



## **CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT TO NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**

**7 FEBRUARY 2019**

### **INTRODUCTION**

I am pleased to provide my first formal report since the reconstitution of the new Northern Ireland Policing Board. It is important that I put on record my personal thanks to the Chair, Vice Chair and to the Chief Executive and her staff for their support and oversight during the last two years, whilst the Board was not fully constituted.

The PSNI welcomes the return of its Policing Board, as accountability and transparency are essential values in policing for legitimacy and public confidence. In addition to proving challenge, Policing Board members can also be great advocates for policing to influence our strategy and plans, such as organisational representatives, legacy issues, stronger partnership working and good governance.

### **FINANCE UPDATE**

Similar to many public services, the PSNI continues to operate in an environment of continually shrinking budgets and over the past five years we have witnessed a reduction of £150m.

This year has been no different and has been compounded with rising costs in expenditure such as retrospective injury on duty awards, compensation payments, legal fees and additional costs in respect of holiday pay claims.

Despite the financial strain, we are projecting a break-even position by year end, but this has only become achievable due to significant additional funding received during the year from the Department of Justice.

Looking forward, we have no certainty around the potential policing budget for 2019-20. This lack of clarity places the PSNI in a difficult position when making decisions about the allocation of resources, cost reduction and service levels and could directly impact confidence in policing and front line services in Keeping People Safe.

This lack of clarity has been highlighted with the Department of Justice, as the time available to properly plan and respond to any budget settlement is now upon us. Any influence or support from the Policing Board would therefore be welcome in this area.

## **HUMAN RESOURCE UPDATE**

We currently have an establishment of 6702 officers (6735 actual headcount), 2533 police staff (2397 actual headcount), 282 part time reserve officers, in addition to over 500 managed service personnel.

Over the last year 366 police officers and 124 police staff have left the organisation. We have invested significantly in forecasting resource requirements (including EU Exit implications) and identifying creative solutions to ensure PSNI is adequately resourced to meet demand.

In terms of police officer recruitment, PSNI is due to launch the police trainee/student officer recruitment procurement process. This new contract is likely to see the next police officer recruitment process launched in Spring 2020.

The current police officer recruitment process (Campaign 5), launched in October 2018 resulted in 6,243 applications. Candidates are currently progressing through the assessment centre stage and it is anticipated that appointments will commence in Autumn 2019.

In relation to police staff external recruitment, this year has delivered 29 competitions including:- Three senior roles at Grade 5; Head of Human Resources, Head of Legal Services and Head of Corporate Communications. 21 external competitions are ongoing, mostly specialist roles within Occupational Health and Welfare, Estate Service, Finance and Air Support. All these posts have been approved through the Priority Based Resourcing process and will assist the organisation in meeting our operational objectives.

## **EU EXIT UPDATE**

As a Police Service we remain entirely apolitical on the issue of EU Exit and the ongoing negotiations. Our role throughout this process has been to offer our professional assessment on operational impacts for policing in Northern Ireland.

From a policing perspective, there are real challenges ahead. However, with the appropriate resources and clear, committed and collaborative coordination with our partners, we can continue delivering an effective service for our communities.

**Planning and Preparation** - Like all other Police Services, and indeed public services, PSNI has been asked to plan for a 'No Deal'. Our planning is being conducted in partnership with all other Public Departments in Northern Ireland.

Deputy Chief Constable Stephen Martin has overall responsibility for preparing the organisation for EU Exit. He is assisted by ACC Mark Hamilton, who is leading on work to ensure the PSNI is operationally prepared across a range of police responsibilities and functions, including hate crime, protests, human resources, estates and transport. Assistant Chief Constable Tim Mairs is leading work on resourcing, policy and police powers including the impacts on the European Justice and Home Affairs Measures.

**EU Exit Additional Resources** - In December 2018, the PSNI received £16.5m in EU Exit funding from the Treasury following the submission of a business case. We welcome this additional funding which will allow us to recruit a total of 308 additional officers and staff by April 2020 and make some investment in our estate, IT and infrastructure. The ethos of Policing with the Community has been central to our planning and the majority of the funding will go into frontline policing for border communities. Some of the funding will also go towards increasing our ability to tackle organised criminality.

**Cooperation with An Garda Síochána (AGS)** - Cooperation between PSNI and our colleagues in AGS continues to be strong and effective. This exists at every level between our organisations, from counter terrorism to road safety; illegal drug importation to rural crime and across immigration and excise offences. Many people live and work across the border and this often means local police investigating everyday matters such as road traffic collisions, missing persons and domestic disputes that involve people from a different jurisdiction. We will continue to work with our partners in AGS to ensure we will be in the best position possible to protect and serve our communities whatever the outcome of the EU Exit process. In line with these objectives, the Commissioner and I have most recently met on 4 February 2019.

**European Justice and Home Affairs Measures** - Many of the current collaborative powers and capabilities between the PSNI and AGS are facilitated by the European Justice and Home Affairs Measures. I, together with other Chief Constables across the UK have made public our concerns that any dilution of these powers will affect our ability to counter terrorism, serious and organised crime as well as deliver effective day-to-day policing on both sides of the border.

PSNI is linked into the work of the National Police Chiefs' Council and the National Crime Agency in relation to European Justice and Home Affairs Measures. However, we know that any alternatives to the current powers are likely to be slower, less effective and more resource intensive.

A new International Crime Coordination Centre (ICCC) is now fully operational and is working to ensure that UK law enforcement are prepared to use alternatives if we lose access to current tools and powers. This unit will support officers all Police Services to access alternatives and will engage with EU authorities in this regard.

**Mutual Aid** - Mutual aid has received significant media attention in recent weeks. While, at present, we do not have any reason to believe that we will need mutual aid, putting such plans in place forms part of our planning process.

Precautionary planning around mutual aid is something that happens every year across UK policing through the National Police Co-ordination Centre (NPoCC) based in London. Normally these plans are in place for the summer months but in 2019 the additional resources will be available from the date of EU Exit in line with national contingency planning.

Despite having plans in place every year, we have only ever called on mutual aid for public disorder in the summer of 2013. This was the year G8 took place in Fermanagh and the PSNI also faced some significant public disorder linked to parades and protests. Even though we make plans for mutual aid, we only ever call on it when it is absolutely necessary. While we always hope for the best, as a Police Service, we are statutorily obliged to plan for the worst.

## **LEGACY**

Legacy continues to place significant demands on PSNI resources, with a continuing financial impact, and possible impacts on current day confidence in policing.

Legacy Investigation Branch, with an establishment of 70 Officers and support staff has a caseload of 1134 incidents resulting in 1425 deaths. The review of these cases is complex and time consuming work, and unfortunately but inevitably this means that many victims and families continue to wait for answers in respect of the deaths of their loved ones.

Our response to the Stormont House Agreement (Draft) Bill Consultation has been submitted; whilst we await the establishment of the Historical Investigations Unit, the cost of dealing with the past will continue to impact upon the resources available for policing today.

Our Legacy Support Unit currently has carriage of over 850 civil litigation matters along with legacy inquests. The cost of resourcing this work is projected to be £1.79 million at the end of this financial year. To date, seven legacy inquests have been completed with verdicts delivered, along with a number completed pending delivery of verdicts, however there are currently 43 legacy inquests outstanding. The disclosure demands in respect of these cases continue to increase and as a result I have had to redeploy 25 Police Officers from other areas in order to meet these demands and avoid being found in contempt of court.

PSNI is part of a multi-agency bid for funding for Legacy Inquests through the DoJ, this bid is currently awaiting approval from HM Treasury, it is hoped that if approved, this will enable us to expand and restructure our existing resources to manage disclosure in respect of legacy inquests and litigation.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The PSNI, in partnership with the NIPB, completed a 10-week public consultation process on the Local Policing Review that ran from the 30 August until the 9 November 2018. Both the PSNI and the NIPB were committed to ensuring the maximum number of people and organisations participated in the public consultation, and at the close of the consultation there were 4328 individual responses, 87 events organised which was attended by 3,067 individuals, 14 organisational responses were also received. An analysis of the results is currently being finalised and we look forward to working with the Board in how we may jointly implement relevant findings to improve policing in Northern Ireland.

## **OPERATIONAL UPDATE**

**Security Threat** - Recent events in Derry/Londonderry have once again underlined the severity of the threat here in Northern Ireland. The car bomb outside the city courthouse on the evening of 19 January 2019 and the hijackings and security alerts that followed reflect the determination that exists within small groupings like the New IRA to exert control over the community through fear and violence.

Their determination to harm communities and our police officers is however overshadowed by the unified and committed voices of the vast majority who want a future that is focused on opportunity, employment, wellbeing and peace.

We are grateful for the overwhelming support emanating from the community in Derry/Londonderry and beyond and we are resolute in our commitment to ensure those responsible are brought to justice.

**Serious Crime** - In the last few weeks two murders have been carried out in Warrenpoint and Belfast which has left two families devastated and communities shocked. Detectives in Serious Crime Branch continue to investigate these senseless crimes with professionalism and commitment but need the help of the community to bring the offenders to justice.

Police continue to progress the investigation into the murder of Wayne Boylan in partnership with the community working to gather CCTV, conduct house to house enquiries and interview witnesses. Detectives are establishing a full sequence of events and would again appeal to the public to come forward with any information they may have.

The murder of Ian Ogle in both terms of its brutality and senselessness has also shocked the community. Detectives have effected eight arrests to date and conducted numerous searches in an attempt to locate evidence. The enquiry is at an early stage, is fast moving and has made tangible progress. Detectives believe they are rapidly building a picture of not only what happened at the time of the attack but the lead up to the incident over a number of months. Police would appeal for the cooperation of the public as the lines of enquiry are progressed and again for anyone with information to come forward.

**The Paramilitary Crime Task Force** - (PCTF) continue to work with the National Crime Agency and the HMRC to protect communities by tackling all forms of criminality linked to Paramilitarism. In the period from April 2018 – December 2018 PCTF conducted 393 searches, effected 172 arrests, charged and reported 131 persons and the courts have convicted 13 persons.

**Christmas Drink Driving Campaign** – during the recent drink driving campaign, which ran from 30 November 2018 to 1 January 2019, PSNI officers tested over 11,000 drivers which resulted in 322 arrests (a reduction of 10.6% arrests compared to same period last year). The youngest person detected was 14 years of age and the eldest was 83. It is disappointing that despite repeated and well publicised warnings a minority of people completely disregarded the safety of themselves and others by taking the shameful and incredibly dangerous risk of driving after drinking.

**Speeding Figures** - The Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership (NIRSP) which operates the 'speed detection vans' and administrated by PSNI, is seeing a rise in speed detections of approximately 21% year to date.

The main cause of this rise is the investment in new speed detection equipment in the vehicles. The improved technology also allows them to be used in low-light conditions, thereby extending the hours of usage to detect excess speed at night.

## **CONCLUSION**

This report provides a snapshot of how we are working as an organisation to keep people safe across a number of different aspects of policing. We look forward to discussing these matters in more detail in subsequent Board and Committee meetings.

On Monday 28 January 2019, I advised the Chair of the Policing Board of my intention to retire at the conclusion of my contract in June later this year. I am extremely honoured to have been offered an additional contract and for the confidence that the Policing Board has placed in me over the last five years. However, having thought long and carefully on the issue I have decided that it is the right time for me and the PSNI.

It has been a huge honour to have served the public through policing and, without doubt, the greatest privilege of my career has been to serve as Chief Constable of the PSNI for the last five years.