



Police Service of Northern Ireland

RECORD OF MEETING

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Strategic Management Board (SMB)
DATE: 17 September 2025
TIME: 10.30am
LOCATION: Main Conference Room, Brooklyn
CHAIRPERSON: Chief Constable

MEMBERS:

Chief Constable	J Boutcher
Deputy Chief Constable	Apologies
Chief Operating Officer	P McCreedy
ACC Justice	A McNally
ACC Local Policing	R Henderson
ACC Operational Support	M Jones
ACC Crime	D Beck
ACO Corporate Services	M McNaughten
ACO People and Organisational Development	C Duffield
ACO Strategic Planning and Transformation	Represented
Director of Legal Services	
Director of Strategic Communications & Engagement	
Director of Information & Communication Services	Apologies
Director of Human Resources	
Director of Finance	Apologies

NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS:

Non-Executive Member: Chair of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	
Non-Executive Member	

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Chief Superintendent Executive Support Team (Committee Manager)	
Staff Officer Executive Support Team (Notetaker)	
Head of Corporate Governance	
Head of Criminal Justice (Agenda Item Nine)	
Head of Procurement (Agenda Item)	
Assistant Director HR (Agenda Items)	

OBSERVERS:

PFNI Secretary	
NIPSA	
SANI	

ACTIONS assigned by the Chair are highlighted in blue text.

Item No	
1.0	<p>111/25 Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Introductions and apologies.</p> <p>Apologies from:</p> <p>DCC Singleton – Attending Chiefs Council ACO Strategic Planning and Transformation - Represented Director of Finance Director of ICS</p>
2.0	<p>112/25 Declaration of Conflict of Interest</p> <p>Nothing heard.</p>
3.0	<p>113/25 Record of Previous Meeting</p> <p>Record agreed.</p>
4.0	<p>114/25 Actions Arising from Previous Meetings</p> <p>Members were updated on the progress of all actions.</p> <p>The following action was agreed for closure: Action 106~25 pdrCHAT.</p>
5.0	<p>115/25 Corporate Risk Register</p> <p>As part of this discussion, the wider financial context was also noted. Members discussed the challenge of operating with a significant budget shortfall, which directly affects the ability to deliver services safely and shapes organisational risk appetite. It was agreed that the Risk Register must remain central to meetings going forward and that it was good to consider this aspect at the top of the agenda each quarter.</p> <p>Members further noted that the Data Breach litigation has progressed through negotiation, with a potential settlement cost in excess of £100 million. The Department has now approved the vfm of the business case but the affordability remains unresolved. If agreement is not reached, the long-term cost could be much higher, perhaps between £200–300 million. The ongoing Holiday Pay issue was also highlighted</p>

with the business case currently awaiting Departmental approval.

It was noted that other sectors are continuing to report significant financial pressures, most recently Health, projecting a £614 million funding gap. This presents a significant risk to public services overall. The Chief Constable made reference to writing to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State again regarding Legacy Funding, alongside a request for around 80 additional posts to support this work.

6.0

116/25 Finance Report

It was reported that a shortfall of £23 million remains, and this figure has been submitted as part of the October monitoring round which, is now expected to be delayed until after the Chancellor’s Autumn Statement on 26 November, meaning responses may not be expected until December. This creates additional time pressures in responding to the outcome. Members heard that the Department has requested a meeting with the COO and ACO Corporate Services in October to discuss how the £23 million gap might be closed. The Chief Constable has also met with the Permanent Secretary to reiterate the scale of the gap and the associated risks.

The Chief Constable highlighted critical equipment needs within areas such as Public Protection Branch, Air Support, surveillance and tackling dissident republicanism, which present risks to safety if not addressed. It was highlighted that work has been carried out to demonstrate efficiencies and provide reassurance that public responsibilities are being met.

Members noted that summer disorder had created additional pressures on the cost of Overtime, but that this had been offset by the additional funding secured in the June Monitoring Round. Continued effort is required towards a break-even position on Overtime for the full year. That said, the Department might expect Overtime to be an element of any agreed Savings Plan.

Members discussed significant business case items, several of which remain flagged as red or amber. It was noted that the Holiday Pay and

Data Breach issues are both unresolved.

The Finucane Inquiry was also discussed, with indicative costs of over £20 million, which have not yet been factored into the budget gap but represent unavoidable additional pressure.

Members were advised that the Chief Constable has written to staff on the Data Breach following some negative press commentary. It was noted that lobbying across government departments is ongoing, with PSNI competing for priority against other asks. The Chief Constable's letter on legacy funding was seen as complementary to this process. Members agreed that the case for prioritisation should be evidence-based and framed around the consequences for public safety, including community safety and VAWG.

Members also noted that the November Board will adopt a thematic "Show and Tell" approach focusing on efficiency, effectiveness and transformation.

Pay awards are unlikely to be confirmed in advance of December pay, which may cause further disappointment, although this remains outside of the organisation's control.

(ACC Crime left the room)

Action 25~27

ACO Corporate Services to draft a letter for the Department, timed closer to the decision making on October Monitoring allocations.

7.0

117/25 Governance Board Update Reports:

- **Service Performance Board – 23 July 2025**

Members received an update from the Service Performance Board held on 23 July 2025. It was noted that minutes are provided to demonstrate due diligence, and that the DCC was not present due to attendance at Chiefs Council.

(ACO People and Organisational Development left the room)

Update provided by ACC Operational Support regarding the monitoring

of cultural background in the use of policing powers, particularly stop and search under Justice and Security and Terrorism legislation. It was explained that there is no current mechanism to record community background, despite the Ramsey ruling in 2020. Legal advice confirmed that “community background” is not defined and officers reflect the diversity of society, making it difficult to measure.

Members were informed that data has been collected via the Origin app, but after 17 months 71% of encounters still record “not asked” or “declined to answer.” Teams from OSD are working hard to deliver training across teams to improve compliance.

Members noted that four times as many Catholics as Protestants are being stopped. It was acknowledged that disproportionality is not necessarily negative, and that intelligence should remain the driver of the use of powers.

Members reviewed the performance scorecard. Positive outcomes were noted, including higher levels of out-of-court disposals, improved file timeliness, and a reduction in overall crime. Positive particularly given the challenges we are facing as an organisation.

(ACO People and Organisational Development and Assistant HR Director enter the room)

8.0

118/25 Culture Development Framework and Inclusion Strategy

Update provided by ACO People and Organisational Development on paper linked to Outcome 3, valued and engaged workforce.

The framework will be presented for approval at the Board next month. Members discussed the importance of workplace culture, encompassing behaviours, support, structures and processes. It was recalled that a cultural audit in 2023 had achieved a 45% response rate and identified 16 priority actions. An update was provided on progress against these.

Members noted that the inclusion survey has now launched, with a 17% response rate after just two days of going live.

Team PSNI events are ongoing, and the paper proposes a joined-up approach overseen by a culture implementation group chaired by ACO

People and Organisational Development and the DCC. Regular workforce engagement will help track progress. A further culture review is planned for early/mid-2026, aligned to national benchmarks.

Members discussed recent feedback from Team PSNI showing that nearly half the workforce had attended sessions, with 85% reporting senior leaders as approachable, and four out of five saying they felt they had a platform to be heard.

Members agreed that culture must be actively managed and that workforce views and impact should be measured through key questions:

- I am proud to work for the PSNI
- I feel valued and respected
- I would recommend friends and family to work for the PSNI

These will be a good test of culture.

The inclusion survey will remain open for two weeks. Members suggested weaving future survey results into the roadmap of values.

(Assistant HR Director leaves the room)

9.0

119/25 Facial Recognition

Members received a briefing from ACC Justice on the use of AI and facial recognition technology. Members noted that the organisation's risk tolerance levels in this area remain in the adverse category, with strict caveats on use.

Three types of recognition were explained in detail:

- Real-time
- Officer-initiated
- Retrospective.

Members heard that officer-initiated recognition is used only in South Wales at the moment. Retrospective recognition allows searches against the Police National Database, although PSNI uses a more

restrictive approach based on policy.

Lindsey Chiswick is the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) lead for facial recognition. Discussion around a case study with a positive outcome.

Members considered proposals to expand PSNI use in PND searches, allowing wider lawful policing purposes. This included the allocation of licences to other business areas, and supporting governance around use.

Background provided around the asks. Expand use of cases for PND searching, expand it to any lawful legitimate policing purposes. Instead of having a narrow focus we are seeking expansion. Need to take our risk tolerance level where we are using this efficiently, are justified and human rights compliant. Fits in with the policing plan and in turn, will provide us with confidence to show the Board that we are using this ethically. These proposals are supported by the Facial Recognition Board.

(ACO Corporate Services leaves the room)

Still central governance around its use. Example provided around Summer disorder.

Former Met Police lead for facial recognition, Mick Neville.

(ACO Corporate Services and Head of Procurement enter the room)

In terms of governance does it require senior officers and authorisation.

Paper on building trust to be released in February 2026 and will be useful in acting as a toolkit.

Plan to train “super users” first within the next few weeks. Need to think about a comms plan. Toolkit from the UN coming out about how to engage the public on its use.

Proposed changes supporting recommendations approved.

Chief Constable supportive.

10.0

120/25 Procurement Annual Report

	<p>Members received the annual procurement report, introduced by ACO Corporate Services and presented by the Head of Procurement.</p> <p>Members noted the scale and complexity of procurement activity, with third-party spend increasing by 3.8% in the last financial year, reflecting inflation. There has been a reduction in major contracts but an increase in smaller contracts.</p> <p>Legislative changes adopted in June 2025 have been incorporated into internal guidance. Members noted that a satisfactory audit was achieved in June, though a common repository for contract data remains an issue.</p> <p>It was noted that most expenditure is in Corporate Services in areas such as Logistics and ICT among others.</p> <p>One third of contracts are due to expire, a reduction from the previous year.</p> <p>Members discussed the importance of avoiding gaps between expiring and new contracts, which will be a monitoring priority.</p> <p>(Head of Procurement leaves the room)</p>
11.0	<p>Disability Action Plan</p> <p>Briefing on the Disability Action Plan provided by ACO People and Organisational Development.</p> <p>It was noted that PSNI is statutorily required to promote positive attitudes and encourage participation in public life. The EDI team within HR, has undertaken significant work aligned to the NPCC national strategy. The action plan covers both the internal workforce and accessibility for communities and victims.</p> <p>Members noted that representation remains low and that the plan will be reported annually to the Equality Commission. Contributions from the Disability Network are central to this work.</p> <p>The paper was noted without further comment.</p>
12.0	<p>121/25 Any Other Business</p> <p>(ACO Corporate Services enters the room.)</p>

	Nothing noted by members in the room or online.
13.0	122/25 Forthcoming Papers (October) Not discussed.

Date of next meeting: 15 October 2025