



# Annual Business Plan 2024 – 2025

## Foreword

The Office of the Police Ombudsman's Corporate Plan for 2024-2027 sets out the five strategic objectives that we want to deliver.

The objectives for the Office are driven by our vision and values based around the themes of fairness and a human rights based approach, accountability, learning from our work to improve policing standards and practices, and sustainable and ethical use of our resources.

They are also influenced by the changing nature of Northern Ireland society, the new legislation relating to the investigation of Legacy cases and the Northern Ireland Executive's priorities contained in the draft Programme for Government.

We are therefore aspiring to:

- Deliver contemporary policing oversight that improves today's policing by investigation allegations and sharing our insights
- Improve victims' and survivors' confidence in the justice system and support the Executive Office's Ending Violence Against Woman and Girls strategy
- Develop our digital capabilities in support of the Safer Communities Executive priority
- Transform our operating model to reflect current fiscal realities, improve our effectiveness, and enhance the confidence of the public/police in our service.

The five strategic objectives are high-level aims that we seek to achieve over the next three years and will be reviewed annually by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), to ensure they remain relevant given anticipated changes in the operational, social and financial environments.

The objectives are:

**Objective 1:** Deliver the Transformational Change Programme, ensuring effective communication internally and externally on its progress.

**Objective 2:** Continue to provide a high quality, human rights compliant, complaints and investigation service that achieves fair and appropriate outcomes for the public and police.

**Objective 3:** Support, value and invest in our staff and maximise growth in the areas of leadership, learning and development, and standards.

**Objective 4:** Establish and maintain effective external relationships with stakeholders in a consistent, fair and lawful manner.

**Objective 5:** Be ethical and accountable for our service delivery and use of resources including human, financial and other resources, and to ensure sustainability for the Office in order to protect those resources and the environment.

This Annual Plan supports the delivery of Year 1 of the Corporate Plan 2024-27 across a 12-month period. It explains what we will do and what information we will use to evaluate our performance and if we have made progress towards achieving our outcomes.

The Balanced Score Card outlined in the Plan will be used to help quantify the progress towards our aims.

We will report progress on this Plan each quarter to the Department of Justice who in turn will be able to assess our impact using the empirical information.

**Hugh Hume, Chief Executive**

## Annual Business Plan 2024/25

### Accountability and Governance

Each Department will assess its achievement against the objectives set out in the business plan for the accounting year. Annual appraisals with staff will reflect their roles in achieving the business plan objectives.

The Police Ombudsman and Chief Executive will hold Directors to account for the delivery of the relevant business plan objectives. The Chief Executive as Accounting Officer will provide a report on the achievement against business objectives to the Permanent Secretary of DOJ in accordance with the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM).

Overall Office performance against all business plan objectives will be assessed using the balanced scorecard and communicated to, and discussed at, Audit and Risk Committee.

### Our Annual Business Plan 2024/25

The following business objectives identified in the three year strategic plan, approved by the Police Ombudsman, will be addressed in 2024-25 via the objectives outlined in the Balanced Scorecard (see appendix A) and ELT, with the support of SLT, will develop internal plans to achieve the actions outlined below.

The plan sets out the activities of the Office and how they support the delivery of each of the strategic aims. The plan is a combination of regular 'business as usual' activity and initiatives to deliver specific pieces of work. It addresses also the impact of the Transformational Change on our people, premises, systems and operations.

**Objective 1:** Deliver the Transformational Change Programme, ensuring effective communication internally and externally on its progress.

- Deliver the procurement of a new Case Handling System (CHS).
- Embed a Legacy Investigation team and related work plan for the investigation of Non-Troubles related legacy matters.
- Embed a structure for the Legal Team and Disclosure Unit.
- Finalise and engrain a Terms of Reference and establish a new Legacy Operations Board.
- Complete Information Sharing Agreements with ICRIR and Omagh Bombing Inquiry.
- Update the Disclosure Manual to take account of the ICRIR and Omagh Bombing Inquiry.
- Embed a new policy for dealing with Non-Troubles related legacy complaints.
- Deliver on a structure and resourcing model for the Investigations and Impact Departments.
- Complete a strategy to support internal and external communication.
- Establish a fully functioning Technical Support Team.
- Complete a review of the use of technology in investigations in support of the RESET Programme.

- Embed a process in relation to Business Process Maps for the Complaints Office Team.
- Complete a review of governance arrangements to support the new structures and embed any necessary changes.

**Objective 2:** Continue to provide a high quality human rights compliant complaints and investigation service that achieves fair and appropriate outcomes for the public and police.

- Embed a cross-departmental schedule for publication of Category A investigations.
- Implement a strategy for enhancing investigation capabilities and response to complaints and other matters relating to Abuse of Position for Sexual Purposes cases with review to ensure this is effective.
- Support the work of the CJINI Inspection into Abuse of Position cases and implement recommendations where appropriate.
- Complete 70% of fully investigated Category C investigations within 90 days.
- Complete 60% of fully investigated Category B investigations within 120 days
- Complete at least 15 Category A Investigations.
- Publish at least 12 Regulation 20 Reports or Closure Letters regarding Category A investigations.
- Deliver on a suitable 'Walk In' policy and protocol for the organisation.
- Achieve a mechanism for the analysis of customer service complaints and user information in order to improve the customer experience and investigations, and reduce complaints.
- Establish 'bite-size' learning with Investigations and the Legal Department.
- Complete 18 external reports on Troubles-related investigations.
- Review and finalise the criteria and policy for commencing Section 60A investigations.
- Review the terms of reference for the existing Quality Improvement Committee and ensure it is fit for purpose.
- Achieve a mechanism to ensure 95% of new complaints are added to the Case Handling System (CHS) within 10 working days of receipt.
- Complaints Officers to contact the complainant within 2 working days of allocation or set a complaints office strategy outlining steps to be taken.
- Complete a focused inspection on time taken for PSNI PSD and PPS to provide responses to recommendations.

**Objective 3:** Support, value and invest in our staff and maximise growth in the areas of leadership, learning and development and standards.

- Produce a revised induction programme for new investigation staff.
- Embed the Terms of Reference for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and its role in strategy and operational aims of the Office.
- Achieve a successful mentoring arrangement with other Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) over the course of the plan.
- Deliver on a People Strategy to support the Strategic and Corporate Plan.
- To complement and support the People Strategy, a Learning and Development strategy to be delivered to ensure staff are developed to the highest level possible.
- Accomplish a programme of leadership and management development.

- Re-emphasise the Office values by engaging with staff and promoting how these are demonstrated to ensure they are embedded in workplace culture.

**Objective 4:** Establish and maintain effective external relationships with stakeholders in a consistent, fair and lawful manner.

- Continue to develop cross-jurisdictional learning opportunities and relationships with other police oversight bodies over the course of the three year plan.
- Finalise and review over the course of the plan an Operating Protocol to compliment the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the PPS.
- Complete an Operating Protocol with PSNI PSD in relation to police misconduct.
- Improve standards of written communication with service users to better explain our findings and recommendations and review over the three year period.
- Finalise a MOU with the NIPB supported by a Data Sharing agreement.
- Review the Security Service MOU and adapt if necessary.
- Complete a review of the effectiveness of policy recommendations made to PSNI.
- Develop a strategic approach to National Preventative Mechanism (NPM) and Data Sharing Agreements with other oversight bodies.
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to ensure all MOUs are fit for purpose and continually reviewed.
- Finalise the Retention and Disposal Schedule with PRONI to be presented to the Assembly and formally enacted.

**Objective 5:** Be ethical and accountable for our service delivery and use of resources including human, financial and other resources and to ensure sustainability for the Office in order to protect those resources and the environment.

### Reporting Progress

We will report on progress in several ways. This includes reporting that is required by statute in a single document (the Annual Report and Accounts) and that required by our Management Statement and Financial Memorandum with the DOJ and our Corporate Governance framework.

#### Annually

We will report achievements against the outlined strategic objectives and business plans through the Police Ombudsman's Annual Report and Accounts. This Report will be published annually in accordance with schedule 3 of the 1998 Act and will be laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly as the document of record for the Office.

#### Other Reporting

In order to maintain confidence in the Office and the police complaints system in Northern Ireland, achievement and progress on this Plan will also be reported through other mechanisms as required including:

1. Reporting performance against plan to the Department of Justice.
2. Scrutiny by the Committee for Justice of the Northern Ireland Assembly.
3. Section 60A reports on policy and practice investigations.
4. Publication of Annual Report on Accounts and Annual Business plans.

5. Ensuring Data Protection and Freedom of Information obligations are met in respect of information requests.
6. Reporting and updating staff as part of internal communications plans.
7. Stakeholder engagement with a range of stakeholders, including the public, PSNI, criminal justice bodies, other regulatory and oversight bodies, representative and advocacy bodies with an interest in our work.
8. Internal monthly monitoring of the Balance Scorecard against Business Plan objectives.

## APPENDIX A

### 2024-25 BALANCED SCORECARD AIMS, TARGETS AND MEASURES

Year	Key Aim 1: Deliver the Transformational Change Programme, ensuring effective communication internally and externally on its progress	Key Aim 2: Continue to provide high quality human rights compliant investigation services that achieve fair and appropriate outcomes for the public and police.	Key Aim 3: Support, value and invest in our staff and maximise growth in the areas of leadership, learning and development and standards	Key Aim 4: Establish and maintain effective external relationships with stakeholders in a consistent, fair and lawful manner	Key Aim 5: Be ethical and accountable for our service delivery and use of resources including human, financial and other resources and to ensure sustainability for the Office in order to protect those resources and the environment
2024-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commence procurement of a new Case Handling System</li> <li>• Establish a Legacy Investigation team and related work plan for the investigation of Non-Troubles related legacy matters</li> <li>• Establish a structure for the Legal Team and Disclosure Unit</li> <li>• Develop a Terms of Reference and establish a new Legacy Operations Board</li> <li>• Complete Information Sharing Agreements with ICRIR and Omagh Bombing Inquiry</li> <li>• Update the Disclosure Manual to take account of the ICRIR and Omagh Bombing Inquiry</li> <li>• Develop a new policy for dealing with Non-Troubles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a cross-departmental schedule for publication of Cat A investigations.</li> <li>• Implement a strategy for enhancing investigation capabilities and response to complaints and other matters relating to Abuse of Position for Sexual Purposes cases</li> <li>• Support the work of the CJINI Inspection into Abuse of Position cases and implement recommendations where appropriate</li> <li>• Complete 70% of fully investigated Cat C investigations within 90 days</li> <li>• Complete 60% of fully investigated Cat B investigations within 120 days</li> <li>• Complete at least 15 Cat A Investigations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and implement a revised induction programme for new investigation staff</li> <li>• Embed the Terms of Reference for the Senior Leadership Team and its role in strategy and operational aims of the Office</li> <li>• Develop a Mentoring arrangement with other ALBs</li> <li>• Develop a People Strategy to support the Strategic and Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Learning and Development to be progressed in support of the People Strategy</li> <li>• Develop a programme of leadership and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop cross-jurisdictional learning opportunities and relationships with other Police Oversight bodies</li> <li>• Finalise and implement an Operating Protocol to compliment the MOU with the PPS</li> <li>• Develop an Operating Protocol with PSNI PSD in relation to police misconduct</li> <li>• Improve standards of written communication with service users to better explain our findings and recommendations</li> <li>• Establish a new MOU with the NIPB supported</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure Finance function is fully operational with monthly management accounts</li> <li>• Deliver an Annual Report and Accounts 24/25 which meets FReM requirements</li> <li>• Collaborate with DoJ in establishing a new Partnership Agreement</li> <li>• Develop a Sustainability Strategy for the Office</li> <li>• Develop the Office Accommodation Needs Business Case</li> <li>• Agree Strategy to deal with attendance issues in the organisation</li> </ul>



	<p>related legacy complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a final structure and resourcing for the Investigations and Impact Departments</li> <li>• Implement a strategy to support internal and external communication</li> <li>• Establish a Technical Support Team</li> <li>• Complete a review of the use of technology in investigations in support of the RESET Programme</li> <li>• Establish process Business Process Maps for the Complaints Office Team</li> <li>• Undertake a review of Governance arrangements to support the new structures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish at least 12 Regulation 20 Reports or Closure Letters regard Cat A investigations</li> <li>• Develop a new 'Walk In' policy and protocol</li> <li>• Establish a mechanism for the analysis of customer service complaints and user information obtained as learning to improve the customer experience and investigations and reduce complaints</li> <li>• Establish 'bite-size' learning with Investigations and the Legal Department</li> <li>• Complete 18 external reports on Troubles-related investigations</li> <li>• Review the criteria and policy for commencing Section 60A investigations</li> <li>• Review the terms of reference for the existing Quality Improvement Committee</li> <li>• Establish a mechanism to ensure 95% of new complaints are added to the CHS within 10 working days of receipt</li> <li>• Complaints Officers to contact the complainant within 2 working days of allocation or set a complaints office strategy outlining steps to be taken</li> <li>• Complete a focused inspection on time taken for PSNI PSD and PPS to provide responses to recommendations.</li> </ul>	<p>management development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-emphasise the Office values by engaging with staff and promoting how these are demonstrated to add to a positive workplace culture.</li> </ul>	<p>by a Data Sharing agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the Security Service MOU</li> <li>• Complete a review of the effectiveness of policy recommendations made to PSNI</li> <li>• Develop a Strategic Approach to NPM and DSA with other oversight bodies</li> <li>• Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to ensure all MOUs are fit for purpose</li> <li>• Finalise the Retention and Disposal Schedule with PRONI.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure IT infrastructure supports the organisation and all accreditation requirements in place.</li> </ul>
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## APPENDIX B

### Office of the Police Ombudsman NI – Budget Allocation 2024/25

	2024-25 Draft Revised Budget £k
<b>2024-25 Planning Budget as per letter of 3 October 2023</b>	<b>10,885</b>
2023-24 IFRS 16	423
2024-25 IFRS 16	(410)
<b>2024-25 Budget Baseline Allocation</b>	<b>10,898</b>
Additional Allocation	881
<b>Non-ringfenced Resource DEL – Draft Opening Budget (21 May 2024)</b>	<b>11,779</b>
SMT Allocation – Legacy Inquests	431
<b>Non-ringfenced Resource DEL – Draft Revised Budget</b>	<b>12,210</b>
<i>Earmarked funding included within the Draft Revised Budget:</i>	
<i>Legacy Historical Investigations</i>	<i>1,180</i>
<i>Legacy Inquests</i>	<i>431</i>

#### 2024-25 Capital DEL

	2024-25 Revised Budget £k
Capital DEL	-

#### 2024-25 Ringfenced Resource DEL

	2024-25 Revised Budget £k
<b>Planning Budget as per Letter of 3 October 2023</b>	<b>1,272</b>
Easements against the Opening Position	(500)
<b>Ringfenced Resource DEL – Opening Budget</b>	<b>772</b>

#### 2024-25 Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)

	2024-25 Revised Budget £k
Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)	200

#### 2024-25 Net Cash Requirement (NCR)

	£k
Net Cash Requirement (NCR)	12,210