



Northern Ireland Audit Office

Continuous improvement arrangements in policing



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This report has been prepared under Section 29 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 for presentation to the Northern Ireland Assembly in accordance with Section 30 of the Act.

K J Donnelly
Comptroller and Auditor General

Northern Ireland Audit Office
3 March 2020

The Comptroller and Auditor General is the head of the Northern Ireland Audit Office. He, and the Northern Ireland Audit Office are totally independent of Government. He certifies the accounts of all Government Departments and a wide range of other public sector bodies; and he has statutory authority to report to the Assembly on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which departments and other bodies have used their resources.

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Executive Summary

Background

1. The Northern Ireland Policing Board (the Board) was established on 4 November 2001 by the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, which put the recommendations of the Patten Report on policing into practice. At the same time, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (the PSNI) came into being, replacing the Royal Ulster Constabulary.
2. Section 28 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 requires the Board to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions, and those of the Chief Constable, are exercised, having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The Board is required to prepare and publish a Performance Plan (known as the Policing Plan) for each financial year. This includes a section setting out how the continuous improvement arrangements are to be implemented. The Board also has to prepare and publish a performance summary in respect of the previous year.

Basis and scope of the audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General

3. As the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) for Northern Ireland, I am required under section 29 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 to audit the Policing Plan and performance summary and to send a report to the Board, the

Chief Constable and the Department of Justice for Northern Ireland (the Department).

The C&AG's certificate and audit opinion to the Assembly on the Northern Ireland Policing Board's Performance Summary and Performance Plan

4. In accordance with section 29 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 as amended¹, I certify that I have audited the Board's and the PSNI's:
 - performance summaries for the years ended 31 March 2018 and 31 March 2019; and
 - Policing Plan for the years ended 31 March 2019 and 31 March 2020.

Basis of my opinion:

5. I planned and performed my work to obtain all the information and explanations that I considered necessary in order to provide an opinion on whether:

- (i) **for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 Performance Summaries** – the Board has prepared and published a summary assessment of its own and the Chief Constable's performance in 2017-18 and in 2018-19, measured by performance

¹ Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003; The Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010

targets and performance measures against the Board's Business Plan and Policing Plan respectively. My work included examination, on a test basis, of the evidence supporting the performance indicators and measures set out in the 2017-18 Policing Plan; and

- (ii) for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 Policing Plan** – arrangements are in place to secure continuous improvements; the Policing Plan includes those matters prescribed in legislation; the arrangements for publishing the Policing Plan complied with those requirements; and the performance indicators and standards are reasonable.

Main findings of my review

6. I have given an unqualified audit opinion on the 2017-18 and 2018-19 Performance Summaries and the 2018-19 Policing Plan (**Appendix 1**). I have also raised a number of issues and recommendations for the attention of the Board and the PSNI. The most significant are set out in the following paragraphs.

On performance – The Policing Board and the PSNI

7. Performance measures are published for both the Board and the PSNI in the Board's Business Plan and the Policing

Plan respectively. The Board reported its performance in its Annual Reports for 2017-18 and 2018-19.

8. The PSNI has reported performance against the Policing Plan in its 2017-18 and 2018-19 Annual Reports. These reports are an adequate reflection of the objectives, measures and outcomes included in the 2017-18 Policing Plan which had been agreed by the Board prior to the last election.

On the 2018-19 and 2019-20 Policing Plan

9. In the absence of a legally constituted Board, following legal advice and as a pragmatic solution, the Department recommended that the 2017-18 Policing Plan (which was agreed by the full Board before the last election) should be rolled forward to 2018-19. The 2018-19 year falls within the span of the Board's Strategic Outcomes for Policing 2016-20 and therefore the approved strategic context was already in place. As the Board was not restored until December 2018, it was agreed to roll the Plan forward again into 2019-20 while work to develop a new plan for 2020-21 was undertaken.

Executive Summary

Update on the legislation supporting the continuous improvement arrangements

10. In my 2017 report, I noted that it was time for the Department of Justice to consider changes to the legislation underpinning the audit of continuous improvement, which has been in place since 2000. The role of the C&AG defined in the 2000 Act in respect of continuous improvement in Northern Ireland now appears to be unique in the UK, with the Department finding that many of the corresponding provisions to the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 in the UK have been repealed and, for the most part, 'best value' arrangements in England and Wales no longer apply to the police. Any such proposal would be subject to Ministerial approval.

Status of the Board

11. The Policing Board is an independent public body made up of 19 political and independent members. The nine independent members are appointed by the Justice Minister. The NI Assembly was dissolved from 26 January 2017 for an election in March 2017. At this date the Board members ceased to hold office. Following the election, as a NI Executive was not formed, no new political members were appointed to the Board and the Board was not legally constituted.

12. The Board was reconstituted on 1 December 2018 when the Secretary of State appointed three new independent Board Members, and ten political Members under the NI (Executive Formation and Execution of Functions) Act 2018 which received Royal Assent on 1 November 2018.

Summary of recommendations

The consultation and engagement between stakeholders, the Board and the PSNI on the Policing Plan should identify clear and appropriate outcomes, indicators and baselines which will demonstrate positive impacts for citizens and communities.

Measures and indicators should be based on timely and accurate data and appropriate baselines should be used to demonstrate the delivery of strategic outcomes.

Part One: Introduction and Background

Responsibilities of the Northern Ireland Policing Board

1.1 Under section 28 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, the Northern Ireland Policing Board (the Board) is required to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions, and those of the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (the PSNI), are exercised, with regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

1.2 The Board must prepare and publish a performance plan (known as the Policing Plan) each financial year, containing details of how these continuous improvement arrangements are to be implemented. In particular, the Policing Plan must:

- identify performance indicators, by reference to which performance in exercising functions can be measured;
- set performance outcomes to be met in relation to those performance indicators; and
- include a summary of the Board's assessment of:
 - its, and the Chief Constable's, performance in the previous financial year, measured by reference to performance indicators and measures; and
 - the extent to which any performance standard, which

applied at any time during that year was met.

1.3 In practice, the Board works in partnership with the PSNI to develop the Policing Plan and monitor and review progress in its implementation, within an overall context of continuous improvement.

Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

1.4 Under section 29 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, I am required to audit the Policing Plan (including the assessment of the previous financial year's performance) to establish whether it was prepared and published in accordance with the requirements of section 28 of the Act. Accordingly, I must issue a report (**Appendices 1 and 2**):

- certifying that I have audited the Policing Plan;
- stating whether I believe the Policing Plan was prepared and published in accordance with the requirements of section 28;
- stating whether I believe the performance indicators and measures are reasonable and, if appropriate, recommending changes to them;

- if appropriate, recommending how the Policing Plan should be amended so as to accord with the requirements of section 28; and
- recommending whether the Department of Justice should give a 'direction' to the Board, under section 31 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. Such a direction would require the Board to take appropriate corrective action to ensure compliance with the Act.

1.5 Under section 30 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, I may carry out an examination of the Board's compliance with the requirements of section 28 of the Act.

Scope of the review

1.6 During the course of the review, my staff liaised closely with the Policing Board and the PSNI. The Board was not legally constituted between 2 March 2017 and 1 December 2018. During this period the Board and the PSNI continued to pursue the objectives set out in the 2017-18 Plan. In February 2018, I published a report² summarising my audit of the 2017-18 Policing Plan.

1.7 My 2018 report identified a number of issues for the Board and the PSNI to address. The report contained several recommendations that are presented at **Appendix 3**, along with an update

from the PSNI and the Board on progress. Mindful of the circumstances of the Board and the PSNI, I have not exercised my discretion to complete a review of continuous improvement arrangements this year.

1.8 My findings are set out as follows:

- **Part Two: Review of Performance:** summarising the Boards and the Chief Constable's performance in 2017-18 and 2018-19 and the extent to which performance standards were met; and
- **Part Three: Review of the Policing Plan:** considering whether the Policing Plan meets the Board's statutory obligations and whether proposed performance indicators and measures are reasonable.

² *Continuous improvement arrangements in policing*: Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General 27 February 2018, <https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/sites/niao/files/media-files/Continuous%20Improvement%20in%20Policing%202018.pdf>

Part Two: Review of Performance

Introduction

- 2.1 The Board is required to report, each year, a summary of its assessment of:
- its, and the Chief Constable's, performance in the previous financial year, measured by reference to performance indicators; and
 - the extent to which any performance standard which applied at any time during that year was met.
- 2.2 In this part of the report, I consider whether the performance summaries published in the annual reports for 2017-18 and 2018-19 meet the statutory obligations of the Board and the PSNI.

are identified and grouped into three themes/outcomes (see figure 1), each with measures against which to gauge performance.

- 2.4 In the Annual Business Plan for 2017-18⁴ each of the three Outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan are divided into two or three Indicators (described as Measures in the Corporate Plan). Each Indicator then has between two and twelve Measures which allow progress on each Indicator to be assessed – a total of 45 measures. This represents a further small reduction in the number of targets from previous years (2016-17:47, 2015-16:48 targets)
- 2.5 In accordance with the legislation, the Board's performance was summarised in the 2017-18 annual report⁵.

Figure 2 presents a summary of the Board's performance against the 2017-18 business plan. Of the eleven measures reported as not having been achieved, ten were not met due to the absence of a legally constituted Board during the period. Of the remainder 29

Policing Board performance

- 2.3 The Board's Corporate Plan for the period 2017-2020³ sets out the Board's Purpose, Vision and Values and outlines the key challenges envisaged during the period. Seven key priority areas of work

Figure 1: Summary of Themes, Outcomes and Measures

Theme/Outcome	Theme/Outcome Narrative	Priority
1	We have an effective, efficient and continually improving police service, Policing Board and Police and Community Safety Partnerships	1,6
2	We have trust and confidence in policing.	2,4,5
3	We have a safe community, where we respect the law and each other.	3,7

Source: NIAO summary based on NIPB Corporate Plan 2017-2020

3 NI Policing Board Corporate Plan 2017-2020 <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/sites/nipb/files/publications/corporate-plan-2017-2020.PDF>

4 NI Policing Board Business Plan 2017-18 <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/sites/nipb/files/media-files/business-plan-1718-year-end-assessment.pdf>

5 NI Policing Board Annual Report and Accounts 2017-18 <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/sites/nipb/files/Annual-Report-and-Accounts-1-April-2017.pdf>

were reported as fully achieved (64 per cent) and five were reported as partially achieved (11 per cent).

supported by Measures. In the Business Plan, the Corporate Plan “Measures” are referred to as “Indicators” and there

Figure 2: Policing Board performance against the Corporate Business Plan Outcomes 2017-18

Outcome	Measures	Fully Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
We have an effective, efficient and continually improving police service, Policing Board and Police and Community Safety Partnerships.	27	15	4	8
We have trust and confidence in policing.	12	8	1	3
We have a safe community, where we respect the law and each other.	6	6	-	-
Total	45	29	5	11

Source: NI Policing Board Annual Report 2017-18

2.6 The Performance Analysis section in the Board’s Annual Report for 2017-18 notes that performance against the Business Plan is normally reported quarterly to the Board, the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team. During 2017-18 and much of 2018-19, as the Board was not legally constituted, quarterly reports were submitted instead to the Chair and also to the Department of Justice which is the sponsor department.

2.7 In my April 2017 report (paragraph 1.6), I recommended that the Board should ensure that it is consistent in its presentation of information when reporting performance. There remains some inconsistency of terminology between the Corporate Plan and the Business Plan. The Corporate Plan specifies three Themes/Outcomes

are different “Measures” underlying each of the Indicators. The Annual Report classification follows that of the Business Plan.

2.8 The performance information in the Board’s Annual Report reproduces information from the Board’s Business Plan and is consistent with it, rather than the Corporate Plan. The Annual Report also contains additional background narrative. The reason for measures either being partially or not achieved was presented as due to the absence of a legally constituted Board during the year.

2.9 The Board’s performance in 2018-19 is summarised at **Figure 3**.

Part Two: Review of Performance

Figure 3: Policing Board performance against the Corporate Business Plan Outcomes 2018-19

Outcome	Measures	Fully Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
We have an effective, efficient and continually improving police service, Policing Board and Police and Community Safety Partnerships.	33	21	7	5
We have trust and confidence in policing.	13	7	4	2
We have a safe community, where we respect the law and each other.	7	6	1	-
Total	53	34	12	7

Source: NI Policing Board Annual Report 2018-19

2.10 The Board's performance improved compared to 2017-18. Of the total measures, 34 (64 per cent) were fully achieved and 12 (23 per cent) partially achieved.

2.12 As a result of recommendations made by the Comptroller and Auditor General in his previous reports on Continuous improvement arrangements in policing that the number of strategic outcomes should be reduced to allow more focus on the most important aspects of policing performance, the number of strategic outcomes was reduced from 12 to nine. These are set out at **Figure 4**. The revised outcomes were supported by 25 performance measures and 11 lower level targets, a reduction from 26 high level performance measures and 13 lower level targets.

PSNI performance 2017-18 and 2018-19

2.11 The Policing Plan for 2017-18⁶ set out how the PSNI would deliver the second year of the "Strategic Outcomes for Policing 2016-20"⁷. The Plan reflected the five key themes set out in the Strategic Outcomes document. The Plan also contained an appendix showing the objectives and performance indicators to be achieved for each measure.

⁶ NI Policing Board Annual Policing Plan 2017-18 <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/sites/nipb/files/media-files/nipb-annual-policing-plan-2017-2018.PDF>

⁷ NI Policing Board Strategic Outcomes for Policing in Northern Ireland 2016-2020 <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/sites/nipb/files/publications/Strategic-outcomes-for-policing-2016-2020.pdf>

Figure 4: Strategic Outcomes for Policing 2016-2020

Theme	Strategic Outcome
1. Communication and Engagement	1.1 Trust and confidence in policing throughout Northern Ireland
	1.2 PSNI engages with communities to improve understanding of the impact of policing decisions, involving communities where possible in those decisions.
2. Protection of people and communities	2.1 Harm caused by crime and anti-social behaviour is reduced, with a focus on protecting the most vulnerable, including repeat victims.
	2.2 People are safe on the roads.
3. Reduction in offending	3.1 Identify and intervene with priority offenders.
	3.2 Address serious and organised crime.
	3.3 Address paramilitarism.
4. More efficient and effective delivery of justice	4.1 Achieve an effective partnership with the Public Prosecution Service and the wider Criminal Justice agencies to deliver more positive outcomes for victims.
5. More efficient and effective policing	5.1 An efficient and effective police service.

Source: NIAO summary based on Policing Plan 2017-18

- 2.13 The PSNI's Annual Report and Accounts 2017-18⁸ contains a section setting out Performance against the Policing Plan, and shows the status of each measure - Achieved, Partially Achieved or Not Achieved. Out of a total of 25 measures only one, 5.1.5 relating to increasing the number of officers and staff available for full duties, was reported as not being met. The others were reported as either Achieved or Partially Achieved.
- 2.14 The PSNI report on Performance against the Policing Plan should be read in conjunction with the Board's Assessment of the PSNI Performance against the Policing Plan 2017-18, which was issued in April 2019.⁹
- 2.15 In the absence of a legally constituted Board, and following legal advice, the Policing Plan for 2017-18 was rolled forward into 2018-19. Progress against the Policing Plan is reported in the PSNI's Annual Report and Accounts for 2018-19.
- 2.16 The PSNI's narrative in its report on Performance against the Policing Plan broadly reflects the objectives, measures and outcomes included in the Policing Plan and provides supporting information on each objective. However,

8 Police Service of Northern Ireland Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2018 <https://www.psni.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-departments/finance-and-support-services/documents/2018-psni-main-report.pdf>

9 NI Policing Board Assessment of the PSNI Performance against the Policing Plan 2017-18 <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/sites/nipb/files/publications/board-assessment-psni-performance-policing-plan-201718.PDF>

Part Two: Review of Performance

the narrative tends to be focused at an operational level, describing activity, and stating what was “done” during the year. It is not always clear how performance during the year met the outcomes and performance indicators set out in Appendix 1 of the Policing Plan and consequently it is difficult to see clearly how far individual measures were achieved, what added value could be attributed to the initiatives carried out during the year, and how PSNI was meeting, or progressing towards, the outcomes envisaged in the Plan.

- 2.17 The PSNI assessment of the 2017-18 year designates a status of Achieved, Partially Achieved or Not Achieved to each measure. However for 2018-19, while it is clear that work has been ongoing in each area, there is no assessment made of the status achieved.
- 2.18 In previous reports I have recommended review of the strategic outcomes and key performance indicators to allow more focus on demonstrating improvement in policing performance. While work has been ongoing in this area, further progress remains necessary. In addition, reporting should be transparent and clearly linked to the underlying performance indicators.

Conclusion

- 2.19 Performance against the Corporate Plan and the Business Plan is consistently disclosed in the Board Annual Report and Accounts. The objectives, measures and outcomes in the Policing Plan are adequately reflected in the PSNI Annual Reports.

Part Three:

Review of the Policing Plan 2018-19

Introduction

- 3.1 In this part of the report, I consider;
- whether the Policing Plan for 2018-19 meets the Board's statutory obligations; and
 - Whether the proposed performance measures are reasonable.
- 3.2 The 2017-18 Policing Plan had been developed in consultation with Board members and the PSNI. As no NI Executive was formed following the March 2017 election, new political members could not be appointed to the Board, and the Board was not legally constituted.
- 3.3 In November 2017, Board officials sought legal advice which confirmed that the Board's responsibilities for progressing the development, consultation and publication of a Policing Plan and Performance Plan are core functions of a properly constituted Policing Board. While Board and PSNI officials were able to progress preliminary work in developing the 2018-19 plans, they could not make the required assessments in order to prepare draft plans for consultation.
- 3.4 Following legal advice, and as a pragmatic solution, the Department recommended that the 2017-18 Policing Plan (which was agreed by the full Board before the last election) should be rolled forward to 2018-19. The 2018-19 year falls within the span of the

Board's Strategic Outcomes for Policing 2016-20 and therefore the approved strategic context was already in place.

- 3.5 The Board was reconstituted on 1 December 2018 when the Secretary of State appointed three new independent Board Members, and ten political Members under the NI (Executive Formation and Execution of Functions) Act 2018 which had received Royal Assent on 1 November 2018.

Development of the Policing Plan 2019-20

- 3.6 In the Board's absence, officials continued to work in partnership with the PSNI to discuss how best to meet their statutory responsibilities and to monitor PSNI performance.
- 3.7 Due to the short time between the Board being reconstituted on 1 December 2018 and the deadline of 31 March 2019 for the 2019-20 Policing Plan to be published, it was agreed by the Board that the most pragmatic solution would be to retain the basis of the previous Policing Plan, but to reduce the number of measures.
- 3.8 In my previous reports I have recommended a reduction in the number of performance indicators and measures. As 2020 is the last year of the current Strategic Outcomes for Policing 2016-20, this will allow time for a full review of the approach to developing strategic

outcomes and a more outcomes based methodology.

Conclusion

- 3.9 Some progress towards developing an outcomes-based approach has been made. Effective consultation and engagement leading to the new Strategic Outcomes for Policing will be essential.

Recommendations

The consultation and engagement between stakeholders, the Board and the PSNI on the Policing Plan should identify clear and appropriate outcomes, indicators and baselines which will demonstrate positive impacts for citizens and communities.

Measures and indicators should be based on timely and accurate data, and appropriate baselines should be used to demonstrate the delivery of strategic outcomes.

Appendix 1: *(paragraph 1.4)* The Comptroller and Auditor General's certificate and opinion to the Assembly on the Northern Ireland Policing Board's Performance Summary and Performance Plan

1. In accordance with section 29 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 as amended, I certify that I have audited the Northern Ireland Policing Board and Police Service of Northern Ireland's:
 - performance summary for the year ended 31 March 2018; and
 - performance plan for the year ended 31 March 2019.

Basis of my opinion

Audit of the Performance Summary

2. I planned and performed my work to obtain all the information and explanations that I considered necessary in order to provide an opinion on whether the Northern Ireland Policing Board has prepared and published a summary of the Board's assessment of its own, and the Chief Constable's, performance in 2017-18, measured by reference to performance indicators and performance standards.
3. My work comprised a review and assessment and, where appropriate, examination on a test basis of the evidence supporting performance against the indicators and standards as prescribed in the 2017-18 Performance Plan. I obtained sufficient evidence to satisfy myself that the summary provided includes those matters prescribed in legislation, and that the arrangements for publishing the summary complied with those requirements.

Audit of the Performance Plan

4. I planned and performed my work to obtain all the information and explanations that I considered necessary in order to provide an opinion on whether:
 - the plan has been prepared and published in accordance with statutory requirements; and
 - the performance indicators and performance measures for 2018-19 are reasonable.
 5. My work comprised a review and assessment of the plan and, where appropriate, examination on a test basis of relevant evidence sufficient to satisfy me that arrangements to secure continuous improvement are in place, that the plan includes those matters prescribed in legislation, and that the arrangements for publishing the plan complied with those requirements.
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Appendix 1: (continued)

Opinion

6. In my opinion:

- the Northern Ireland Policing Board has prepared and published its and the Police Service of Northern Ireland's performance summary for the year ended 31 March 2018 in accordance with the requirements of section 28 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000;
- the Northern Ireland Policing Board has prepared and published its Policing Plan for the year ended 31 March 2019, as required by the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000; and
- the performance indicators included within the Policing Plan 2018-19 are reasonable.

Recommendation to the Department of Justice

7. Under section 29 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, I am required to make a recommendation as to whether the Department of Justice should issue a direction to the Policing Board under section 31 of the Act.
8. On the basis of my work, I do not recommend that the Department of Justice issues a direction under section 31 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.



Kieran Donnelly

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21 February 2020

Appendix 2:

The Comptroller and Auditor General's certificate and opinion to the Assembly on the Northern Ireland Policing Board's Performance Summary and Performance Plan

1. In accordance with section 29 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 as amended, I certify that I have audited the Northern Ireland Policing Board and Police Service of Northern Ireland's:
 - performance summary for the year ended 31 March 2019; and
 - performance plan for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Basis of my opinion

Audit of the Performance Summary

2. I planned and performed my work to obtain all the information and explanations that I considered necessary in order to provide an opinion on whether the Northern Ireland Policing Board has prepared and published a summary of the Board's assessment of its own, and the Chief Constable's, performance in 2018-19, measured by reference to performance indicators and performance standards.
3. My work comprised a review and assessment and, where appropriate, examination on a test basis of the evidence supporting performance against the indicators and standards as prescribed in the 2018-19 Performance Plan. I obtained sufficient evidence to satisfy myself that the summary provided includes those matters prescribed in legislation, and that the arrangements for publishing the summary complied with those requirements.

Audit of the Performance Plan

4. I planned and performed my work to obtain all the information and explanations that I considered necessary in order to provide an opinion on whether:
 - the plan has been prepared and published in accordance with statutory requirements; and
 - the performance indicators and performance measures for 2019-20 are reasonable.
 5. My work comprised a review and assessment of the plan and, where appropriate, examination on a test basis of relevant evidence sufficient to satisfy me that arrangements to secure continuous improvement are in place, that the plan includes those matters prescribed in legislation, and that the arrangements for publishing the plan complied with those requirements.
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Appendix 2: (continued)

Opinion

6. In my opinion:

- the Northern Ireland Policing Board has prepared and published its and the Police Service of Northern Ireland's performance summary for the year ended 31 March 2019 in accordance with the requirements of section 28 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000;
- the Northern Ireland Policing Board has prepared and published its Policing Plan for the year ended 31 March 2020, as required by the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000; and
- the performance indicators included within the Policing Plan 2019-20 are reasonable.

Recommendation to the Department of Justice

7. Under section 29 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, I am required to make a recommendation as to whether the Department of Justice should issue a direction to the Policing Board under section 31 of the Act.
8. On the basis of my work, I do not recommend that the Department of Justice issues a direction under section 31 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.



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21 February 2020

Appendix 3:

Progress on Recommendations in the Comptroller and Auditor General's Report

NIAO Continuous improvement arrangements in policing Report 2018

NIAO Recommendation	NIPB/PSNI Response	Progress as at 31 March 2019
<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>Through engagement and partnership with other stakeholders, the Board and the PSNI should more clearly link outcomes, indicators and baselines to demonstrate positive impacts on citizens and communities, aligned with wider PfG outcomes and indicators. Performance measures and indicators should be based on timely and accurate data, identifying appropriate baselines and demonstrating the delivery of strategic outcomes.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>Assuming that the Policing Board is fully constituted during the 2018-19 financial year, a new Policing Plan and Performance Plan for 2019-20 will be developed which will fully implement this recommendation. Baselines will be identified and evidenced by adopting the 'Turning-the-Curve' exercise in order to clearly demonstrate PSNI performance in achieving key performance indicators and delivering agreed outcomes.</p> <p>Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) recognises the importance of partnership working to address outcomes and, as a result, engagement with stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sectors will be vital in developing appropriate indicators and outcomes for the Policing Plan and Performance Plan.</p>	<p>Moving from the existing framework of the 2016-2020 Strategic Outcomes for Policing to an outcomes based framework is a significant undertaking, particularly in terms of engagement and collaboration with key delivery partners. Given that the Board was not reconstituted until December 2018, with the first meeting in January 2019, there was insufficient time to progress this recommendation adequately, given the significant conceptual and practical changes needed.</p> <p>Legal advice from the Crown Solicitor's Office confirmed that Board officials could not develop or consult on any draft Policing Plan or Performance Plan document in the absence of a fully constituted Board as this would involve essentially anticipating Members' positions with regard to the identification of appropriate outcomes, indicators, measures and baselines. Therefore, officials in PSNI and the Board had to await reconstitution before developing a new Policing Plan.</p> <p>As a pragmatic solution, the PSNI and the Board worked in collaboration to reduce the number of measures in the Policing Plan set within the framework of the final reporting year of the Strategic Outcomes for Policing 2016-20. Planning activity has already begun in both organisations for the 2020-2024 period which will see the implementation of this recommendation.</p>

Appendix 3: (continued)

NIAO Recommendation	NIPB/PSNI Response	Progress as at 31 March 2019
<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>The consistent subsuming of projects into new or other projects in the PSNI continuous improvement programme makes assessment of the delivery of objectives difficult. The PSNI must ensure that timescales set for the full completion and implementation of continuous improvement projects are realistic and that sufficient resources are available to complete projects as planned.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The PSNI will ensure that the governance process through the established ServiceFirst Board will continuously monitor the progress of project delivery and, when justified, will make strategic decisions to alter the course of project direction. Alterations will be managed through the PSNI's project management methodology and discussed/agree with the NIPB.</p> <p>The PSNI have identified the need to increase resources to support and complete the change programmes and will recruit business improvement skills into their Corporate Development Team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous Improvement Projects are being managed under project management methodology and governance which includes the following main stages: • Terms of Reference approved by Service Change Board (previously either ServiceFirst Board or PBR Board or Priority Based Resourcing Board, both chaired by DCC). • New governance process implemented for Business Cases, which includes validation by heads of department and their head of finance. Business cases are reviewed and registered with Economic Advisory Team for traceability through to Post Implementation Review stages (PIR Part A and Part B). • Business Cases are in a standard format (10 Step as per NIGAE format). • Solution design (when applicable) will be reviewed and approved at Governance boards. • Variation or deviation from original Terms of Reference will be reviewed by Governance Board and decisions made on approval will be informed to NIPB (for example, Priority Based Resourcing Project and Demand Profiling Project – justification of change issued by DCC Harris to NIPB in May 2018).

Appendix 3: (continued)

NIAO Recommendations	NIPB/PSNI Response	Progress as at 31 March 2019
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Implementation Review – Part A and Part B follow the governance process as described against Recommendation 3 below. • Corporate Development Team introduced a tracking report for all change projects which is presented to Service Change Board (previously ServiceFirst Board and PBR Board). Significant progress has been made in terms of compliance with the process stages mentioned above. • Service Change Board will receive updates at each board meeting and if project changes are required, these will be brought to Service Change Board for review and decision. • PSNI will report on projects to NIPB against a schedule set by NIPB for 2019-20 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policing with the Community – 30th May 2019 • Custody – 21st November 2019 • Working Together – 19th December 2019 • Policing with the Community – 30th December 2019 <p>Regarding resourcing, Corporate Development Team is currently recruiting additional staff in order to support the organisation's change programmes. Meanwhile current Corporate Development Team members are assigned and prioritised to support current change projects.</p>

Appendix 3: (continued)

NIAO Recommendations	NIPB/PSNI Response	Progress as at 31 March 2019
<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>The PSNI should ensure that all Post Project Evaluations are completed in accordance with PSNI procedures on a timely basis after the completion of a project.</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>The PSNI will ensure that Post Project Evaluations for continuous improvement projects are planned and conducted in accordance with the established project management process. Progress will be reported to, and monitored by, ServiceFirst Board.</p>	<p>New governance procedures through which we monitor and track PPEs to completion were introduced in 2018. Revised evaluation guidance has been issued to colleagues in the Service reminding them of their roles and responsibilities. This guidance is also available on PoliceNet. Training workshops were conducted by the Economic Advisory Team on 24 April 2018.</p> <p>Outstanding PPEs are reported to Service Performance Board (previously PASET) for review and action when applicable.</p> <p>The process continues to be under review.</p>

NIAO Reports 2018 and 2019

Title	Date Published
2018	
Continuous improvement arrangements in policing	27 February 2018
Type 2 Diabetes Prevention and Care	06 March 2018
Financial Auditing and Reporting: General Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland – 2017	13 March 2018
Speeding up justice: avoidable delay in the criminal justice system	27 March 2018
Performance management for outcomes: A good practice guide for public bodies	15 June 2018
The National Fraud Initiative: Northern Ireland	19 June 2018
Local Government Auditor’s Report – 2018	04 September 2018
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The Financial Health of Schools	16 October 2018
The UK Border: How prepared is Northern Ireland for exiting the EU? (website only)	26 October 2018
The Social Investment Fund	08 November 2018
Eradicating Bovine TB in Northern Ireland	27 November 2018
General Report on the Health and Social Care Sector	18 December 2018
2019	
Welfare Reforms in Northern Ireland	17 January 2019
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Follow-up reviews in the Health and Social Care Sector: Locum Doctors and Patient Safety	09 April 2019
Making partnerships work: A good practice guide for public bodies	30 April 2019
Mental Health in the criminal justice system	14 May 2019
Management of the NI Direct Strategic Partner Project – helping to deliver Digital Transformation	14 June 2019
Local Government Auditor’s Report - 2019	17 June 2019
Financial Auditing and Reporting: General Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland - 2018	26 July 2019
Performance improvement in local government: A good practice briefing (website only)	27 September 2019
Major Capital Projects	19 December 2019



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