



## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

### **Continuous improvement arrangements in policing**

Mr Kieran Donnelly CB, the Comptroller and Auditor General, today (21 July 2022) published his report to the Assembly on continuous improvement arrangements in policing. The report examines the performance summary of the Policing Board and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in 2020-21 and the Annual Performance Plan for 2021-22.

#### Background

As the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) for Northern Ireland, Mr Donnelly is 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 Policing Board, the Chief Constable and the Department of Justice for Northern Ireland (the Department). This report from the C&AG reviews the systems underpinning the plan and performance summary. It is not an audit of PSNI's performance.

#### Main Findings

- The C&AG has given an unqualified audit opinion on the on the 2020-21 Performance Summary and the 2021-22 Performance Plan.
- The Board's Business Plan for 2020-21 included 13 performance actions underpinning 4 corporate objectives. Of these actions, the Board reported that in 2020-21, 11 (85 percent) (2019-20: 73 percent) had been achieved and the remaining 2 actions were partially achieved.
- The Performance Plan for 2021-22 supports the second year of *The Northern Ireland Policing Plan 2020-25* and comprises 9 indicators and 13 measures (2020-21: 9 indicators and 11 measures) across the same 3 overarching outcomes noted above.
- The arrangements to achieve continuous improvement have changed in recent years following on from changes to the Policing Plan and have focused on objectives to achieve of certain desired outcomes. However, my initial observations are that only 5 of the 9 indicators are supported by data and baseline information enabling an assessment of performance to be made.
- The report recommends the inclusion of up to date and relevant data and baseline information for all indicators and measures. This is essential in order to monitor performance, to establish targets to evaluate ongoing success. Also the Board is recommended to undertake a review of existing arrangements to ensure that it is content with the new approach under the outcomes based approach and specifically that it can continue to meet its requirement to secure Continuous Improvement within the PSNI.

ENDS

**THIS STATEMENT IS ISSUED ON THE STRICT UNDERSTANDING THAT IT IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION OR BROADCAST BEFORE 00.01 hrs ON 21 JULY 2022**

Notes for Editors

1. The Comptroller and Auditor General is Head of the Northern Ireland Audit Office (the Audit Office). He and the NIAO are totally independent of Government. He certifies the accounts of Government Departments and a range of other public sector bodies. He has statutory authority to report to the Assembly on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which departments and public bodies use their resources. His reports are published as Assembly papers.
2. Section 28 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 requires the Policing 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 Policing Board is required to prepare and publish a performance plan for each financial year, detailing how continuous improvement arrangements are to be implemented. Under the Act, the Board must also prepare and publish a performance summary.
3. The report is available on the Audit Office website at [www.niauditoffice.gov.uk](http://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk). The report is embargoed until 00.01 hrs on 21 July 2022.
4. Background briefing can be obtained from the Audit Office by contacting or Garry Currie (028 9025 1126) or Francis Casey (028 9025 1087).