



OFFICIAL PUBLIC

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Chief Constable's Accountability Report to the Northern Ireland Policing Board

July 2022

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Foreword

In my second accountability report of the financial year, I reflect with pride on the successful delivery of key policing events such as the Queen's 70 year Jubilee and the ongoing celebrations of 100 years of Policing. These celebrations have continued throughout the month of June and have given us the opportunity to reflect and acknowledge the contributions of the Royal Ulster Constabulary GC to policing in Northern Ireland.

Outlined in the report, we also highlight the key successes in targeting organised crime and the work of our Major Investigation Teams in keeping communities safe.

As part of a national 999 initiative, June marked a chance to acknowledge the tireless work of our response teams in keeping the public safe. It allowed us to showcase and thank officers in those critically important roles for their dedication and professionalism in delivering operational policing every day.

However, the highlight of the month was the recent launch of our Public Engagement Vision – 'Here for You' and 'Hallmarks of Neighbourhood Policing'. This was a significant milestone for policing in Northern Ireland and one I am particularly proud of. I want to extend my thanks to everyone who has worked to deliver this keynote initiative.

Having only recently celebrated twenty years since the formation of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, I was reminded of the content of the Independent Commission Report, led by Chris Patten, where we acknowledged the call for a new policing style, rooted in communities that went beyond the 'Peelian' principle of consent, to one of partnership.

We know that, by working together, we have made significant progress in protecting local communities from harm; we have taken record amounts of drugs off our streets, we continue to disrupt and dismantle organised crime gangs, and, according to official statistics, Northern Ireland is one of the safest places in the UK.

That said, now is the time to more deeply embed our approach to engagement with local communities so that they feel a sense of ownership over community safety in the place

they call home and realise the opportunities of neighbourhood policing as a key tool to empower that engagement.

However, there are also challenges to address. The difficult budgetary situation facing policing means that we need to prioritise resources and work in smarter and more intelligent ways and I would ask that the Northern Ireland Policing Board and communities, support us in doing so.

Another notable event was the contribution made by Deputy Chief Constable Mark Hamilton, to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (Legacy Bill) on 21 June. His evidence outlined the challenges of policing the past and an acknowledgement that whilst it remained my statutory responsibility, it is one of the most contested, complex and emotive areas for policing in Northern Ireland.

My thoughts were also with the family of Noah Donohoe, following the anniversary of his passing this month.

A special acknowledgement goes to our four Birthday Honours recipients. Three Queen's Police Medals (QPM) and one British Empire Medal (BEM) were awarded for their Services to Policing and the Community in Northern Ireland.

I want to extend my thanks to our colleagues in Human Resources, who have recently launched the new Professional Development Review (PDR) process. This is not just about better IT, it is about encouraging a different type of conversation between officers, staff and their managers, with the aim of creating a supportive and motivated workplace, where high performing teams consistently deliver great service to the public.

In the coming months we will be exploring the role of the first line supervisor with a view to fully understanding the nature of the challenges they face. This will inform front line training and equip these leaders to set the right standards, have difficult conversations and better manage conflict in the workplace.

We have also initiated interim guidance on hybrid working, that outlines a more flexible and agile approach to work. Our final policy will embrace the learning from the pandemic and good practice from elsewhere.

The fast pace of policing continues for the month ahead as we move into a busy summer period, with the additional operational pressures of bonfires and parades.

We also look forward to meaningful engagement with the Policing Board as we plan for our Board Induction Day on 6 July.

Finance update

As reported last month, the Police Service entered 2022-23 with a challenging financial settlement, including a £59m funding gap for resource costs and a capital settlement totalling just 51% of our bid.

Since the start of the year, some additional funding has been agreed, including £3.1m to support policing the NI Protocol, £5.7m to tackle paramilitary crime, £0.6m to support the new Victims Payment Scheme and further sums for legacy Inquests and Gillen reforms.

This additional funding, together with our planned cost reductions, means that our projected resource pressure for the year is now around £20m. This reflects the unresolved shortfall of £4.0m in NI Protocol funding, £6.0m depreciation, a £4.8m over-commitment and a new pressure of £5.5m due to increasing utility costs. This assessment does not reflect potential pressures from pay inflation over 1%, police overtime, or legacy compensation costs.

Although progress has been made in narrowing the funding gap, we continue to make the case for an improved settlement this year to protect the delivery of policing services.

Looking to the future, there continues to be a lack of clarity on funding for the Police Service and this remains a significant concern, not least due to the direct impact on overall headcount and likely diminution and delay to services in communities.

Earlier this month I wrote to the Permanent Secretary for the Department of Justice and the Chair of the Board to explain the challenges and highlight that the reductions outlined in the agreed Resource Plan were being progressed.

Our Performance

Security

Last month we reported on the much welcomed reduction of the Northern Ireland threat level from Northern Ireland Related Terrorism (NIRT), from 'severe' to 'substantial' in March 2022. This change was the first reduction since 2010.

The most recent official information on trends and statistics relating to the security situation in Northern Ireland, demonstrate a continued downward trend and gives the Police Service and the communities we serve, something to be proud of.

We remain vigilant and focused on dismantling the terrorist threat and our recently launched Public Engagement Vision and Neighbourhood Policing Hallmarks, outlines our commitment to work in genuine partnership with communities to achieve this.

During 1 June 2021 to 31 May 2022:

- There was one security related death, compared to two during the previous 12 months.
- There were fewer bombings, shootings and paramilitary style attacks than during the previous 12 months.
- There were 4 bombing incidents, compared to 17 in the previous 12 months and 22 shooting incidents, compared to 41.
- There were 31 casualties of paramilitary style assaults, compared to 41 in the previous 12 months. All 31 casualties were aged 18 years or older.
- There were 10 casualties of paramilitary style shootings compared to 19 during the previous 12 months. All 10 casualties were aged 18 years or older.
- There were 118 security related arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000, compared to 120 during the previous 12 months.
- 15 persons were subsequently charged, compared to 23 during the previous 12 months.

Source NISRA

Crime

Northern Ireland - Crime Rates

As a Police Service we are pleased to note that Northern Ireland has one of the lowest crime rates when compared to England & Wales.

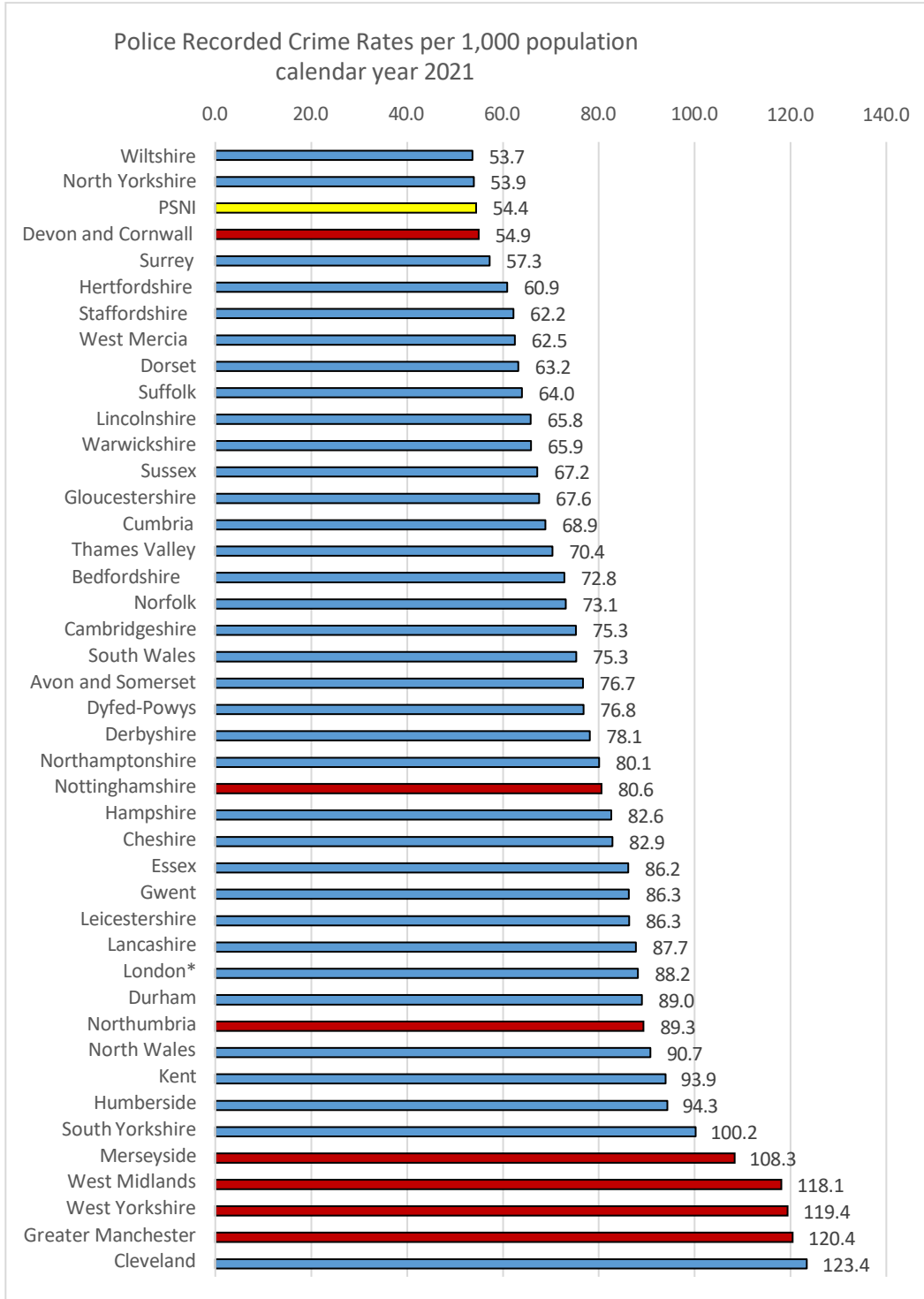


Figure 1: Crime rate comparisons - Northern Ireland and England & Wales.

Figure 1 outlines **crime rate data** for calendar year 2021. The crime rate in Northern Ireland was **54.4 crimes per 1,000** population. The crime rate for England & Wales for the same period was **85.5 crimes per 1,000** population.

Our most similar forces (MSFs) (highlighted in red), have a notably higher overall crime rate than Northern Ireland, with the exception of Devon & Cornwall, who are only slightly higher (54.9 crimes per 1,000 population).

Additionally, overall **crime outcome rates** remain high. By way of example, Figure 2 shows improvement around outcome rates over a five year period for racist, sectarian, and homophobic crimes.

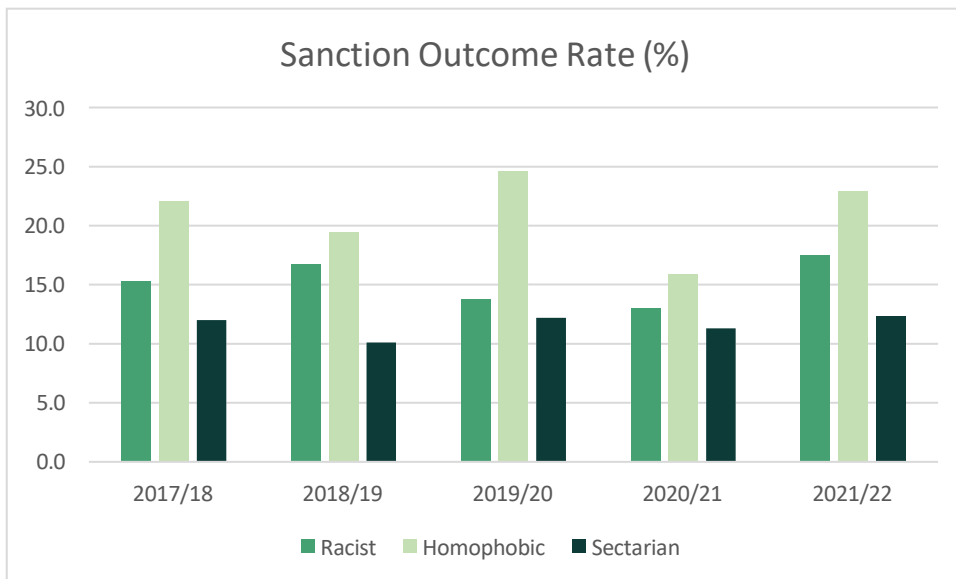


Figure 2: 5 year trend showing sanction outcome rates for crimes with a Racist, Homophobic and Sectarian motivation.

Working in smarter and more intelligent ways

Forensic submissions: In 2019 submissions to Forensic Science Northern Ireland were taking between 60 and 110 days from date of incident. The introduction of auto-populated submission forms and streamlining of business processes to assist Officers has reduced this timeframe to between 12-14 days.

Immediate visibility of performance is delivered via our “PULSE” performance management portal.

International Law Enforcement Alerts Platform: The Police Service has been working with National and International partners to develop the International Law Enforcement Alerts Platform (I-LEAP).

The objective of I-LEAP is to provide a single mechanism for United Kingdom (UK) Law Enforcement users to access and share alerts with International partners. This capability to share information will enable better protection of citizens globally.

This month the Police Service were the first UK law enforcement agency to go live with the I-LEAP connection.

Outcome One – We Have a Safe Community

Response Policing Week



In June we joined the national police initiative to celebrate and acknowledge the tireless work of our response officers and staff, who keep communities safe every day.



Assistant Chief Constable Bobby Singleton visited officers in Belfast and Coleraine to recognise their professionalism and courage; and in a short video, shared across social media platforms, Chief Superintendent Wendy Middleton acknowledged the wide range of complex and often challenging situations response officers faced on a daily basis.

Serious Crime

June was a particularly busy time for officers and staff in the Major Investigations Teams (MITs), who work tirelessly on some of the most serious of crimes. The value and role they play makes a real difference and is something they can all be proud of.

Behind every one of these cases, a family is experiencing their darkest moments. Officers and staff are helping them to get answers, justice and closure and making Northern Ireland a safer for others. This is often unseen work that takes time to come to an end stage.

Some key results include:

- Murder of Margaret Noone – man charged.
- Murder of Paul McDonagh - conviction.
- Murder of Emma McParland – sentence of 14 years
- Murder of Patrycja Wyrebek - sentenced to 20 years
- Murder of Pat Ward – guilty plea.
- Murder of Jennifer Dornan - sentenced to 22 years

Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit

As a result of the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine the Executive Office established multi-agency "Ukraine Assistance Centres". The Centres, located in four Council areas across Northern Ireland, are used to facilitate, support and welcome those Ukrainians coming to our country.

In June, officers from the Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) and Gang Masters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) delivered training, facilitated by the Department of Finance and Infrastructure, to approximately 600 reception centre staff and volunteers on how to spot the signs and indicators of Modern Slavery and how to report concerns to Police.

This training resulted in MSHTU receiving two separate referrals from Centre staff, who worked with colleagues in Home Office Immigration Enforcement (HOIE) and safeguarded two Ukrainian women and two children. This work remains ongoing.

Outcome Two – We Have Confidence in Policing Paramilitary Crime Task Force

Search and seizures



In June officers from the PCTF conducted a proactive search at an address in the Belfast area aimed at targeting East Belfast UVF's drug supply network. During this search a quantity of Class A and B drugs, together with a substantial amount of cash estimated to be close to £100,000 were seized. A 19-year-old man was also arrested and charged with numerous drugs offences including possession of Class A drugs with intent to supply.

Image shows cash and suspected drugs seized by PCTF during search in June

In June, PCTF officers seized an estimated £48,000 worth of suspected Class A drugs following proactive searches at three locations in the Shankill area.



Image shows cigarettes and counterfeit goods recovered by PCTF in June.

Officers also recovered an estimated 10,000 cigarettes, as well as a quantity of cash and a number of suspected counterfeit items, including football shirts. This activity was conducted as part of an ongoing investigation into suspected drugs criminality linked to the West Belfast UDA.

PCTF conviction

June saw the sentencing of a 57 year old man at Newry Crown Court following a search and seizure of £270,000 worth of Class A last Spring. This related to a PCTF investigation into suspected drugs criminality linked to East Belfast UVF. A sum of cash, totalling £6,750 was also seized by PCTF officers and following a forfeiture order granted by the Court, the money was donated to the Southern Area Hospice Services.

Operation Dealbreaker

Search and seizure



Image shows cash and other items seized during a search in June.

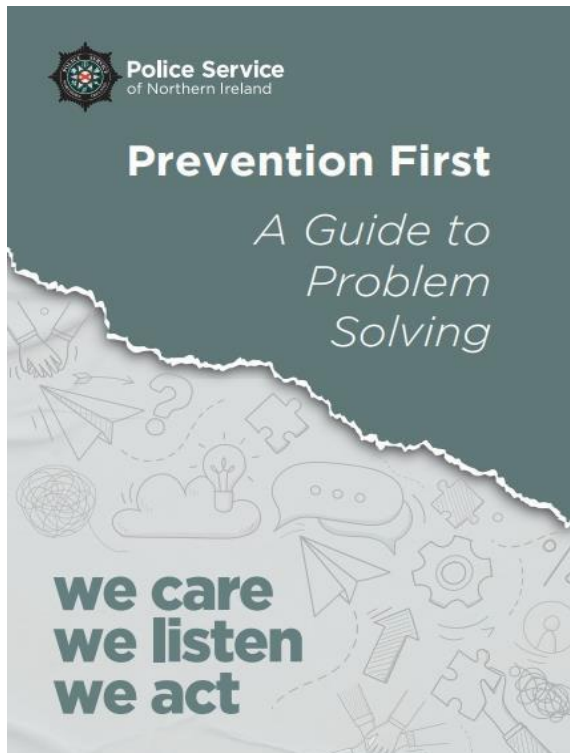
This month saw officers from our Organised Crime Unit (OCU) seizing a quantity of Class B and C drugs, along with other items, including £50,000 cash, a quantity of cigarettes and a stun gun. A 57-year-old man was arrested and enquiries remain ongoing.

Sentencing

Three men were sentenced for drug-related offences following their arrest in 2020 by officers from the Organised Crime Unit. This investigation resulted from the search of a property in the Cookstown area, where a drugs-manufacturing factory was uncovered. The drug seizure, which included cocaine, had an estimated street value of £825,000.

Outcome Three – We Have Engaged and Supportive Communities

Problem Solving



We have recently launched our Crime Prevention Strategy, placing a significant focus on 'Prevention First'.

To support our officers and staff we have designed a Problem Solving Guide and Toolkit.

In addition to these resources, we have also recently trained and appointed 77 Problem Solving Champions across all Districts. The Champions will help to embed and inform how we evolve our Problem Solving processes to continually improve and strive for consistency.

Launch event 28 June 2022– Public Engagement Vision and Hallmarks of Neighbourhood Policing



For some years, neighbourhood policing and engagement with local communities has been a very important part of the Police Service and this launch event was a significant milestone for policing in Northern Ireland.

Our Public Engagement Vision – ‘Here for You’, sets out the 5 pillars that the Police Service will use to further increase the trust and confidence that will be key to enhancing community safety.

Strategic Community Engagement

5 Key Pillars



Whether it's by improving our representativeness, increasing transparency over our use of powers, or creating more opportunities for local accountability, this vision will underpin everything we do.

To demonstrate our commitment to action, we also launched our 8 'Hallmarks of Neighbourhood Policing'. The Hallmarks will be a key driver of the 'Effective Neighbourhood Policing' pillar of the 'Public Engagement Vision'. These Hallmarks provide a set of standards the public can expect of us and outline how we intend to make them central to our defining mission, that is – 'we are a visible, accessible, responsive and community-focused police service'.

The event, which took place in Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey on the 28 June 2022 was attended by the Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constable Singleton and was also widely supported by key partners and Board members. It had significant social media coverage of the Hallmarks and followed a number of events with our Police Community Safety Partnerships (PCSP's) prior to the formal launch.

Our People, Your Service

Key Events and Campaigns

Northern Ireland Affairs Committee – Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill

On 21 June 2022, DCC Hamilton gave oral evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee. His evidence outlined the challenges of policing the past and an acknowledgement that whilst it remained a statutory responsibility of the Chief Constable, it is one of the most contested, complex and emotive areas for policing in Northern Ireland.

DCC Hamilton gave assurance to victims, survivors and their families that the Police Service is committed to doing the best we possibly can, with the resources we have available, to deliver the truth and justice they deserve. He reinforced the previously stated position that the Police Service does support a process that removes the responsibility for Legacy investigation from the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

However, whilst the debate continues, the function of a Police Service will be to remain impartial and independent and we will uphold the rule of law as set out by our democratic institutions and elected representatives. DCC Hamilton further reflected the Police Service's position in supporting decision-makers understand the impact of new proposals on the operational landscape based on our policing experience.

Muckamore Abbey Hospital Public Inquiry

This is a statutory public Inquiry established to examine the issue of abuse of patients at Muckamore Abbey Hospital Public Inquiry which began on 6 June with the opening statement from the Police Service, delivered Wednesday 8 June. We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Public Enquiry Team in order that the Enquiry Team can work alongside the Police Investigation. This remains ongoing.

Launch of the Professional Development Review (PDR)



We launched our new performance management system on Monday 6 June 2022 following a number of successful pilots. The ‘Professional Development Review’ (PDR) platform is specifically designed to facilitate regular conversations between line managers and staff to encourage the continuous improvement of individuals' skills, behaviours and contributions to the organisation. The system also enables users to identify and understand the link between their individual performance contribution and the achievement of organisational objectives linked to the Policing Plan and our Horizon 2025 Strategy.

Meeting with the Racial Equality Subgroup



This month, the Chief Constable met with members of The Executive Office of the Racial Equality Subgroup. They are a representative panel for minority ethnic communities who support the implementation of the Racial Equality Strategy.

This was an important opportunity to hear first-hand their concerns about under representativeness, training, the use of stop and search

powers, hate crime, legitimacy, policing style, online abuse and local policing. The group was also interested to hear about how we are progressing our Race Action Plan and our commitment to building a more progressive and inclusive policing service.

Meeting with groups representing older persons



This month the Chief Constable met with the Commissioner for Older People, Eddie Lynch, AgeNI Head of Policy and Engagement Eithne Gilligan, and members of the Older Persons Consultative Forum.

This provided an opportunity to listen to the concerns of older people and understand their views on policing. Issues discussed

included scams, financial abuse and safeguarding.

The Chief Constable acknowledged that visibility of police locally clearly remains a significant reassurance issue for older people.

British Association for Women in Policing (BAWP) Awards

Twenty-two officers and staff were nominated for the 2022 British Association of Women in Policing (BAWP) Awards with two people shortlisted for the final.

In a letter to the Chief Constable, Nikki Butt Vice President for BAWP said; "We received an unprecedented number of nominations once again and the standard was exceptionally high.

To be nominated shows how highly regarded the nominee is considered within your organisation and the Awards Committee have been truly humbled assessing such worthy nominations."

Those nominated attended an event at Garnerville to have their achievements formally recognised. They were presented with their certificate by our gender lead, Chief Operating Officer, Pamela McCreedy who thanked them for their dedication to the organisation. Deputy Chief Constable, Mark Hamilton also supported the event.

Superintendents' Association of Northern Ireland Annual General Meeting and Conference.



On 15 June, the Senior Executive Team attended the Superintendents Association NI (SANI) Annual General Meeting along with DOJ partners. The theme of the day was 'Compassionate Leadership' and the Chief Constable presented to members on the topic of 'Leading Through Change'. This was a real opportunity to engage with senior leaders and discuss the challenges facing policing and our vision for leadership within the Police Service.

Queens Birthday Honours

Four Birthday Honours were awarded to police offers and police staff from our Police Service. Three Queen's Police Medals (QPM) and one British Empire Medal (BEM) have been awarded to recipients for their Services to Policing and the Community in Northern Ireland.

- The BEM was awarded to Leanne Barnett, Temporary Director of Strategic Communications Department.
- The QPMs were awarded to Sergeant Darren Welsh, Constable Ricky Taylor and a third recipient who has requested no publicity.

Forward Look

Over the coming weeks and months, the Police Service is acutely aware of a wide range of external events which have the potential to cause unease within local communities. Notwithstanding the budgetary challenges which face the Police Service as a result, the ongoing lack of government institutions in Northern Ireland has the potential to exacerbate the impact of wider events which are cause for concern among local people.

Whilst the Police Service is a strictly impartial organisation, we note that the ongoing challenges around the Northern Ireland Protocol and the UK Government's proposals on Legacy as issues of concern to local communities and victims.

As we approach the parading season, the Police Service has been working closely with a wide range of organisations, community representatives and political parties to ensure a safe and peaceful July holiday period. This engagement and dialogue will continue and intensify over the coming weeks.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with the Board as it, in its advocacy role, supports the Police Service to navigate any external events which may pose trust and confidence challenges for policing with the community.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Our Strategy is in the final stages of preparation and was recently presented to the Criminal Justice Board. The Strategy will be accompanied by a bespoke online training package for all officers and staff. The Police Training College are currently working with subject matter experts and key stakeholders to ensure the training is trauma informed. The formal launch date will be agreed in July 2022, once we have finalised the plan with key partners.

Summer Season - Parades and Bonfires

We are pleased to report that so far in 2022 there have been no significant parade related issues resulting in arrests or disorder. There are 1070 notified parades for July and numbers continue to grow. 44 of these are sensitive.

An external Communications Strategy is also ongoing across all of our social media platforms to ensure we keep everyone safe during the parade season.



A recent trawl across all Districts suggest that we may see a small reduction in the overall number of bonfires compared with previous years, however we may not have any overt signs of bonfire construction until much closer to 11 July.

The vast majority of bonfires take place without incident, however the potential for bonfires to heighten tensions cannot be discounted engagement on bonfires continues at Strategic, District and Local levels. The Bonfires Group continues to meet, and whilst a number of bonfire sites are of concern, they are not at the levels previously experienced.

NIPB Induction day

We look forward to presenting at the Northern Ireland Policing Board induction day on 6 July, where our Service Executive Team will meet Board members. This will be a great opportunity to provide an insight to our challenges and policing priorities across all areas of work.

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