



Police Service of Northern Ireland

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

November 2021

Report Date: 29 October 2021

Presented at Policing Board Meeting: 04 November 2021

Version 1.0



Report online. Call 101. In an emergency call 999

**we care
we listen
we act**

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Foreword: 20 Year Anniversary

It is with a sense of reflection and inherent pride that I present this report to you on the 20th Anniversary of the formation of the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Firstly, a sincere thank you to the brave officers and staff of the Police Service of Northern Ireland who, over the past two decades, have worked day and night with determination to keep our communities safe, motivated by the care and compassion that defines public service.

The important contribution made by our colleagues in the Royal Ulster Constabulary GC, in laying the foundations towards the policing of today, should not be underestimated. We should never forget the trauma and tragedy that was a reality for so many in policing for so many years. Too many colleagues never made it home or were seriously injured in the face of extreme violence. We remember them and their loved ones today.

In November 2001, whilst much reform had already begun by my predecessor Sir Ronnie Flanagan, the 'A New Beginning' report and its 175 recommendations, signalled a new era for policing.

I am reminded of the words of the then Chief Constable, on the cusp of this momentous change, *"I remain convinced that the men and women who already make up this organisation and those new individuals who are about to join this organisation will rise together to meet whatever challenges lie ahead"*. And as history shows, so we did and will continue to do so. That determination and adaptability to meet public expectation is hard wired into our ethos.

The last 20 years have not been without difficult and indeed dark days. It is with profound sadness that we remember the tragic loss of the 13 colleagues who died in the course of performing their duties during this time.

Whilst policing, at times, still faces challenging and sensitive issues, we operate within a well-defined accountability mechanism. Our central achievement has been the human rights based approach which has been embedded into day to day policing activity in an unprecedented way. This commitment to human rights is underpinned

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by our core principles of impartiality, integrity, transparency and public service, which have come to define our policing model.

The Police Service has made steady progress in a society transitioning from conflict. During this time, the professionalism of our organisation has been stress-tested by periods of disorder, protest, policing the Covid-19 pandemic and, of course, the enduring threat from terrorist violence. We are, however, a proud and resilient organisation, reflective when things go wrong and determined to do the right thing day and daily.

Today, we increasingly invest in visible, accessible and responsive neighbourhood policing. Our community-focused policing style finds its origins in Patten, and is committed to securing widespread support for policing in the interests of public safety.

Looking ahead, we are transforming our connectivity with the public and indeed each other through our digital policing programme.

Our police buildings and estate are ready for modernisation, rationalisation and increased accessibility, itself undoubtedly one of the unfinished pieces of Patten business.

Tangible changes such as new fleet, new uniform and new equipment mark a step change in how we begin the next decade of our history.

By its very nature, policing continues to evolve to meet the needs and expectations of the people and communities we serve. There is clear consensus and support for visible, accessible and responsive policing, prompting us to adapt the way that we attend incidents, investigate crime and bring offenders to justice.

The officers and staff of the past, present and future have one very important thing in common – a pride in public service and an unwavering commitment to helping people. Policing with the support and cooperation of local communities has been, and will continue to be, the cornerstone of progress in Northern Ireland.

We reach forward now into our third decade with optimism.

Contents

The November 2021 Accountability Report provides an update to the Northern Ireland Policing Board on the following topics:

We Care

- Corporate Services
- People and Organisational Development
- Violence and intimidation against women and girls
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- Scamwise
- Neighbourhood Policing

We Listen

- Contact Management
- Community Engagement and Outreach
- Information Management

We Act

- Monthly Overview: September 2021
- Organised Criminality
- Drugs
- Investigation and Justice Outcomes
- Public Protection

We Care

Corporate Services

Financial Outlook

We look with interest to the outcome of the October monitoring bid which is anticipated by the end of the month or beginning of November 2021. Once the outcome is known, we will be in a position to update the Board on what this means for our full year position, currently reporting a pressure of some £8.9m.

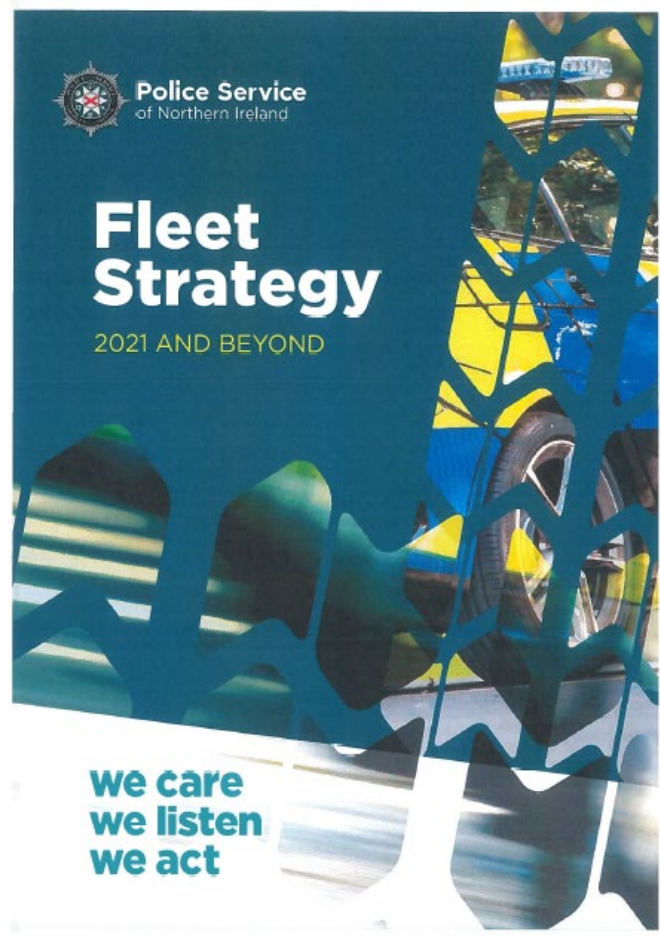
Further reviews of our funding position will take place before the final funding opportunity in the January monitoring round, which was commissioned earlier this week.

There is still uncertainty about our budget provision moving into 2022-23. This will be impacted by the Chancellor's Budget announcement on 27 October and the Executive's decisions on priorities. We continue to make the case for investing in policing.

Transport Services Developments

In October 2021, our Strategic Management Board agreed a new Fleet Strategy which will be presented to Board Committee in the coming months.

The intention of the Fleet Strategy is to create a modernised, technologically advanced and green operating model that provides colleagues with a safe mobile working environment to meet future policing demands. This is an integral part of our ambition to be more visible, accessible and responsive to the public.



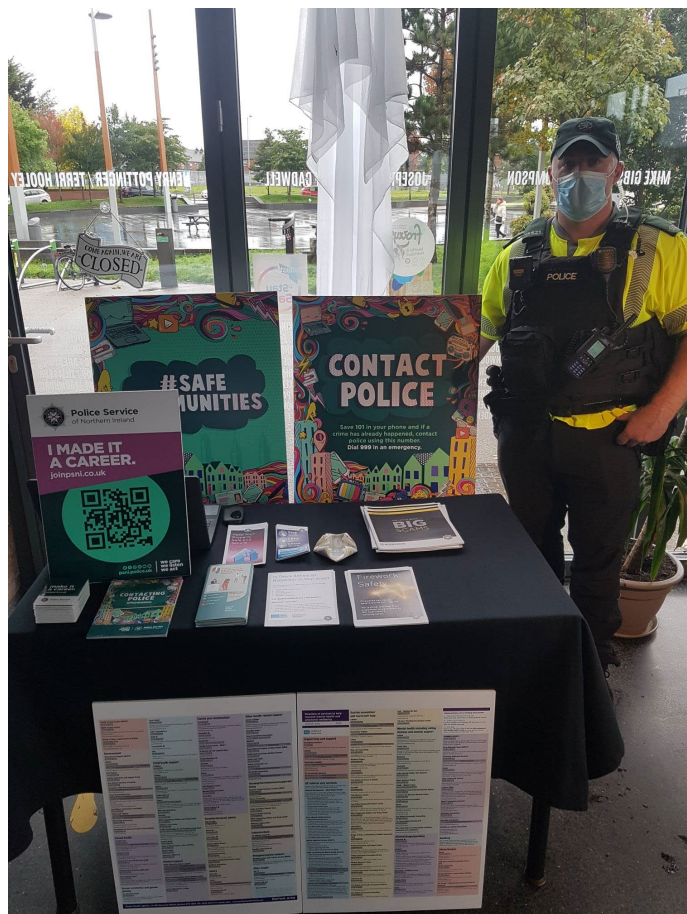
Key aspects of the Fleet Strategy include:

- Enhancing the visibility and specification of our vehicles, with an aspiration to increase the liveried fleet to 80% over the next two years
- Less variance to improve quality and cut costs
- More on-board technology to fight crime and protect officers and staff.

People and Organisational Development Recruitment

Our new police officer recruitment campaign will formally launch on 2 November 2021 and close on 19 November 2021. We look forward to assessing the impact of the campaign's approach, targeted community outreach and local officer engagement on overall applicants and representative returns. We will continue to keep the Board apprised of progress and outcomes.

Local officers across Districts have been contributing to the recruitment effort by engaging with the local community, encouraging applications. The image below is an example of a local officer who attended an event at CS Lewis Square, Belfast in October 2021.



Police staff campaigns for Administrative Support Officers, roles in Occupational Health and Wellbeing and Scientific Support indicate strong interest in a career in policing. By way of example, Administrative Support Officer and Scientific Support campaigns generated 1939 and 2082 applications, respectively. This is positive and indicates that, for many, the police service is a career of choice.

Further police staff recruitment processes for roles in Call Management, Financial Services and Physical Training will open soon.

We also look forward to the progression of senior selection for Assistant Chief Officer posts by the Policing Board in the coming months.

Violence and Intimidation against Women and Girls

Since the last update provided to the Board, the Deputy Chief Constable and the Chief Operating Officer have jointly established a Strategic Coordination Group to provide oversight and impetus in our response to the issue of Violence and Intimidation against Women and Girls.

Three workstreams have been derived from the Police Service strategy which reflects the recently launched national policing strategy, issued by National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).

- Pursuit of perpetrators
- Safer spaces
- Improved trust and confidence in policing

Initial actions taken under these workstreams is outlined below.

Pursuit of Perpetrators

- Development of a five year rape action plan with Public Prosecution Service
- Informed by the *Gillen* recommendations, we have already reduced file gateway errors to Public Prosecution Service from 70% to 11%
- Completion of a dedicated *Achieving Best Evidence* cadre pilot. We will now work to introduce this for child victims across Northern Ireland, with an intention to extend to adult victims in due course
- A bespoke four-module training package is being rolled out to better support officers in responding to Domestic Abuse incidents.

Safer spaces

- A dedicated rape and sexual crime media campaign is planned for November 2021
- Update of Operation Nitelife strategies to ensure specific focus on Violence and Intimidation Against Women and Girls
- Scoping of the potential to introduce the NPCC recommended '*street safe*' initiative
- Safety campaign '*Ask for Angela*' to be launched in the coming months in partnership with Hospitality Ulster
- Support to ONUS safe places for day-time retail

Improved trust and confidence in policing

- Review of crime data relating to domestic abuse
- Focus on professional conduct, behaviour and ethics
- Internal review of the practices and processes within Professional Standards Department and the Misconduct Regulatory Framework. This work will be based on a *Prevent, Detect* and *Protect* strategy and will report on progress to the Strategic Coordination Group.
- Independent Advisory Group feedback
- Schedule of focus groups and site visits during November 2021, to listen to the views of victims and other stakeholders
- Support to Women's Aid '*16 Days of Action*' in November 2021
- Continued support to charity *White Ribbon NI* which campaigns to end male violence against women and girls.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

Every year people are trafficked into and around Northern Ireland for sexual exploitation. People of all ages, genders and sexual orientation can be susceptible to human trafficking.

During this financial year so far, a total of 213 potential victims of human trafficking were referred via the National Referral Mechanism in Northern Ireland.

During this period the Police Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Unit has carried out:

- 86 Screening Assessments
- Six searches
- 58 safeguarding visits/non-warrant operations, 21 of which were conducted in partnership with other law enforcement agencies
- Six arrests for modern slavery/human trafficking and /or related offences
- 11 voluntary interviews.
- One person has been charged and 14 have been reported to the Public Prosecution Service for modern slavery/human trafficking and/or related offences.

During October, to promote National Anti-Slavery day, we ran a social media campaign to promote awareness of modern slavery/human trafficking and common indicators that a person may be a victim of this high harm offending. The campaign also sought to reach out to people who are being exploited and to signpost them to places where they can seek support.

The campaign was supported by proactive presence by Detectives from the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Unit at airports, screening for potential victims of modern slavery and human trafficking.

Spot the signs of **Modern Slavery**

Human trafficking is happening in Northern Ireland.



Tap next to learn some of the signs that may indicate someone has been trafficked or enslaved.

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Spot the signs of **Modern Slavery**

If you spot something that doesn't look right, report your concerns to:

The Modern Slavery Helpline on 08000 121 700

Police on 101 or 999 in an emergency

Know the signs, tap the link to visit our website.

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Spot the signs of **Modern Slavery**

Living in overcrowded accommodation or in poor sanitary conditions.



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ScamwiseNI Partnership

November 2021 marks the fifth anniversary of the launch of the ScamwiseNI Partnership.

When it was launched five years ago, ScamwiseNI started out with 15 partners from a range of organisations including, the Commissioner for Older People, the Northern Ireland Policing Board and the Department of Justice. Since this time, the partnership has gone from strength to strength with over 45 members representing statutory, educational, community, business, banking, religious and charity organisations.

ScamwiseNI has been important in preventing crime and the exploitation of vulnerable people. It aims to increase public awareness of the many different types of scams that now exist and provides prevention advice.



We would like to take this opportunity to recognise the important contribution that ScamwiseNI has made to community safety. It is a great example of the wider outcomes that can be achieved in partnership. The Police Service would like to express our sincere appreciation to our ScamwiseNI partners.

Neighbourhood Policing

The College of Policing national role profile has been adopted for neighbourhood policing roles in the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

An additional 400 officers have been assigned to Neighbourhood Teams across all Districts. This is supported by a rolling process to ensure that vacancies are filled and numbers are maintained. Neighbourhood Team presence will be increased to 16 hour per day, seven days per week in local communities. These enhanced working hours will be in place across all teams by late November.

A bespoke performance framework has been developed for neighbourhood teams which will be embedded in developing IT solutions. In addition, the development of Neighbourhood Policing Hallmarks continues to progress.

Neighbourhood Policing Team Forums were held during June and September 2021 to explore issues relating to culture, ethos, values and to facilitate the sharing of best practice. Further focus groups have been scheduled to explore emerging issues in further detail.

A number of other developments are progressing and will be updated to Board in the coming months.



We Listen

#ControlRoomHeroes



As part of International Control Room week, 18 – 24 October 2021, we have been using social media platforms to acknowledge and promote the work of staff and officers in our Contact Management Centre.

The Contact Management Centre is a busy and demanding environment. Teams provide the gateway to frontline service delivery, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Blended officer and staff teams assess and mitigate risk to members of the public and officers deployed to emergency and non-emergency incidents. Our teams provide practical and listening support to people, often when at their most vulnerable which some Board members have had the opportunity to see first-hand during recent visits.

In 2020, we received close to 634,000 calls into our Contact Management Centres.

Just over 176,000 of these calls were emergencies. Almost 95% of the 176,000 emergency calls were answered by Contact Management Centre staff within 10 seconds. We also received over 28,000 incidents reported online.



Community Engagement and Outreach

Strategic Community Engagement

The work of our Strategic Community Engagement Team continues, focusing on three key workstreams:

- Reinvigorated Engagement
- Attraction and Recruitment
- Procedural Fairness and Legitimacy

An in depth update was provided to the Policing Board Partnership Committee at the end of October 2021.

An overarching strategy is being developed and is on track for completion by Spring 2022.

Independent Advisory Groups

The Police Corporate Independent Advisory Group (IAG) has been operational since October 2020 and has met on 12 occasions since this time. The most recent issue considered by the group was the new Police Recruitment Campaign.

A review of the IAG's first year is being undertaken by Crime Prevention and Early Intervention Branch, overseen by Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Bobby Singleton. It is anticipated that we will be in a position to update the Board on identified learning by December 2021.

We have been working in close partnership with the Education Authority to develop a Youth Independent Advisory Group. The Youth Independent Advisory Group (YAIG) will be a vehicle for young people to have their voices heard and help shape the future of policing in Northern Ireland. The first joint YAIG session is scheduled for 30 October 2021 where there will be a discussion around the findings of the survey for police use of Stop and Search. It is envisaged that the YAIG will meet approximately four times per year but it may also be called in response to dynamic and emerging issues.

We aspire to develop District Independent Advisory Groups to complement local policing structures by September 2022.

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Excellence in Race Equality Leadership Award

At the end of October, we were pleased to send delegates from the Police Service of Northern Ireland to the National Black Police Association Annual Conference in Luton.

The Chief Constable led the delegation and proudly received an award for '*Excellence in Race Equality Leadership*'. This nomination was made unanimously by our own Ethnic Minority Police Association (EMPA). Criteria for award nominations was that nominees must have demonstrated excellence in leadership in pursuing race equality within policing, demonstrating proactive and innovative progression of the race agenda in the criminal justice system and improved trust and confidence of staff and communities.

A proud moment for the Police Service.



Recommendations from the Information Commissioner's Office

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) published a report into the extraction of data from mobile devices in June 2021. Report findings aligned to similar reports for the English, Welsh and Scottish jurisdictions.

A total of seven recommendations were made for the Police Service of Northern Ireland, each of which was designed to protect the rights of victims, witnesses and suspects when devices, especially mobile phones, are in the possession of police for the purposes of an investigation.

This is an important issue, which we took seriously. I am pleased to report that we have made significant progress in recent months in partnership with senior colleagues from the Public Prosecution Service and the Department of Justice. As a result, new policy has been drafted, a Data Protection Impact Assessment has been completed and a new approach will commence in the Cyber Crime Centre on 1 November 2021.

Going forward, formal notices will be provided to victims, witnesses and suspects before a device is examined. Parameters will be required from the Investigating officer, with oversight approval by an Inspector, in terms of the data to be examined on any device.

ICO has been regularly updated in terms of progress against the recommendations and has been complimentary of our advancement and transparency. We will continue to engage with partners and with ICO to fully embed the new approach.

We Act

Monthly Overview: September 2021



Organised Criminality

We are committed to frustrating, disrupting and dismantling organised criminality to prevent harm in communities who are targeted and exploited by such groups. Much of this work takes place in blended teams through multi-agency frameworks for collaborative effort and maximum impact (Organised Crime Taskforce, Paramilitary Crime Taskforce, and Joint Agency Taskforce).

In the period January to August 2021, our teams have worked relentlessly to pursue and create a non-permissible environment for organised criminality, to ensure we have safer communities that are confident in their police service.

Supported by local neighbourhood policing teams, the Paramilitary Crime Taskforce has been proactive in conducting arrest and search operations with criminal justice outcomes achieved against Belfast INLA, North West INLA, South East Antrim UDA, East Belfast UVF, West Belfast UDA and North Antrim UDA. Investigations are ongoing across a wide range of offending.

Tackling Organised Criminality

Paramilitary Crime Taskforce
In period January to August 2021



We have recently carried out a self-assessment of our arrangements for Serious and Organised Crime against Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services' (HMICFRS) assessment criteria. This has informed development plans focusing on Organised Crime Group mapping, scoring criteria and methodology to assess the impact of actions taken against Organised Crime Groups.

Drugs

Last month's Accountability Report provided an overview of Operation DEALBREAKER. This was established in July 2021, to coordinate our collaborative approach to addressing every aspect of drug misuse across Northern Ireland.

As a Police Service we are committed to doing all we can to prevent and detect drug related activity, ranging from importation, supply, possession or financial gain resulting from drug related criminality. Working with partner agencies and across Police Service specialisms, this proactive focus is intended to break criminal drug dealing networks to prevent harm to local communities.

We act by prioritising preventative and enforcement action against drug crime and the devastating impact it has in our communities

Drugs Enforcement

In the first quarter of 2021

2384
DRUGS
SEIZURES

858
DRUGS RELATED
ARRESTS

379
DRUGS RELATED
CHARGES

OP

DEAL BREAKER



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In a two week period alone, from 17 September to 4 October 2021, we have removed £1.34 million worth of suspected drugs from the streets and communities right across Northern Ireland. We have conducted 94 searches, seized 317 drugs exhibits, made 129 arrests and charged 55 people for drug related offences.

The infographic features a dark teal background. At the top left, a white rounded rectangle contains the text 'OP DEALBREAKER' in bold black letters, with a small circular icon of a crossed-out scale of justice to its right. Below this, the dates 'From 17th September to 4th October 2021' are written in white. Three white boxes with teal borders display statistics: 'OVER £1.34 million OF DRUGS SEIZED', '129 DRUGS RELATED ARRESTS', and '55 DRUGS RELATED CHARGES'. At the bottom left, the website 'psni.police.uk' and social media icons are listed, along with the text 'Report online. Call 101. In an emergency call 999'. At the bottom right, the slogan 'we care we listen we act' is positioned next to the Police Service of Northern Ireland crest and logo.

OP DEALBREAKER

From 17th September to 4th October 2021

OVER **£1.34 million** OF DRUGS SEIZED

129 DRUGS RELATED ARRESTS

55 DRUGS RELATED CHARGES

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The devastation resulting from drug misuse is cross-cutting and impacts lives of people at every level in Northern Ireland. The activities of these individuals and crime gangs is a demonstration of harm at its highest.

As a Police Service, through Operation DEALBREAKER, we will continue to take a co-ordinated, consistent and multiagency approach, supported by partners within the Organised Crime Task Force to break the supply and demand chain.

Success of this scale would not be possible without the support and engagement of the local people in local communities. We intend for Operation DEALBREAKER to send an unequivocal message that we care about community safety, we have listened to community feedback and we will act to deliver on what matters most in local communities.

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Investigation and Justice Outcomes

Terrorism

We work in partnership with other agencies to prevent terrorist attacks and pursue criminal justice outcomes. Detectives in our Serious Crime Branch have been working at pace, with a total of 67 serious crime investigations ongoing into the activities of the 'New IRA' alone. Investigations include the murder of Lyra McKee and subsequent charges, offences of directing terrorism, attempted murder, the recovery of explosive devices and weapons alongside other serious offences, including child protection. Serious Crime Branch is also pursuing investigations into the 'Continuity IRA', including an attack on Enniskillen Police station where one suspect has been charged and murder investigations that are linked to Óglaigh na hÉireann, such as the murder of Danny McClean in Belfast in February 2021. Terrorism Investigation Unit continues to work against all violent dissident groups and right wing extremism.

The sustained and determined effort by our teams has been augmented by significant custodial sentences recently issued, changes in the law affecting actual time served in prison, and arrangements for the management of offenders on release through Probation Licences and Terrorism Notification Orders. This has already shown signs of a significant preventative impact in relation to this particularly serious criminality. The result is safer and more confident communities.

Enhanced Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) Accreditation

Recognising the critical importance of high quality, objective and impartial forensic services, we have started to transition our current accreditation standards for Crime Scene Investigation to the more robust standard provided within ISO17020.

The role of Higher Crime Scene Investigation staff has been enhanced, recognising their central role in facilitating this development. Acting in the capacity as CSI Hub Unit Managers, they will provide direct support to staff and ensure that revised procedures and policies are embedded. Technical Managers have also been appointed to assist Scientific Support Branch to meet and maintain the enhanced quality standards and requirements of ISO17020. An additional in-house trainer role

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has been developed, specialising in scene attendance activities and ensuring the ongoing competence of all scene attenders.

Considerable work has already been undertaken in this area. I am pleased to report that the Police Service will be in a position to achieve initial accreditation to ISO 17020 within the next 12 months, subject to assessment by the UK Accreditation Services. Accreditation will provide an authoritative statement of technical competence with a key focus on impartiality and consistency of activities carried out by our Scientific Support Branch, in the interest of criminal justice outcomes.

Public Protection

Muckamore Abbey Hospital Investigation

The Operation TURNSTONE investigation team has continued suspect interview and CCTV viewing processes throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is not possible to be definitive with regards to the timeframe for completion of the investigation. Additional resources have been recruited to supplement the investigative team's capacity. This resourcing uplift, of eight Detective Constables and one Detective Sergeant, is being implemented currently and is on track to complete by the end of November 2021.

To date:

- Over 1500 incidents requiring safeguarding/criminal referral have been generated
- 34 victims have been identified
- 24 suspects have now been arrested and interviewed in relation to hundreds of offences
- 3 files have been submitted to the Public Prosecution Service

CCTV viewing is 100% complete in terms of safeguarding and 65% complete from a criminal investigation perspective. It is now anticipated that CCTV footage review will be complete by the end of 2022. Suspect interview processes continue.

Increases in calls for service to Muckamore have now stabilised, returning to pre-investigation levels, following a series of multi-agency meetings and follow up by the neighbourhood policing team.

Ongoing liaison and support to the families of victims is provided by our investigative staff.

Mother and Baby Homes

The Police Service launched an investigation into the Mother and Baby Homes and Magdalene Laundries on 6 October 2021.

A dedicated phone line and email address has been established, resourced by members of the Historical Child Abuse Team to increase accessibility to victims who wish to report any historical abuse connected to this issue. Victims and survivors can also report to police through 101 and online channels.

A media campaign was launched by our Public Protection Branch at the beginning of October 2021, promoting the reporting pathways detailed above. This was reinforced by a social media campaign throughout October 2021.

Internal officer and staff briefings have taken place to ensure consistent understanding of reporting pathways and processes any investigations.

To date, five referrals have been received and are being investigated, with weekly review by a Detective Superintendent.

Following on from discussions at the last Board meeting in October, we have formally written to the Department of Health seeking assurances that all documentation will be retained for the purposes of criminal investigation.

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