

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Annual Report of the Policing Authority 2023

In accordance with section 62O. (1) of the

Garda Síochána Act 2005 (as amended) and in compliance with the Code of Practice for the
Governance of State Bodies

Table of Contents

Chairperson’s Foreword	i
Chief Executive’s Review of the Year	iii
Policing Authority Review of 2023	1
1. What the Policing Authority does	2
2. Progress against Strategic Objectives.....	6
3. Feature Article: The Changing Nature of Society, Policing and Oversight	14
4. Governance and Structure	16
5. Financial Information 2023.....	27
Appendix 1 – Status of 2023 Corporate Priorities at 31 December 2023	29
Appendix 2 – Competition Statistics for Senior Garda Appointments 2023	39
Appendix 3 – Summary of Financial Report 2023	40
Appendix 4 – Chairperson’s Statement of Internal Control	41
Appendix 5 – Energy Usage 2023	45

“...a body to be known as An tÚdarás Póilíneachta or, in the English language, the Policing Authority for the purpose of overseeing the performance by the Garda Síochána of its functions relating to policing services.”

Policing Authority establishing legislation

Chairperson's Foreword



As the Authority prepares to embark on a new chapter with the transition to the Policing and Community and Safety Authority in 2024, a reflection on the activities and achievements of the Authority throughout 2023 is warranted. Such a reflection could not be commenced without acknowledging the work of our former Authority Members and Chairperson who completed their terms of office on 31 December. It is with immense gratitude that I extend my appreciation to Dr Moling Ryan and Valerie Judge, in addition to our former Chairperson, Bob Collins, whose dedication and leadership has guided us through remarkable achievement and growth as an Authority. We are now two years into our three-year strategy and have continued to make progress against the objectives under each of five strategic themes, with some notable achievements as follows:

- **Community focused policing:** we continued to engage with communities as a central part of our oversight work by listening to specific communities' views on the service provided by the Garda Síochána.
- **Effective policing:** we focused oversight on key areas including human rights and matters of Garda conduct and discipline and responding to child sexual abuse.
- **Garda integrity and human rights:** we continued our focused engagement with the Garda Síochána in relation to a wide range of integrity issues, including discipline, suspensions, protected disclosures, performance management and anti-corruption.
- **Informed oversight that engages the public on policing matters:** we engaged with 74 public groups and organisations, 74 Garda units and stations and attended 10 Joint Policing Committees.
- **Leading through change:** we continued active engagement with the Department of Justice steering groups and the Garda Inspectorate in relation to the upcoming transition to the Policing and Community Safety Authority.

There were considerable work activities conducted throughout 2023 which built on these strategic themes, a key one of which was the update on the Examination of the Garda Síochána Review of the Closure, (including cancellation) of Computer Aided Dispatch Incidents (CAD 999). The update in June reported on additional call listening activities conducted in January and May 2023. In addition, a final report published in January 2024 made observations in relation to the status of the implementation of the 16 recommendations in the original 2022 report. Mr Penman's update indicated 12 of these recommendations have been implemented, three partially implemented and one not implemented. The implementation of a large number of these recommendations to date demonstrates the commitment of the Garda Síochána and the Authority in ensuring that all these recommendations will be fully implemented.

However, there were also concerning findings from a final review conducted by Mr. Penman in December. This report, which was published in January 2024 highlighted that following an Adverse Impact Assessment Report, there were 37 cases where physical harm occurred. This demonstrated missed opportunities for the Garda Síochána to deliver its commitment to "keep people safe". In addition, although the findings from this update have been largely positive, Mr. Penman highlighted a lack of access to live call listening. This prevented the Authority from seeing many significant improvements in call handling and demonstrates a further missed opportunity to provide reassurances on the progress made. The Authority will continue to monitor the four recommendations which have yet to be fully implemented.

A further area of strategic focus for the Authority across the year was Garda conduct and discipline. It is vital for public confidence that there is a robust system for setting and communicating the standard of behaviour that is expected of members of the police service and for dealing with individuals whose behavior does not meet those standards. The Authority consistently engaged in detailed discussions with the Commissioner in relation to a number of matters pertaining to discipline, including the current processes and procedures, existing regulations and the status of their review and revision by the Department of Justice. The 2023 Assessment of Policing Performance also highlighted that while systems and policies for performance management are in place for Garda members, meaningful progress is yet to be made to embed a culture of performance management in the organisation. Deficits in such a culture are central to ongoing Authority work on workforce discipline and integrity.

A reflection on 2023 would be incomplete without commenting on the civil unrest that was experienced throughout the year, and continues to influence the oversight responsibilities of the Authority. In 2023, the Dublin Metropolitan Region alone saw a 101% increase in protests, of which more than one-third were anti-migrant in sentiment, according to reported data. However, the Garda Síochána described the “vast majority” of all protests in 2023 as peaceful. The Authority engaged with the Garda Commissioner on numerous occasions, who noted the complexity of issues surrounding protests, the associated tensions and confrontations requiring a policing response and the consequent impact on, and adequacy of, Garda resources to respond.

In addition to the increase in protests, in 2023 there were 13 arson attacks on properties allocated or purported to be allocated for International Protection Accommodation Services. Seven of these attacks occurred between the 23rd of November and the 31st of December, as reported in the media at the time. This shift in society’s response to challenges faced has already influenced changes in responding to spontaneous public order events by the Garda Síochána and the oversight responsibilities of the Authority. The strong oversight emphasis in how the Garda Síochána responds to public order events will continue into 2024. The Authority will report to the Minister for Justice in 2024 with advice regarding what might enhance policing performance and support the Gardaí in the exercise of their lawful powers during public order events.

The year ahead will be a time of change for the Authority as we prepare for the transition to the Policing Community and Safety Authority. In February 2024, the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 was signed into law. A new Policing and Community Safety Authority will be established incorporating the functions of the Policing Authority and the Garda Inspectorate. Despite this considerable transition, we will continue to ensure that oversight remains at the forefront of work planning. As always, our ability to successfully engage in such rigorous oversight activities and fulfil our responsibilities would not be possible without the commitment and professionalism of the Chief Executive and her colleagues. I also wish to thank my fellow Authority Members for their dedication and hard work in an unprecedented year.



Dr Elaine Byrne BL
Chairperson
31 March 2024

Chief Executive's Review of the Year



The work of the Policing Authority during 2023 continued to place a strong emphasis on oversight in a time where agile responses were needed for the evolving and complex situations that the Garda Síochána and in turn the Authority experienced. Throughout the year, protests and use of social media have posed a challenge to community cohesion, policing responses and policing oversight. Despite these challenges, the Policing Authority continued to actively engage with communities and stakeholders across the country; including public meetings in Waterford, Mayo, Louth

and Dublin City. This active and rewarding engagement had a direct and positive impact on the discussion topics that were put to the Commissioner and his senior colleagues during Authority meetings. Further examples of our engagement during the year included:

- Meetings with 10 Joint Policing Committee/Community Safety Partnerships across Ireland;
- Visits to 74 Garda units and stations;
- 74 meetings with stakeholder groups and organisations;
- 17 Authority meetings, 6 of which were unscheduled and 6 of which took place in public;
- 16 Committee meetings.

In addition to engagements which informed oversight, we also worked towards achieving our strategic objectives through proactive means such as:

- participating with the Irish Research Council New Foundations Scheme to support evidence-based policy and strategies in relation to policing and community safety;
- commissioning and launching research exploring the experience and perceptions of policing within African and Brazilian Communities in Ireland;
- launching a joint research scheme with the Garda Síochána focusing on the well-being of Garda personnel, and awarding a contract to Ms. Jane Gordon to develop a Human Rights Framework for Policing Oversight and Inspections for the PCSA;
- publishing and starting to implement our Section 42 Framework Implementation Plan 2023-2024.

A more detailed analysis of progress against the strategic objectives can be found in section 3 of this report and the progress of our corporate priorities is contained in appendix 1. Throughout 2023, the Authority also produced five publications which included:

- Assessment of Policing Performance 2022;
- Update on the examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure of CAD incidents;
- Publication of 'What we heard', a report on the Authority's engagement with stakeholders in 2022;
- Mid-year assessment of Policing Performance 2023;
- Annual Report 2022.

Our role in relation to senior Garda appointments and resources continued to form a significant body of work this year. Selection competitions were held for Chief Superintendent and Superintendent ranks and panels were established, from which senior appointments were made and will continue to be made during 2024. A

competition was also held for the role of Deputy Commissioner, however from this process, no candidate was invited to final interview and the process was concluded.

In all, 44 senior appointments within the Garda Síochána were made/approved by the Authority comprising of: one Assistant Commissioner, 10 Chief Superintendents and 28 Superintendents, and five senior Garda Staff. In addition to this, in January 2023 the Policing Authority commissioned the Performance Partnership to commence a job analysis and competency modelling project for the three ranks of Superintendent, Chief Superintendent and Assistant Commissioner. The outputs of this significant project are intended to enhance the quality of future recruitment and promotion campaigns by ensuring that the job descriptions and associated competencies reflect the depth and breadth of work across the three ranks thereby enabling a comprehensive assessment of future candidates. It is expected that the new competency framework will be completed and in use for competitions run in 2024.

Throughout 2023 we also continued to engage with our international colleagues from Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, Canada, and the United States. This was an important exercise in learning from what others do, maintaining international connections and horizon scanning for potential improvements and progressions in policing oversight. This horizon scanning was also a vital task in preparing for our transition to the Policing Community and Safety Authority. The Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 was enacted on 7 February 2024. The transition from the Policing Authority to the Policing Community and Safety Authority will be a unique opportunity to combine the capacity of oversight with inspection and is an opportunity to a world-leading concept for policing oversight. We hope that it will improve policing accountability, and ultimately enhance the policing service to the public.

This has been a year of inherent challenges as we prepare for that change while also maintaining our usual oversight operations and business as usual. Through the cohesive teamwork and collective efforts of the executive staff and the Authority, we have managed to navigate through the changes effectively, while ensuring continuity of operations. Their dedication has been instrumental in facilitating the transition towards the new oversight entity and I am grateful for their enthusiasm and commitment. I would also like to extend my thanks to the Garda Síochána, the Garda Inspectorate and the Department of Justice for their cooperation throughout the year.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our former board members Valerie Judge, Dr Moling Ryan and Chairperson Bob Collins whose guidance and contributions have been integral to our successes throughout the years of their terms.



Helen Hall
Chief Executive Officer
31 March 2024



REVIEW OF 2023



LISTENING TO COMMUNITIES

In 2023, the Policing Authority continued its unwavering commitment to fostering transparency, accountability and excellence in policing.

Over the course of the year the Authority actively engaged with communities and stakeholders to understand their experience of policing and the ongoing challenges and successes in community safety.

APPOINTMENTS

1	ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
10	CHIEF SUPERINTENDENTS
28	SUPERINTENDENTS
5	SENIOR GARDA STAFF

ENGAGEMENT SUPPORTING OUR OVERSIGHT



ORGANISATION INFORMATION



KEY OVERSIGHT AREAS



RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT



1. What the Policing Authority does

The Policing Authority is an independent statutory body with a key role to oversee the performance of the Garda Síochána in the provision of policing services in Ireland. It was established on 1 January 2016 by the enactment of the Garda Síochána (Policing Authority and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2015 (the Act) which amends the Garda Síochána Act 2005.

In February 2024, the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 (the Act) was signed into law. This Act will implement the recommendations of the report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland and means that the Authority's role will change. A new Policing and Community Safety Authority is intended to be established, involving the amalgamation of many of the functions of the Policing Authority and the Garda Inspectorate. These changes will ensure that the oversight framework for policing is coherent, supporting clear and effective accountability and ultimately, better policing. Through this new role in oversight, the new Authority will exist to help achieve world class policing outcomes for individuals, families and communities in Ireland. However, until such time as the PSCS Act is commenced, the Policing Authority's existing statutory functions and oversight role will continue unchanged.

The Authority works across four principal areas outlined below. Some of these functions were previously the responsibility of Government or the Minister for Justice. The full range of functions is available on the Authority's [website](#).

Oversight of Policing

The main function of the Policing Authority is to oversee the performance of the Garda Síochána in the provision of policing services. We do this in a number of ways, including by:

- Setting annual Policing Priorities and performance targets for the Garda Síochána;
- Approving the three year Garda Síochána Strategy Statement and the Garda Síochána Annual Policing Plan;
- Holding monthly meetings with the Garda Commissioner, including meetings in public at least four times each year, as required by statute;
- Building independent sources of evidence to assess performance through engagement with a broad range of stakeholders;
- Reviewing arrangements and mechanisms within the Garda Síochána;
- Reporting and providing advice to the Minister for Justice arising from the Authority's functions and on request; and,
- Monitoring and assessing the measures taken by the Garda Síochána in relation to recommendations made in reports of the Garda Síochána Inspectorate and other third party reports.

While the Authority is responsible for oversight of the performance by the Garda Síochána of its policing services, under section 26(3) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, the Garda Commissioner is accountable to the Minister for Justice for the performance of the Commissioner's functions and those of the Garda Síochána.

Appointments

The Authority undertakes a range of activities relating to the selection and appointment of personnel in the Garda Síochána, such as:

- Nominating persons for appointment by the Government to the positions of Garda Commissioner and Deputy Garda Commissioner;
- Undertaking selection competitions for appointments to the senior ranks of Assistant Commissioner, Chief Superintendent and Superintendent and making appointments to these senior ranks and equivalent senior Garda staff positions.

The Authority also oversees a range of other functions relating to workforce planning, recruitment, promotion and training by the Garda Síochána.

Public Awareness and Engagement

The Policing Authority places a high value on transparency to promote awareness of policing performance and related issues to the general public and other interested parties.

The Authority communicates and engages directly with key stakeholders to learn and gain feedback about expectations and experiences which inform our work whilst also holding consultations with the general public.

In order to achieve this, the Authority holds meetings and other events in public. In addition, the Authority is committed to publishing agendas and minutes of Authority meetings, reports and other relevant material on our website.

Research

An important objective of the Policing Authority is to add to the body of knowledge in respect of policing in Ireland, to identify best practice, and to contribute to national and international benchmarking.

This is achieved by undertaking in-house research to support the organisation's statutory functions and corporate priorities. Alternatively, the Authority may commission or assist in research projects in respect of matters relating to policing services. This includes the launching of a Research Bursary, with resources being made available to fund a project or projects covering the research themes selected by the Authority.

The Authority also builds networks with others in the policing and oversight arenas, nationally and internationally, including oversight bodies, academic and research institutions, and other stakeholders.

Mission

To hold the Garda Síochána fairly and transparently to account in the interests of all, particularly the most vulnerable.

Vision

An ethical, effective, human rights based policing service that merits and enjoys the confidence of the increasingly diverse people it serves.

Values

Independence

We perform our functions without fear or favour, alert to the need to maintain independence in thought and action, in order to best serve the public.

Listening

We reach out to organisations and reach in to our communities. As part of our service to the public, we actively seek out and listen to voices not frequently heard, including the voices of children, to understand the lived experience of policing.

Public Centred

Our efforts are directed towards oversight that is open, transparent and accountable and that gives assurance and confidence to the public, in all its diversity, that we are acting on its behalf to secure and support a policing service that keeps them safe and makes them feel safe.

Fairness

We are even-handed in our processes, our engagement and our assessment.

Respect

We recognise and respect the professionalism and experience of the Garda Síochána and the unique nature of the risks its members take to keep people safe. We also respect the validity of the experience of all those who encounter the policing service and recognise that our oversight is informed by both.

Human Rights

We will work to ensure that the policing service delivered by the Garda Síochána vindicates the human rights of all that come into contact with it. We will promote equality, diversity, human rights and inclusion in our own organisation, in policing and in wider society.

Learning

We value curiosity and continuous improvement in our organisation and in policing. We will develop our skills and knowledge to inform the work that we do.

2. Progress against Strategic Objectives

The following tables set out in brief summary, the progress we have made in 2023 against the objectives set out in our [Statement of Strategy 2022-24](#). Our Strategy has five strategic themes with a focus on community policing, effective policing, Garda integrity and human rights, informing and engaging the public on policing matters and a focus on our own organisation and our capacity to constantly improve and manage change.

Strategic Theme 1 - Community Focused Policing

Desired Outcome - Policing serves the needs and secures the confidence of the community in all its diversity.

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
<p>Assess the effectiveness of the policing service provided to communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to engage with communities as a central part of our oversight work by listening to specific communities' views on the service provided by the Garda Síochána. Namely, the Authority held meetings in public with the Commissioner in Dublin's North East Inner City, Drogheda, Ballina, and Waterford. The agendas for each of these meetings included an item on 'local policing challenges', and were informed by a programme of local engagements (approximately 80) with local communities and front-line Garda members and staff. In addition to the above, the Authority continued its programme of stakeholder engagement, meeting with national and sub-national groups to further understand the perceptions and experiences of policing among communities, in all their diversity. Arising from its engagements in Drogheda, the Authority included an in-depth assessment of the policing response to the organised crime and community safety issues faced there in its half-year Assessment of Policing Performance 2023, published December 2023. The Authority attended 10 Joint Policing Committee Meetings to increase its awareness of local policing and community safety issues.
<p>Improve the experience of policing, especially for children and young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioned research on the experience and perceptions of policing within diverse and minority communities in Ireland. The research will explore the experience of policing across two communities in Ireland — the Brazilian community and those of African descent. A final report is due to be submitted in Q1 2024. Through meetings held within communities, and the supporting engagement activity, the Authority placed considerable emphasis on the experiences of young people and those working with them, as they related to engaging with the Garda Síochána as members of the community, victims, suspects, etc.

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated engagement at Executive, Committee and Authority level concerning the approach to engaging with, supporting, and policing young people. • Provided observations in relation to the draft Garda Síochána Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
<p>Undertake focused oversight of key issues for the community through engagement with the Garda Síochána, and relevant stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout the year the Authority undertook and maintained significant focus on matters of particular community concern, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The response to organised crime; ○ The impacts of, and response to, drug and drug related crime, including drug-related intimidation; ○ Policing as it relates to the support and protection of vulnerable individuals and communities – including policing and mental health and the response to increased, targeted protest activity against migrants; ○ Engagement by the Garda Síochána with the Traveller Community; ○ The prevention, investigation, and detection of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence – including supporting and engaging with victims; ○ Garda visibility and community engagement; ○ Roads policing and ensuring safety on the roads; ○ Matters relating to Garda integrity, behaviour and discipline; and ○ Additional CAD 999 audits which were completed in January and June, with an update of the examination of the Garda Síochána review of closure of CAD incidents published in July.
<p>Strengthen local policing accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered three regional training and networking events for members of the Joint Policing Committees (JPCs) and their administrators. These events focused on maximising the potential of the new JPC guidelines and on learning from, and sharing experiences with other JPCs. • Attended JPC and Community Safety Partnership meetings around the country.
<p>Monitor and assess the learning arising from interagency initiatives and any implications for community safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority reviewed and updated the Policing Priorities 2022-2024, to include new performance measures concerning roads policing and Garda workforce health and wellbeing. • Approval of the Garda Síochána Policing Plan 2024. • Publication of What We Heard 2022 (February 2023), an overview of

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
	<p>the themes emerging from engagement with stakeholder groups in 2022 on their perceptions of policing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of two Assessments of Policing Performance. The first considering the Garda Síochána’s performance in 2022 and the second concerning performance in the first half of 2023. • The submission of the Authority’s annual advice to the Minister on the adequacy of Garda resources. • Significant engagement with the Garda workforce at all ranks and grades throughout 2023 – the themes arising from which were captured in the February 2024 publication, What We Heard 2023.

Strategic Theme 2 – Effective Policing

Desired Outcome - Policing is effective in preventing and detecting crime and is consistently delivered through the effective use of resources.

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
Monitor and assess policing performance in line with statutory commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused oversight on key areas including human rights matters of Garda Conduct and Discipline; and how the Garda Síochána respond to the crimes of Child Sexual Abuse.
Monitor and assess the governance arrangements in place in the Garda Síochána that ensure that key third party recommendations are implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority’s Garda Síochána Organisation Development Committee addressed progress made by the Garda Síochána in relation to finance, human resources, governance and infrastructure. • Quarterly engagement on the Garda Síochána’s strategic workforce planning, including recruitment and retention. • Consideration and approval, as appropriate, of Garda Síochána business cases for new staff positions. In 2023, approval was given for positions including: the Garda Information Services Centre, the finance function and Garda analysts.
Assess the degree to which the enabler functions such as finance, HR, ICT and accommodation are providing strategic support to policing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority’s Garda Síochána Organisation Development Committee addressed progress made by the Garda Síochána in relation to finance, human resources, governance and infrastructure.
Monitor, assess and report on the efficacy of the structures, training, policy and practices in place that enable the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority has monitored the implementation and rollout of the Investigation Management System (IMS), including as a central part of its in-depth oversight activity undertaken in Waterford in Q4 2023. • Significant engagement took place throughout 2023 on various crime

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
<p>effective prevention and detection of crime</p>	<p>types, including drug and drug related crime, organised acquisitive crime, economic and cyber-crime, domestic sexual and gender based violence, etc. across which crime prevention and detection was central, as was the efficacy of training and continuous professional development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were in-depth engagements across the year on the pilot and national rollout of the outcomes project, a crime recording initiative designed to provide greater insight into non-detection outcomes across all crime types. • The Authority continued to undertake monthly, quarterly and annual reviews of detection rates using both Garda Síochána and CSO data. • The implementation of the new Detections Improvement Plan will be monitored throughout 2024.

Strategic Theme 3 – Garda Integrity and Human Rights

Desired Outcome – Ethical policing that vindicates the human rights of all who engage with the service and those who are affected by it.

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
<p>Oversee the range of actions being taken by the Garda Síochána to monitor and support Garda Integrity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued and focused engagement with the Garda Síochána with regard to a wide range of integrity issues, including discipline, suspensions, protected disclosures, performance management and anti-corruption. • Continued oversight of the implementation of the recommendations arising from the Garda Inspectorate Report <i>‘Countering the Threat of Internal Corruption’</i>. • Engaged with the Garda Síochána in the area of human rights, the Code of Ethics and its impact on the culture of the organisation.
<p>Assess the degree to which Human Rights are embedded throughout the organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing oversight of implementation of the recommendations arising from the Garda Inspectorate Report on Delivering Custody Services. • Awarded a contract to Ms. Jane Gordon to develop a Human Rights Framework for Policing Oversight and Inspections for the new Policing and Community Safety Authority. • Attended meetings of the Garda Síochána Strategic Human Rights Committee (SHRAC) in an observer capacity.

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
Assess how consistency in the handling of complaints regarding Garda behaviours and subsequent action is assured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused and continuous engagement with the Garda Síochána on performance and conduct. • Extended engagement with stakeholders from Ireland and from neighbouring jurisdictions, including within international conferences, in relation to best practices around handling complaints against members of police services.
Appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued to develop the process for appointments to senior ranks of the Garda Síochána. • Engaged a company to carry out a job analysis and competency modelling project for the three ranks of Superintendent, Chief Superintendent and Assistant Commissioner in the Garda Síochána; carried out an extensive consultation process and worked closely with the company and with the Garda Síochána and the Public Appointments service to put in place a new enhanced promotion framework for the selection of candidates into the future. • Two selection competitions were undertaken and a panel established for appointment to the ranks of Chief Superintendent and Superintendent.

Strategic Theme 4 – Leading through Change

Desired Outcome – To ensure that the Authority has influenced and is prepared for: the future policing oversight arrangements; and, its transition to become the Policing and Community Safety Authority.

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
Drawing on the Authority's experience to inform and influence the consideration and implementation of future policing oversight arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued active engagement with the Department of Justice steering groups and the Garda Inspectorate in relation to the upcoming transition to the Policing and Community Safety Authority.
Prepare the organisation for the transition to the new entity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Policing Authority and the Garda Inspectorate have put in place eight work streams and the project teams are working through detailed projects plans in order to successfully implement the transition to the new oversight body.
Maintain a culture of high performance during the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively managed human resource matters in the Authority including recruitment, retention, training and development and

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
period of transition to any new working arrangements and to the establishment of the new Authority	<p>performance management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complied with governance, risk and reporting requirements in line with legislation and Codes of Practice. Worked with Garda Inspectorate colleagues to identify an optimum organisational structure for the new Authority and to identify areas for development through engagement sessions and reflection.
Enable effective move to hybrid working in the organisation in line with Government policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working from home arrangements are in place for all staff members within the Policing Authority which are in line with Government policy and best practice. The hybrid working policy has been reviewed and is being updated in line with legislation and central government policy. The revised policy will be rolled out and communicated to staff early in 2024. In addition, staff members have all the necessary equipment and resources in order to work effectively on a remote basis.
Maintain and enhance governance structures and processes to continue to fulfil all statutory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted three internal audits of internal controls, compliance with GDPR and ICT. In addition, there was an annual follow-up audit on the implementation of recommendations. The Annual Board and Committees self-review of performance and effectiveness was undertaken, in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

Strategic Theme 5 – Informed oversight that engages the public on policing matters

Desired Outcome - The Authority, through research and active listening, seeks out a diversity of perspectives on the experience of policing and uses this knowledge to challenges the Garda Síochána to improve policing continually.

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
Engage with stakeholder organisations and groups to hear their experience of policing and the experience of the people they represent, in order to inform our oversight work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2023, we had 74 specific meetings/engagements with groups throughout the country (From Waterford, Drogheda, Mayo, and North East and South Inner City Dublin). These include groups representing victims of domestic, sexual and gender based violence, seniors/older people, children and young people, rural communities, the Traveller community, migrants and ethnic minorities, and those affected by substance misuse and drug related intimidation.
Engage with Garda members in stations, specialist units and bureaus to hear and understand their experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Authority undertook 74 engagements across individual garda stations, specialist units and bureaus to inform its oversight. In February 2024, the Authority published 'What We Heard 2023', a

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
<p>of the challenges of policing, policing reform and resourcing</p>	<p>report providing a summary of the key themes that have emerged from Authority engagement with gardaí and garda staff nationwide during the year. Engagement with the Commissioner on these themes occurred in December 2023 and February 2024.</p>
<p>Undertake, commission, promote and collaborate in research into policing matters, to inform oversight and public awareness of policing matters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioned research on the experience and perceptions of policing within diverse and minority communities in Ireland. The research will explore the experience of policing across two communities in Ireland — the Brazilian community and those of African descent. • A Joint Research Scheme between An Garda Síochána and the Authority, exploring evidence-based interventions promoting resilience, mental health, and well-being of An Garda Síochána personnel issues, was agreed and finalised and launched in January 2024. • Arising from its participation in the Irish Research Council (IRC) New Foundations Scheme, a project to support evidence-based policy and strategies in relation to policing and community safety was selected for funding by the Authority. The project is titled <i>‘Hidden Voices’: a research led collaborative network to elicit marginalised community perspectives regarding community safety challenges in Ireland</i> and is led by Professor Colum Dunne and Professor Gautam Gulati, University of Limerick. • The Authority agreed to participate in a new partnership, the Criminal Justice Open Research Dialogue (CORD), aiming to embed a culture of interdisciplinary open research in criminal justice in Ireland. Project partners representing nearly 40 organisations will form a ‘Researcher-Policymaker-Practitioner Partnership’ throughout 2024.
<p>Maintain and deepen effective relationships with policing oversight bodies in Ireland and abroad</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued presence at a range of domestic and international events and conferences. • Continued to engage with international colleagues from Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, Canada, and the United States.
<p>Promote public awareness of policing matters and the outcomes of policing oversight</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of ‘What We Heard’, a report on the Authority’s engagement with stakeholders in 2022. • Publication of the full year Policing Authority Assessment of Policing Performance 2022 and a half-year Policing Authority Assessment of Policing Performance for 2023. A full year assessment for 2023 will be published in Spring 2024. • Held six meetings in public with the Commissioner and live streamed an additional two meetings, in light of key, emerging oversight issues. • Local and national coverage across the Irish media landscape including print, online, radio and TV.

Objectives	Achievements in 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Published a range of material on the Authority website in order to provide transparency on the Authority’s work to stakeholders and the public.

In accordance with its Statement of Strategy and to reflect additional requests from the Minister, the Authority set its Corporate Priorities for 2023 at the start of the year to guide it in prioritising its work in 2024. The status of the achievement of these priorities at the end of 2023 is included for information at Appendix 1.

3. Feature Article: The Changing Nature of Society, Policing and Oversight

The Changing Nature of Society

The oversight of policing is concerned with understanding and assessing policing performance and the degree to which that performance is in line with the needs, expectations and rights of the public it serves – in all its diversity. This year, the international zeitgeist continued to be influenced by globalisation, social media, conflict and migration. In this context, Ireland has also continued to change and become increasingly diverse, with the recent census results reporting that Ireland’s population has exceeded the five million threshold for the first time in 171 years. Non-Irish citizens now account for 12% of our population¹. These global and national changes also impacted the Policing Authority, as increases in targeted protest activity, anti-social behaviour, and trends relating to road safety matters in 2023 resulted in ongoing engagement and oversight.

Ireland is often referred to as being the country of “*céad míle fáilte*”; a hundred thousand welcomes. However, the events of 2023, in particular the tragic incident and subsequent violent disorder of 23 November, demonstrated a fundamental shift in society’s response to the challenges we are facing as a collective. The right to peaceful protest is a fundamental democratic expression, however this must co-exist with the rights of others to feel safe and free from intimidation. This contrasts sharply with more ominous protests in 2023 that escalated into spontaneous public order events. It was the view of the Authority that the nature of the violent disorder that took place in 2023 should not enjoy the constitutional protections afforded to peaceful protests.

A study conducted by the Institute of Strategic Dialogue, published three days prior to 23 November reported how false information spread online can lead to direct, and real-life action, including acts of violence.² The report outlined how the ecosystem of misinformation and disinformation has been successfully co-opted by the far right in Ireland, and post-pandemic has targeted vulnerable communities such as asylum seekers, refugees and the LGBTQ+ community, framing them as an existential threat to our country. The protests and public order events that have occurred throughout the year have been deeply intertwined with the surge of social media, as the spread of misinformation facilitated discord, and incited the momentum of public order events. Coimisiún na Meán³ also expressed its concerns about the spread on hate speech and disinformation in social media following the events of 23 November.

Oversight Responses

Spurred by these challenges, the Authority broadened and deepened its commitment to stakeholder engagement, meeting with 74 local community groups and organisations in preparation for meetings with the Commissioner and his senior colleagues. In addition, 74 Garda units and stations were visited, and 10 Joint Policing Committees/Community Safety Partnership meetings were held. This was an important facet to oversight which provided the Policing Authority with valuable learning in how outreach and oversight can be further enhanced. In addition, these productive engagements directly impacted on the discussion topics that were put to the Commissioner during Authority meetings.

¹ Central Statistics Office. Migration and Diversity - CSO - Central Statistics Office [Internet]. www.cso.ie. 2023. Available from: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpsr/censusofpopulation2022-summaryresults/migrationanddiversity/>

² Institute for Strategic Dialogue. Uisce Faoi Thalamh - An Investigation into the Online Mis-and Disinformation Ecosystem in Ireland [Internet]. 2023 Nov. Available from: <https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Uisce-Faoi-Thalamh-Summary-Report.pdf>

³ Ireland’s media regulator

The Authority held six public meetings across the country; including Waterford, Mayo, Louth and Dublin City. This diversity in locations facilitated the gathering of varied perspectives on important issues to communities, while also offering the public the opportunity to view proceedings and ensure transparency on the Authority's part. These public meetings and sessions from two private meetings were also live-streamed in order to engage a wider audience and demonstrate the Authority's commitment to transparency and accountability, by providing access to important discussions on emerging oversight issues. Finally, the Authority also held an additional six meetings to its statutory obligation, most of which were in response to the unfolding of urgent public safety and policing matters. These unplanned meetings demonstrated the Authority's ability to respond to unfolding events in an agile, prompt and effective manner.

Impact on Policing

Policing has evolved into a more complex task, adapting to the intricacies of modern life, where demands ranging from cybercrime to social issues now characterise the responsibilities of, and demands on, the Garda Síochána. The protests and use of social media in 2023 have posed a challenge to community cohesion, policing responses and policing oversight. These challenges may require a change from the Garda Síochána, in their ability and capacity to anticipate, respond to and engage in critical incidents, while endeavouring to operate through dynamic decision making processes. In addition, the general public has voiced a desire for increased visibility and presence of the Garda Síochána on our streets. However, this must be balanced with an obligation to invisibly monitor and police the escalating challenges posed by modern crimes such as cyber and economic offences. There are many policing activities whereby invisible work is both vital and indispensable in protecting the public. These include the Cybercrime Bureau whose skills are essential in investigating and prosecuting significant criminal activity, the monitoring of international links of Organised Crime Gangs, and specialised services such as Protective Service Units for domestic violence, abuse and sexual violence. All of this policing requires intense specialist policing and engagement which often goes unseen. It is also vital as it serves to directly prevent and respond to the type of harm that is consistently prioritised by communities themselves. Fulfilling these demands and obligations will require a shift in responses from the Garda Síochána, and in turn how the Policing Authority provides oversight.

Reflection and Looking to the Future

During 2023, Members of the Authority considered the ways in which the Authority's approach to oversight and engagement with the Garda Síochána had evolved and considered to what extent external oversight had impacted on internal practices within the Garda Síochána. They agreed that while change could be imperceptibly incremental, when viewed over the lifetime of the Authority, there had been a significant shift in the culture of accountability in the Garda Síochána, in the context of external oversight. The Authority continuously adapted and responded to emerging policing issues in order to provide oversight throughout 2023. However, it is not possible to predict or anticipate future events, and how the events of 2023 will influence society and in turn impact policing and oversight remains to be seen.

The Commissioner previously expressed the view that the requirement for Ireland to provide International Protection to individuals will endure for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately, the protests and targeted attacks on International Protection Accommodation Services have continued through the end of 2023 and into the early months of 2024. These changes to society will require the Authority to be reactive in its oversight responses to the changing nature of policing. Despite these changes and uncertainties, the Authority is committed to using research and active listening to seek out a diversity of perspectives on the experience of policing and use this knowledge to challenge the Garda Síochána to improve policing continually.

4. Governance and Structure

Authority Members

The Authority's establishing legislation provides for a membership of a Chairperson and eight ordinary members, appointed for a three or four-year term with the possibility of reappointment for a further term subject to a maximum of eight years. The Chairperson and members of the Authority are selected for appointment by the Government, following selection processes run under the Stateboards.ie process by the Public Appointments Service. Members of the Oireachtas or Local Authorities, serving members of the Garda Síochána, GSOC or the Garda Inspectorate are not eligible to be members of the Authority.

There were nine members of the Authority at the beginning of 2023. Members of the Authority were engaged on the basis of a commitment of four to six days per month and the Chairperson's formal commitment is on the basis of 2.5 days per week. Details of the Authority Members are listed in Table 1, including their term of office and meeting attendance during 2023. Table 2 shows annual fees and travel and subsistence costs for Authority Members for 2023.

Table 1: Terms of office and 2023 meeting attendance of Authority Members

Authority Member	Expiry of term ⁴	Authority Meetings attended	Committee and Representational Meetings ⁵
Bob Collins (Chair)	31/12/23	17	25
Anthony Harbison ⁶	31/12/24*	12	0
Dr Deborah Donnelly	31/12/24*	15	5
Dr Donal de Buitléir	31/12/24*	16	3
Dr Elaine Byrne	31/12/24*	16	2
Dr Jane Mulcahy ⁷	31/12/24*	8	0
Dr Moling Ryan	31/12/23	14	13
Paul Mageean	31/12/24*	15	5
Shalom Binchy ⁸	08/03/24	5	2
Valerie Judge	31/12/23	15	5

⁴ Expiry term for members with an asterisks indicates they have been appointed until December 31st 2024 or until the dissolution of the Authority (whichever occurs sooner).

⁵ A total of 16 Committee meetings were held. In addition, Members attended a number of working group meetings and represented the Authority at a number of other meetings and events throughout the year.

⁶ Anthony Harbison was appointed to the Authority on 1 May 2023.

⁷ Dr Jane Mulcahy was appointed to the Authority on 26 July 2023.

⁸ Shalom Binchy tendered her resignation on 3 May 2023 following her appointment to the District Court.

Table 2: Annual fees and travel and subsistence costs for Authority Members (subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General)

Authority Member	Annual Fees paid in 2023 (approved by the Minister for Justice with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.)	Expenses paid for and on behalf of members in 2023 (includes costs paid directly to suppliers and Costs reimbursed to Members – inclusive of Benefit in Kind)
	€	€
Bob Collins (Chair)	32,450	1,620
Anthony Harbinson	9,367	1,370
Dr Deborah Donnelly	14,963	3,250
Dr Donal de Buitléir	14,963	548
Dr Elaine Byrne	14,963	1,561
Dr Jane Mulcahy ⁹	-	1,296
Dr Moling Ryan	14,963	442
Paul Mageean	14,963	7,989
Shalom Binchy	5,094	-
Valerie Judge	14,963	263

On 5 December 2023, the Government agreed to re-appoint Anthony Harbinson, Dr Deborah Donnelly, Dr Donal de Buitléir, Dr Elaine Byrne, Dr Jane Mulcahy and Paul Mageean as members of the Policing Authority until December 31st 2024 or until the dissolution of the Authority following the commencement of the Policing and Community Safety Act (2023) (whichever occurs sooner). In addition, Dr Elaine Byrne was appointed as the new Chairperson, with effect from 1 January 2024. On 31 December 2023, Bob Collins, Dr Moling Ryan and Valerie Judge completed their eight year terms as Authority Members.

Committees of the Authority

The Authority ran four Committees in 2023 to oversee the governance and progress the work of the Authority in relation to its statutory priorities under Terms of Reference which set out their purpose, guided their work and set out the details of matters which are delegated to the Committee for decision. The Terms of Reference for each Committee and the approved minutes of their meetings in 2023 are published on the Policing Authority website.

⁹ As a public servant Dr Mulcahy was not in receipt of any fees under the 'One Person, One Salary' principle.

Updates from Committees are a standing agenda item at each Authority meeting, where the Chair of each Committee provides a verbal update on the Committee’s work to the Authority. Papers setting out matters for the decision or approval by the Authority arising from the work of Committees are submitted for consideration at Authority meetings. Each Committee is provided with a secretarial resource and the Committee Chair keeps the Chief Executive informed of any work which may require additional resources.

All Members of the Authority are members of at least one Committee with the exception of the Chairperson who, while not a member of any Committee, may attend Committee meetings from time to time. At the end of 2023 the Audit and Risk, Garda Appointments Quality Assurance and Selection Governance and Policing Strategy and Performance Committees also had one external member. The Garda Appointments Quality Assurance and Selection Governance Committee is chaired by an external member who is a senior independent recruitment expert. Details of each Committee, together with membership and meetings in 2023 are set out in Table 3.

Table 3: Authority Committees 2023

Committee	Membership	Meetings in 2023
Audit and Risk	Moling Ryan (Chair)	5
	Declan Hoban (External member)	5
	Geraldine Smith (External member)	4
Garda Appointments Quality Assurance and Selection Governance	Bryan Andrews (Chair) (External member)	2
	Moling Ryan	2
	Valerie Judge	2
Garda Organisation Development	Paul Mageean (Chair) ¹⁰	1
	Donal de Buitleir (Chair)	3
	Elaine Byrne	2
	Valerie Judge	3
Policing Strategy and Performance	Deborah Donnelly (Chair)	6
	Gillian Imery (External Member)	6
	Shalom Binchy	2
	Moling Ryan	6
	Paul Mageean	4

Executive Team

The role of the Executive, led by the Chief Executive, is to implement the policies and decisions of the Authority. In addition, the role of the Senior Management Team is to keep the Authority informed through its regular meetings of relevant developments including any material risks and to support the Authority’s work by providing the relevant support, information and expertise in relation to governance and policy development at both Authority and Committee level.

¹⁰ Paul Mageean moved to the Policing Strategy and Performance Committee following attendance of the first Garda Organisation Development Committee meeting. Donal de Buitleir was subsequently appointment Chairperson.

The role and responsibilities of the Chief Executive are set out in legislation and in the Authority’s Governance Framework. In addition, the Chief Executive is the Accounting Officer for the Authority’s Vote. This responsibility is separate to the governance responsibilities of the Authority members.

Membership of the Senior Management Team is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Senior Management Team 2023

Role	Name
Chief Executive	Helen Hall
Director	Aoife Clabby
Director	Margaret Tumelty
Director	Cormac Keating ¹¹

The Chief Executive’s salary on 31 December 2023 was €178,995 on the salary scale for Assistant Secretary in the civil service, which is the amount approved by the Minister for Justice with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. Travel and subsistence costs for the Chief Executive arising from the performance of her duties amounted to €8,590 in 2023.

How we work

Authority meetings

The Authority plans for a day long plenary meeting each month, except in the month of August. Each meeting includes a meeting with the Garda Commissioner and his senior colleagues. The Authority is required by the Act to hold no less than four meetings in public with the Garda Commissioner annually. The schedule of meetings for the year is published in advance, including indicating which meetings will be held in public with the Commissioner. From time to time, the Authority holds additional or exceptional meetings on a needs basis, which may include meetings with the Garda Síochána.

In 2023, the Authority met a total of 17 times. In addition to 11 scheduled meetings in 2023, six further meetings were held to deal with emerging issues. Of these 17 meetings, the Authority met with the Garda Commissioner and his senior colleagues on 11 occasions. Six meetings with the Commissioner were held in a public venue, which facilitated the public and media to observe proceedings. In addition, two private meetings were part-streamed for public viewing.

The Authority publishes the draft agenda for meetings on its website one week in advance and approved minutes are also published on the website. In addition, the Garda Commissioner’s monthly report to the Authority is published on both the Garda Síochána and the Policing Authority websites.

The Authority makes provisions for meeting in private at each monthly meeting without the Executive present and this was availed of on four occasions during 2023.

In keeping with the high value placed by the Authority on openness and transparency, the Authority is committed to communicating and engaging with the public by:

¹¹ Cormac Keating left his position in the Policing Authority on 11 August 2023.

- Publishing agendas and minutes of meetings on the Authority’s website;
- Holding meetings in public, by holding consultations with stakeholders and with the public and by engaging directly with key stakeholders such as Joint Policing Committees and civil society; and,
- Publishing reports and other material on its website.

Governance Arrangements

The Policing Authority is established as a statutorily independent body. In the exercise of its statutory functions, the Authority is wholly independent and as a publicly funded body, it is appropriately accountable to the Oireachtas and the Minister for Justice.

The overall Governance and Control Framework within the Authority is guided by:

- The Garda Síochána Act 2005 as amended;
- The Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, which has been adopted by the Authority;
- The Corporate Governance Standard for the Civil Service, with which the Authority is required to comply in light of its funding by an Exchequer Vote;
- The recommendations of the Report of the Working Group on the Accountability of Secretaries General and Accounting Officers (the Mullarkey Report);
- The Code of Ethics for the Garda Síochána, which has been adopted, where applicable, by the Authority;
- Public Financial Procedures;
- The Public Spending Code; and,
- Such other legislation, government and public service policies and circulars as are applicable to civil service organisations.

Governance Framework

The governance arrangements in place in the Authority are set out in detail in the Authority’s Governance Framework document. This is supported by a suite of other governance documents including:

- Code of Conduct for members and staff;
- Standing orders;
- Scheme of delegations and matters reserved to the Authority;
- Strategy Statement 2022-2024; and,
- Oversight Agreement and Performance Delivery Agreement with the Department of Justice.

These documents were revised as appropriate during 2023 to reflect any changes considered necessary and are published on the Authority’s website.

Responsibilities

The Authority is responsible for:

- Leading and directing the Authority's activities;
- Compliance with all applicable statutory obligations;
- Holding the CEO and senior management to account for the effective performance of their responsibilities;
- Matters relating to audit, governance and risk management;
- Ensuring that effective systems of internal control are in place and implemented;
- The preparation and adoption of a Statement of Strategy; and,
- The preparation of this Annual Report of the Authority.

The Chief Executive is responsible to the Authority for the performance of her duties and for providing it with such information in relation to the performance of those functions as the Authority may from time to time require.

The Authority operates under a financial provision voted by the Dáil annually, for which the Chief Executive is the Accounting Officer with associated responsibilities for the internal control environment.

Code of Conduct

The Policing Authority Code of Conduct sets out the standards of principle and practice which govern the conduct of Members and staff of the Policing Authority, including external members of Authority Committees. The purpose of the Code is to:

- Establish an agreed set of ethical principles for Members and staff of the Authority;
- Prevent the development or acceptance of unethical practices; and,
- Promote and maintain confidence and trust in Members.

By setting out the key principles to which members and staff should adhere, namely:

- Acting in the Public Interest;
- Integrity and Independence;
- Transparency;
- Confidentiality;
- Participation; and,
- Fairness.

The Code underscores the Authority's commitment to the highest standards of business conduct and has been prepared to assist Authority Members and staff in understanding their duties, rights and obligations. It also commits Members and staff to abide by the Code of Ethics for the Garda Síochána. The Authority undertakes an annual review of the Code to ensure it remains appropriate.

Conflicts of Interest

Procedures are in place to ensure that the Members and staff of the Authority comply with the provisions of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act, 2001, where applicable. In addition, in accordance with the Policing Authority Code of Conduct for Members and Staff, Members of the Authority register their interests in other undertakings with the Secretary on their appointment. The Code of Conduct also governs conflicts of interest in the context of selection competitions run by the Authority and other circumstances where conflicts of interest might arise. All Members of the Authority are required to complete an annual ethics return in accordance with the provisions of the Ethics in Public Office Act.

Standing Orders

The Authority's Standing Orders set out the procedures by which the Authority conducts its business.

Scheme of Delegations

The Authority has agreed a scheme of delegations. This sets out:

- Delegated authority to approve expenditure below agreed thresholds to the Chairperson and Chief Executive;
- Matters relating to governance which are reserved to the Authority; and,
- The statutory functions of the Authority and the extent to which these have been delegated to a Committee of the Authority, the Chief Executive or are reserved to the Authority.

Performance Evaluation

A self-assessment review of the effectiveness of the Authority and its Committees in 2023 was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. This is undertaken annually by means of an anonymous survey of all existing Members, including external Committee members, at year end.

Oversight by Parent Department

There is an Oversight Agreement and a Performance Delivery Agreement in place with the Department of Justice which clearly defines the terms of the Department's relationship with the Authority. They also describe the key roles, responsibilities and supports which underpin the relationship between the Authority on the one hand and the Department, the Minister and the Oireachtas on the other. These agreements reflect and document the extent to which the compliance requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies are suitably adapted to the circumstances (including the size and independence) of the Authority.

A number of the functions of the Policing Authority set out in the Act require the Authority to either consult, advise or inform the Minister or the Government on various matters. Governance liaison meetings between senior management of the Department of Justice and senior management of the Authority take place on a bi-annual basis to monitor performance and consider items of common interest in relation to the Authority's remit.

Audit and Risk Committee

An Audit and Risk Committee, consisting of two members, who are external to the Authority, together with one Authority member, was established in July 2016 under an Audit and Risk Committee Charter and met on five occasions in 2023. The Committee provides independent advice to the Authority and the Accounting

Officer, including in relation to the suitability and robustness of the organisation's internal control, internal audit, risk management and governance systems and procedures.

Risk Management

The Authority has a comprehensive Risk Management Policy, Appetite Statement and system in place to review and monitor risks, including a detailed up to date Risk Register. The Risk Register includes a detailed assessment of the Authority's principal risks, a description of the risks and the internal controls and measures put in place to mitigate each risk. The Risk Register is maintained by the Authority's Chief Risk Officer and is updated on an ongoing basis to reflect new risks arising at all levels in the organisation and changes in controls to mitigate risks. The Risk Register is reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee each quarter with a full review by the Authority at least once per year. Risk management is a standing item on the Authority's monthly meeting agenda and a monthly Risk Management Report is reviewed with specific risks being discussed. Risk management is also a standing item on the management, and staff meetings, assuring that risks and measures to mitigate risks are addressed in the context of all significant Authority discussions, decisions and procedures.

System of Internal Controls

Robust and effective internal controls systems and procedures are in place in the Authority to ensure compliance, as appropriate, with the relevant principles, requirements and guidelines of the Public Spending Code and to mitigate against risk. An annual review of the effectiveness of internal control systems has been undertaken annually by the Internal Audit provider to ensure all aspects of risk management and internal control for the year have been considered and to provide significant assurance regarding the adequacy of internal control systems to mitigate and/or manage key inherent risks. The audit in respect of 2023 was commenced in December 2023, and completed in Q1 2024.

Internal Audit

The Authority's internal audit function is supported by our internal audit provider, Crowleys DFK – contracted following a procurement process undertaken in 2020. The internal audit function, including the annual work plan, is overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). In 2023 there were four audits undertaken, the reports for which were provided to the ARC.

Procurement

All procurement activity is guided by the Public Spending Code published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and a Corporate Procurement Plan was in place for 2023. The Authority has policies and procedures in place for the procurement of goods and services. Formal sanction is sought from the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform, where appropriate, for expenditure above an agreed threshold.

Quality Customer Service

The Authority is committed to providing all those who communicate with us with a professional, efficient, courteous and high standard of service in accordance with the principles of Quality Customer Service. As such, we have published, on our website, both our [Customer Charter 2022 – 2024](#) and our [Customer Action Plan 2022 – 2024](#).

Financial Reporting

All appropriate procedures for financial reporting were in place within the Authority in 2023, including:

- An annual budget against which expenditure was monitored by the Authority, by reference to the achievement of the Authority's statutory remit throughout the year;

- A financial overview provided by the Chief Executive to Authority Members on a monthly basis and a detailed report provided quarterly;
- Formal reports on actual expenditure against budgets are submitted to the Department of Justice and the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform on a monthly basis and are reported to the Authority each month and to the Audit and Risk Committee at each of its meetings;
- The Authority is represented at the Justice Sector Vote Financial Management Committee meetings to monitor and review expenditure for the Vote Group, discuss any common financial issues and to review significant items of new expenditure;
- The Annual Appropriation Account is prepared and submitted for audit to the Comptroller and Auditor General; and,
- Relevant and timely reports containing financial and non-financial information are provided to senior management.

Compliance with Legislation

The Authority was established by the Garda Síochána (Policing Authority and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, which amended the Garda Síochána Act 2005 and operates in accordance with the provisions of that Act. It also has arrangements in place to ensure that it is in compliance with the following statutory provisions, where applicable:

Data Protection

The Authority is in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Arrangements are in place to ensure ongoing compliance with the GDPR which came into effect on 25 May 2018. These arrangements are managed by the Authority's Data Protection Officer who has received appropriate training and has a direct reporting line to the Chief Executive. The Data Protection Commission (DPC) has been notified of the Authority's Data Protection Officer.

The Authority has a Data Protection Policy in place which includes a set of guidelines for staff based on the eight Data Protection Rules to ensure that the Authority is in compliance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. In 2023 the Authority did not receive any Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection legislation. One data breach was reported to the DPC in 2023.

Freedom of Information

The Authority provides comprehensive information on its website in relation to its compliance with the Freedom of Information legislation. This includes a publication scheme that provides information about the functions of the Authority and what material it makes publically available. In 2023, the Authority received five Freedom of Information requests. The details of those not related to personal data can be found on the disclosure log on the Authority's [website](#).

Section 42 Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014

The Public Sector Duty (Duty) or section 42(1) of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) Act 2014 requires public bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides services, and protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services.

The following is an update on our implementation of the Duty per section 42(2) which requires public bodies to undertake an assessment of the human rights and equality issues relevant to its work, address these issues through specific policies, plans and actions, and to report on achievements in its annual report.

‘Human Rights’ is one of the Authority’s values as set out in the current Strategy Statement 2022 – 2024. The Authority remains committed to the ongoing review of its policies and procedures so as to maintain compliance with the principles of human rights and specifically the obligations under the Duty.

In 2022-23, the Authority developed a specific Framework and Implementation Plan for the implementation of the Duty—in line with guidance published by IHREC— which assesses the human rights and equality issues relevant to our functions through a values based approach and identifies a number of specific actions to undertake.

Progress on our implementation is driven and overseen by a dedicated Working Group comprised of staff from all grades of the Executive.

Staff from the Executive completed training in digital accessibility and made progress on improving the accessibility of our communications to meet the required standards set out in the European Union Web Accessibility Directive.

The Authority’s core function is to oversee the performance of the Garda Síochána in its functions relating to policing services. This includes ensuring that policing services are delivered according to the highest ethical standards and in a manner which vindicates the human rights of each individual. In this regard the Authority, working with the Garda Inspectorate, contracted Ms. Jane Gordon to develop a Human Rights Framework for Policing Oversight and Inspections as part of the transition of the Policing and Community Safety Authority and the future oversight work of the new Authority.

The Authority places a strong emphasis on the right to fair procedures, the right to privacy, equal access and equal treatment in all aspects of its functions and strives to ensure that we conduct all of our activities through the lens of human rights and equality. Our obligations in this regard are inherent in all of the objectives and activities set out in this Annual Report.

We continuously work to ensure that the dignity and welfare of all our staff is protected and a culture of participation and respect is encouraged, having regard to these rights and principles. We continue to explore and implement reasonable accommodation and positive actions to ensure that our workplace, our work practices and communications are accessible to our diverse workforce and stakeholders. All internal policies and practices are kept under review to ensure compliance with best practice in those areas.

The Authority is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and acknowledges that the key metrics of performance for State bodies are not only economic, but also include culture, diversity and inclusiveness, together with the well-being of those employed, fostering greater engagement among staff and stakeholders and leading in turn to better outcomes for citizens and communities. Women and men working and governing as equals leads to outcomes that deliver positive benefits for Government and society.

While the appointment of Authority members is a matter for the Minister for Justice, appropriate gender balance in relation to the Authority is set out in the Act (Section 62C of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 as amended) which states that “in appointing the members of the Authority, the Government shall have regard to the objective of there being no fewer than 4 members who are women and no fewer than 4 members who are men”. As of 31 December 2023, of the nine Authority members there were four women and five men. As of 1 January 2024, of the six remaining Authority Members, three are female and three

are male and the Authority Chairperson is female. The Executive Senior Management Team also comprises of three women.

The Authority allocates the necessary funds to ensure that appropriate accommodation is made for staff with disabilities to enable them to participate fully in the workplace.

Diversity of views is promoted by inviting and welcoming a wide range of views from Authority members, committee members and staff.

The Authority promotes equality, diversity and inclusion through its Stakeholder Engagement Programme, by listening to a diverse range of stakeholders, on an ongoing basis, to inform the Authority's oversight work. Throughout 2023, the Authority placed a strong emphasis on engaging with groups representing different communities, including seldom heard and minority groups to assess the degree of fairness and equity exercised in the use of police powers. The Members of the Authority and staff of the Executive also engaged with Garda members and staff and their associations and unions.

Protected Disclosures Act 2014

There were no Protected Disclosures made to the Policing Authority in 2023.

The Policing Authority is committed to fostering an environment where everyone who works at the Authority feels able to "speak-up". By speaking-up, staff can improve the organisation and help to ensure that high standards are maintained. The Authority is committed to ensuring that any concerns raised by staff members are carefully listened to, so that prompt action can be taken to address problems. The Authority is committed to the Transparency International 'Integrity at Work' programme.

The Act provides for certain legal protections to workers where they raise concerns regarding potential wrongdoing in the workplace. It sets out what is a protected disclosure and the legal safeguards in place to protect workers who make protected disclosures. In accordance with the Act, the Authority has a Protected Disclosures Policy in place which sets out the procedures in place for reporting of wrongdoing in accordance with the requirements of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014. The Policy sets out the principles underpinning the development and maintenance of an ethical culture in the organisation and the operational details of how protected disclosures may be made by staff and members of the Authority. The Authority is not a prescribed body under the Act.

Procedures are in place for the making of protected disclosures in accordance with section 21(1) of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014. The annual report required under section 22(1) of the Act has been published on the Authority's website.

5. Financial Information 2023

This section sets out financial information in terms of the monies allocated to the Authority and how that was spent in the year. The Authority, in carrying out its mandate, is directly funded by the Exchequer in the form of an annual allocation of Voted Expenditure.

The Chief Executive is the Accounting Officer for the Authority's Vote and, in that capacity, is accountable to the Oireachtas in respect of all funds voted to the Authority for the provision of services.

2023 Expenditure

All financial information is subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General. Gross expenditure from the Policing Authority Vote for 2023 amounted to €3.389 million. This included staff payroll of €2.397 million, representing 71% of total expenditure.

The financial statements of the Authority take the form of the Annual Appropriation Account which is submitted by the Accounting Officer for audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). The Authority's 2023 Account will be published by the C&AG in the Appropriation Accounts publication in September 2024.

The summary financial report to 31 December 2023 in Appendix 3 provides an analysis of the Vote position and related information for 2023. This report is subject to audit by the C&AG during 2024.

Apportioned Costs

In addition to costs directly incurred by the Authority, costs incurred by other Departments and offices must be considered in order to present an overall picture of the cost of operating the Authority.

The following apportioned costs were incurred elsewhere on behalf of the Authority:

- €258,000 under Vote 13 - Office of Public Works in respect of rent and associated services for the Authority's offices;
- €5,000 under Vote 18 – National Shared Services in respect of HR and Payroll Shared Services;
- €60,000 under Vote 24 – Department of Justice in respect of Financial Shared Services; and
- €51,000 under Vote 43 – OCGIO in respect of ICT Services.

Fees, Salaries and Expenses

The annual fee payable to Members of the Policing Authority for 2023 is in accordance with the rate approved by the Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform. In accordance with Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform guidelines, no fees were paid to public servants serving on the Authority.

Government pay guidelines on the pay of CEOs and State Body employees are complied with in full. All employees of the Authority are civil servants and are remunerated in accordance with the civil service salary scales appropriate to their grade and service.

The total staff payroll cost for the Authority in 2023 was €2.397 million. The staff complement of the Authority was decreased from 39 in January 2023 to a total of 35 at 31 December 2023.

The number of employees whose total employee benefits (including Employers' PRSI but excluding employer pension costs) paid in 2023 fell within each of the following pay bands is shown in the following table:

Table 5: Pay bands of employees 2023

Pay Band	Number of Employees
€60,000 - €70,000	3
€70,000 - €80,000	1
€80,000 - €90,000	4
€90,000 - €100,000	3
€100,000 - €110,000	-
€110,000 - €120,000	1
€120,000 - €130,000	-
€130,000 - €140,000	1
€140,000 - €150,000	-
€150,000 - €160,000	-
€160,000 - €170,000	-
€170,000 - €180,000	1
€180,000 - €190,000	-
€190,000 - €200,000	-

The aggregate compensation for the Senior Management Team of the Authority in 2023, comprising salaries and Employer's PRSI, was €528,260. In addition, total expenses of €13,999 were paid in relation to travel for the Senior Management Team in the performance of official duties.

Travel expenses are paid to Authority Members and staff as appropriate and in accordance with the Authority's Travel Policy. Total expenditure in relation to hospitality and gifts in 2023 was €1,420.

Consultancy Expenditure

A total of €10,879 of expenditure in 2023 related to external consultancy and adviser fees, categorised as follows:

- Legal: €10,879
- Advisory: €0

Taxation

The Authority has complied with its obligations under tax law in 2023.

Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997

It is the policy of the Policing Authority to fully comply with the terms of the Prompt Payments of Accounts Act 1997. The Authority has procedures in place to ensure that invoices are paid within the statutory time limit. While the procedures have been designed to ensure compliance with the Act, they only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance against material non-compliance with the Act.

In 2023, five invoices incurred late payment penalties. The total penalties paid during 2023 resulting from late payments amounted to €321.99 (made up of €31.99 in interest and €290.00 in compensation). This amount represents 3.32% of the total value of invoices paid late, which was €9,705.72.

Appendix 1 – Status of 2023 Corporate Priorities at 31 December 2023

This appendix sets out the progress made against our 2023 corporate priorities. These are the priorities identified for 2023 that see the Authority progress towards the achievement of its strategic objectives set out in its Statement of Strategy 2022-24. Some of the priorities are ones that aim to be achieved in one year, others will continue across the three years of the Statement of Strategy

Table 6: Status of 2023 Corporate Priorities at 31 December 2023

Number	Action	Red, Amber, Green Status Q4	Update on Progress Q4
1	Development and delivery of a new competency framework for Garda Síochána appointments at Superintendent, Chief Superintendent and Assistant Commissioner.	Not complete	The Competency Frameworks have now been produced by the Performance Partnership along with a detailed report. These will be considered by the Appointments Committee on 13 February with a view to being brought to the February meeting of the Authority for approval following which engagement will take place with the Garda Síochána in relation to implementation.
2	Make arrangements for the smooth transition of the appointments process to Public Appointment Service.	On Target	Discussions with the Garda Síochána and Public Appointments Service have begun on the transfer of competition processes and relevant records.
3	Appointments - run two competitions in 2023 for the rank of Superintendent and Chief Superintendent (and potentially an Assistant Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner competition).	Completed	Ran two competitions in 2023 for the rank of Superintendent and Chief Superintendent.
4	Building on the Expressions of Dissatisfaction (EOD) work in 2022 - Focus on oversight of the Garda Síochána response to EOD specifically its use of performance management and discipline to prevent and respond to poor performance, inappropriate behaviour and corruption.	On Target	Continuous strong focus on this topic at Authority, Committee and Executive level has been sustained throughout 2023. A one-page summary of statistics on this topic has been produced and its publication is under discussion.

Number	Action	Red, Amber, Green Status Q4	Update on Progress Q4
5	Transition to Policing and Community Safety Authority. Engage actively with the Department of Justice steering groups on each key element of the legislation. Engage with the Consultants Map out our 'to be' state and our 'as is' state identifying the gaps and the work streams needed to prepare the organisation to become the Policing Community and Safety Authority.	On Target	Transition date has now been communicated by the Department of Justice. All work streams are now set up and active. Transition work is expected to be completed in time for this date.
6	Strategic HR to support transition	On Target	Transition work will continue to be ongoing up to the commencement date for the new Authority.
7	Review of impact of the Policing Authority on Policing Service	Not Complete	No decision on proceeding with this project has been made and it was therefore not completed in 2023. It is possible it may be recommended in 2024 prior to the transition to the Policing and Community Safety Authority.
8	Policing in communities and community safety	Completed	<p>The Authority held four meetings within communities in 2023 in Dublin's North East Inner City (April), Drogheda (June), Mayo (October), and Waterford (November). In support of these meetings, the Executive undertook 74 engagements with the Garda Síochána and 74 engagements with community organisations and stakeholders – (over half of all Executive engagements in 2023). These presented considerable material that provided for briefings for the meetings in question but also were of critical importance to wider oversight activity and in upskilling and training Executive staff.</p> <p>Additionally, in each of the locations, the Authority met with a range of stakeholders and local Divisional management and frontline members, in advance of the meetings in public with the Commissioner and his senior leadership team..</p>

Number	Action	Red, Amber, Green Status Q4	Update on Progress Q4
	Policing in communities and community safety	Partially completed	The three regional events have taken place and were successful. It was decided that the annual event would not be held this year and as such this item is partially completed.
		Partially completed	The Authority published a What We Heard 2022 publication in February 2023 capturing the experiences and views on policing as provided by the community groups and stakeholders engaged with throughout 2022. The decision was subsequently taken to defer any additional publication to Q1 2024 and to continue in the interim to capture stakeholders and Garda workforce feedback within the bi-annual Assessments of Policing Performance and similar publications. In line with this decision, the Assessment 2023 (covering January to June) was published in December 2023 and the Authority meeting in December was provided with an initial draft of What We Heard 2023, capturing the key emerging themes from Authority and Executive engagement with the Garda Workforce. Publication is planned for February 2024.
9	Feasibility assessment and preparation for undertaking Policing Authority National Survey	Completed	While the assessment of feasibility is completed (a comprehensive paper summarising potential cost, timelines etc. was provided to the Authority in Q2), it was decided to pause further preparations for the actual undertaking of such a survey due to demand on resources in light of the transition.
10	Joint Research Bursary 2023	Not Complete	A Request for Quotation for an evidence-based review of interventions which would complement the existing Garda Síochána Health and Wellbeing Strategy was finalised for launch in January 2024, with a deadline for applications of end February 2024.

Number	Action	Red, Amber, Green Status Q4	Update on Progress Q4
11	Oversight of Performance against the Policing Priorities and Policing Plan	Completed	<p>As per the update against the public meetings held within communities, the meetings held in support of these meetings also were the central method by which the Executive undertook fieldwork to oversee the Priorities and Plan. In addition to this, there were a range of other engagements with other units and national bureaus across the range of the Garda Síochána functional areas, supported by considerable desk-based work. This included engagement with the Garda Síochána to continually develop the quarterly reporting and thereafter analyse the reporting along with a suite of other Garda Síochána documents received on a regular (Monthly Tactical Assessment, Process Behaviour Analysis, Commissioner’s Monthly Report, etc.) and one-off basis requests (through the Garda Actions Register), as well as CSO, academic and other sources. Outputs include the monthly Executive Overview providing summary analysis of much of the above information sources. In addition, the depth of interaction with the frontline workforce, achieved through the engagements cited above, allowed for a rigorous and nuanced assessment of progress against the Priorities, Plan and a range of other matters.</p> <p>Two bi-annual Assessments were published as planned, in April and in December. Work has commenced in capturing the totality of the above in the full year Assessment - which will go to the March 2024 meeting of the Authority and will be published thereafter.</p>

Number	Action	Red, Amber, Green Status Q4	Update on Progress Q4
	Oversight of Performance against the Policing Priorities and Policing Plan	On Target	A further CAD 999 review took place in November to examine the progress made by the GS in implementing the Penman recommendations. It is proposed that a further review will take place once the issue of access to call listening has been resolved.
12	To build organisational capacity to deliver on the Policing Authority Statement of Strategy 2022-24 and Business Plan 2023 in the areas of community safety and stakeholder and police engagement.	Partially completed	As per items 8 and 11, fieldwork (including stakeholder engagement) has been undertaken throughout the year. Capacity building has centred on key roles with further consideration to be given to wider training and capacity building in the context of the transition.
13	Approval and appointment of Garda Resources - workforce planning, business case analysis and monthly appointments.	Completed	<p>Five Clearing House meetings, involving representatives from the Authority Executive, Department of Justice, Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan delivery and Reform and the Garda Síochána were undertaken, which has resulted in considerable efficiency for all parties. The Executive also engaged throughout the year with the Garda Síochána Human Resources and People Development to assist with the development of the internal processes around business cases, yielding an enhanced quality of case received.</p> <p>At year end there were no cases with the Authority and approx. 100 new positions had been approved with the consent of the Dept. of Justice and Dept. of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform. Five senior appointments (PO and above) took were approved by the Authority in 2023 and a similar number of secondments and acting positions for senior staff were also approved.</p>

Number	Action	Red, Amber, Green Status Q4	Update on Progress Q4
14	Finance Management of the organisation	Completed	2022 appropriation account completed; 2022 Internal controls audit completed; 2022 External (Controller and Auditor General) audit completed; migration to Financial Management Shared Services is ongoing & on target with NSSO's timelines, Policing and Community Safety Authority transition (Policing Authority and Garda Inspectorate finance functions) ongoing with overall Policing and Community Safety Authority transition, Year End work completed; 2023 internal controls audit completed.
15	Audit - Internal	Completed	The audit plan 2024, as agreed with and monitored by the Audit and Risk Committee, was completed in full. This saw audits undertaken in the areas of: Internal Controls, an annual follow-on audit on previous recommendations, ICT, and GDPR compliance. There was significant progress made in closing audit recommendations, with 36 recommendations closed over the year - including a number arising from the above audits. At year end there were six open recommendations, three of which are projected to be completed in Q1 2024 and three of which will be considered in the context of policy and procedure updates as part of the transition - in line with planned policy reviews.
16	Audit - External (Controller and Auditor General)	Completed	2022 External (C&AG) audit completed.
17	Adherence to the Code of Practice and all statutory governance obligations reporting to the Department of Justice.	Completed	All obligations completed to date and future obligations expected to be completed on target.
18	Board and Committee Effectiveness Review	Partially completed	The reviews in respect of 2022 were completed and presented to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) and Authority in Q1 2023. The survey opened as planned in Q4 2023 however due to the delays in responses across the four surveys it was not possible to provide results to the December meetings of the ARC and Authority as planned. This was deferred to the February meeting of both.

Number	Action	Red, Amber, Green Status Q4	Update on Progress Q4
19	Secretary to the Authority	Completed	All obligations completed to date.
20	Statutory Returns - Secretarial	Completed	All obligations completed to date.
21	Minutes of Authority meeting	Completed	All obligations completed to date.
22	Adherence to Authority's obligations under Data Protection	Completed	All statutory obligations met and GDPR compliance audit completed.
23	Adherence to obligations under Freedom of Information	Completed	All FOI requests and reporting obligations on target.
24	Risk Management and reporting	Completed	Risk reports provided to the Audit and Risk Committee and Authority on a regular basis; Risk on the agenda of each Senior Management Team and all-staff meetings and as such the Register is reviewed and updated regularly; contact made with Office of the Government Chief Information Office to review the eRisk tool to consider its appropriateness to the organisation and a demonstration has been provided.
25	Communications and Engagement Strategy implementation (to include website content).	Completed	Communications and engagement were delivered through the year to support the work of the Authority and the delivery of its strategic objectives.

Number	Action	Red, Amber, Green Status Q4	Update on Progress Q4
26	Multi Annual Research Strategy Implementation	At Risk	A Memorandum of Understanding for a joint research scheme with the Garda Síochána has been agreed and a Request for Quotation drafted for publication in January 2024. Diversity research is ongoing and due for completion Quarter 2, 2024. A decision was taken by the Authority not to publish the victims research. Other research plan actions are not completed but are ongoing.
27	Diversity Research Project	In progress - multi-year	A satisfactory Interim report was resubmitted; All fieldwork is now completed; A meeting held with the research team to discuss progress; Final report is due to be submitted in March 2024.
28	Relationship building through attendance at events and conferences and liaison with statutory stakeholders and oversight bodies.	Completed	Attendance at a wide range of conferences and events took place throughout the year, as well as engagement with statutory stakeholders and oversight bodies in Ireland and abroad, including as host.
29	Management of correspondence and enquiries	Completed	Management of correspondence and enquiries through eCorrespondence system ongoing.
30	Authority Meetings – agenda, logistics, papers, minutes	Completed	All 11 scheduled meetings were delivered, as envisaged and an additional 6 meetings were also delivered.
31	Committees (Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Organisational and Development Committee (ODC) & Policing Strategy and performance Committee (PSP)) – agenda, logistics, papers, minutes	Partially Completed	ARC: five meetings were held. A new member was inducted in Q1 2023. ODC: three meetings were held. PSP: All six meetings took place as scheduled.

Number	Action	Red, Amber, Green Status Q4	Update on Progress Q4
32	Organisational Planning and Review	Completed	Three review sessions with Management Team in January, May and October completed and update papers provided to Authority.
33	Internal Communication	Completed	Internal communications were delivered through the organisation's internal newsletter, quarterly staff engagement days, monthly all staff meetings and regular staff emails.
34	Human Resources and Organisational Development to include recruitment, development, training and culture.	At Risk	Recruitment will be an ongoing matter in terms of the number of vacancies that we will have and the amount of work involved in recruitment. All others areas of HR work will be carried out via the work stream and through the HR team on an ongoing and regular basis.
35	Facilities provision, Business continuity and Health and Safety	Completed	Required facilities services provided and significant enhancement of health and safety as a result of implementation of audit recommendations.
36	Procurement services and oversight of adherence to procurement obligations	Completed	Required procurements have been completed across various business areas.
37	Implementation of Section 42 Plan	At Risk	The Policing Authority Implementation plan in relation to S.42 is now published on the website; work to make documents accessible is ongoing; awareness to accessibility is raised at management meetings and issues addressed.

Number	Action	Red, Amber, Green Status Q4	Update on Progress Q4
38	Garda Action Register	Completed	Monthly meetings with Garda Síochána's Policing Authority Liaison Office and the Commissioner's Office take place; weekly review of the Garda Actions Register (GAR) by the team; Status of information requests discussed and monitored weekly at management meeting; most 'under review' information requests GARS closed; some GARs addressed specifically between the CEO and relevant senior personnel within the Garda Síochána.
39	Business continuity	Not Complete	Unfortunately due to other demands there was not sufficient time in 2023 to deliver this goal.
40	Provision of Legal advice	Completed	Legal advice sought and obtained as required.
41	Provision of ICT services	Completed	IT provision ongoing through internal ICT team and Office of the Government Chief Information Office support and hosting.
42	Organisational Culture and Engagement	Completed	All staff engagement days were delivered and additional sessions relating to the transition also took place.

Appendix 2 – Competition Statistics for Senior Garda Appointments 2023

Table 7: Selection competition statistics for senior Garda appointments 2023

Selection Competition: Chief Superintendent 2023					
By rank	No. of Applicants	By gender	No. of Applicants	By Employing Organisation	No. of Applicants
Superintendent	84	Male	88	Garda Síochána	98
Other ranks	22	Female	18	PSNI	8
Total	106	Total	106	Total	106
Selection Competition: Superintendent 2023					
By rank	No. of Applicants	By gender	No. of Applicants	By Employing Organisation	No. of Applicants
Inspector	177	Male	141	Garda Síochána	171
Other ranks	3	Female	39	PSNI	9
Total	180	Total	180	Total	180
2023 Panels established and Appointments					
Rank	No. of candidates on panel	No. of candidates appointed (at 31/12/23)		Date of Expiry of Panel	
Assistant Commissioner	N/A	N/A		N/A	
Chief Superintendent	17	8		24 December 2024 ¹²	
Superintendent	23	8		19 October 2024	

¹² Authority Members approved a proposal to extend this expiry date by six months to 24 December 2024. In doing so they considered a number extenuating factors, in particular the prevailing uncertainty regarding the commencement of the Policing and Community Safety Authority and desirability for an orderly transfer of the appointments function and any live panels and associated records to the Garda Síochána.

Appendix 3 – Summary of Financial Report 2023

Table 8: Expenditure on the Authority's vote (subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General)

	Estimate Provision	Expenditure
	€000	€000
A (i) Salaries, Wages and Allowances		
Salaries, etc.	2,679	2,397
Overtime	-	-
Total A (i)	2,679	2,397
A (ii) Travel and Subsistence		
1. Travel and Subsistence	68	34
2. Air Travel Emissions Offsetting Payment	2	-
Total A (ii)	70	34
A (iii) Training and Development and Incidental Expense		
1. Staff Training & Development	80	44
2. Public Relations and Advertising	65	15
3. Public Meetings	40	55
4. Publications, Reports, Periodicals etc.	20	8
5. Entertainment	30	-
6. Miscellaneous	640	451
7. Members Fees and Expenses	215	205
Total A (iii)	1,090	778
A (iv) Postal and Telecommunications Services		
Postal Services	5	1
Telecommunications	20	21
Total A (iv)	25	22
A (v) Office Equipment and External IT Services		
1. Computer, etc. (Current)	129	98
2. Office Machinery & Stationary	25	4
Total A (v)	154	102
A (vi) Office Premises Expenses		
1. Maintenance	40	33
2. Heat, Light & Fuel	35	23
3. Furniture & Fittings	40	0
Total A (vi)	115	56
A (vii) Consultancy Services and Value for Money and Policy Reviews	80	-
Total Expenditure	4,213	3,389
<i>less</i>		
B. Appropriations-in-Aid		
Pension Levy	70	89
Miscellaneous Receipts	-	-
Total A-in-A	70	89
Net Expenditure	4,143	3,300

Appendix 4 – Chairperson’s Statement of Internal Control

I acknowledge the Authority’s responsibility for the system of internal control.

Any such system of internal control can provide only reasonable, and not substantial, assurance against material error. In considering the effectiveness of internal controls the Authority has regard, among other things, to the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and has made every effort since its establishment, and continuing during 2023, to follow the requirements of the Code insofar as is appropriate to a small, non-commercial, independent agency.

The procedures that have been put in place, designed to provide effective internal control, have been tailored to reflect the size and complexity of the organisation and reflect the evolving nature of the Authority. In this context, I note that a large proportion of the Authority’s expenditure in 2023 was pay related costs which were administered by the Payroll Shared Service Centre in the National Shared Services Office (NSSO) and are consequently subject to the internal control systems, including internal audit, in place in that organisation. Other HR, ICT and financial transaction processing services are undertaken on the Authority’s behalf by FSS, NSSO and the OCGIO.

The Authority has taken steps to ensure that an appropriate control environment is in place by:

- Clearly defining management responsibilities;
- Formalising a clear separation between the functions and powers of the Authority and the Executive;
- Setting regular reporting requirements concerning financial, risk and governance matters;
- Establishing an Audit and Risk Committee;
- Establishing and publishing Codes of Conduct for Members and staff of the Authority;
- Ensuring that staff are appropriately skilled and experienced; and
- Seeking to establish a strong culture and values, which encourage high standards of ethical behaviour across the organisation.

During 2023, the Authority continually had regard to the operation of its risk management system to identify business risks and to evaluate their implications. The operation of the risk management system is overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee. Risk is a standing agenda item at monthly Authority meetings where the Risk Management Report is reviewed, high risks and mitigation actions are monitored, and risk is addressed in the context of all significant Authority decisions.

In 2023, we continued our hybrid working system of office working, remote working, and site visits. The Senior Management Team, Audit and Risk Committee, Internal Auditors and the Authority continued to pay close attention on an ongoing basis to the impact of this on the Authority’s operations in general and the control environment in which the Authority operates.

The significant risks identified in 2023 were risks relating to:

- Changes in Authority membership, including the change in Chairperson on 31 December 2023;
- Matters concerning the recruitment, retention and development of staff, ensuring the Authority possesses sufficient capacity to perform its statutory functions;

- The ongoing preparations for the commencement of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 (PSCS Act 2024);
- The joint preparatory work to enable the transition, under the PSCS Act 2024, to the new Policing and Community Safety Authority – merging with the Garda Inspectorate;
- Wider changes in the policing and policing oversight infrastructure arising from the above Act.

The Authority responded to these risks in 2023 through the following actions:

- The inclusion of standing items concerning the transition and the Act on all Authority, SMT and management meeting agendas to allow for proactive and thorough responses to emerging issues;
- Maintaining a comprehensive approach to transitional activity led by senior management and jointly undertaken with the Garda Inspectorate;
- Extensive engagement with partners, including the Department of Justice and the Garda Inspectorate, on the progression of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill through the legislative process to its enactment in February 2024.

The procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of internal controls include:

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee met on five occasions in 2023. The Annual Report of the Committee was presented to the Authority in March 2024 and will be made available to view on the Authority's website.

The Annual Report of the Committee provides considerable detail as to the activity undertaken in 2023 to review the comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of the internal control environment. This includes the processes and procedures concerning internal audit, risk management and governance and is, in part, informed by the annual activity undertaken by the Internal Audit Provider and the Comptroller and Auditor General, as the Authority's external auditor. This activity includes the annual review of the internal controls system – which was carried out by the Internal Audit provider in Q1 2023 and presented to the ARC in March 2024 – and the annual C&AG audit, the outcomes of which were presented to the ARC in September 2023 in respect of the 2022 Appropriation Account.

In his foreword, the Committee Chair notes that *“On the basis of its considerations during the past year, as outlined [in the report], the ARC is satisfied that the controls in place address the range of financial, operational, reputational, and strategic risks facing the Authority and that these controls are both adequate and operating satisfactorily, and can therefore be relied on to give assurance to the Authority and the Accounting Officer”*.

Accordingly, I am satisfied that the Committee discharged its role appropriately during the year.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Authority is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and acknowledges that the key metrics of performance for State bodies are not only economic, but also include culture, diversity and inclusiveness together with the well-being of those employed, fostering greater engagement among staff and stakeholders and leading in turn to better outcomes for citizens and communities.

The appointment of the Members of the Authority, and therefore matters relating to diversity of its membership, is the prerogative of the Minister of Justice. However, the Authority seeks to ensure that a diversity of views, experiences and perspectives is central to the work of the Authority by:

- Inviting and welcoming a wide range of views from Authority Members, committee members and staff at all meetings of the Authority and its Committees;
- The undertaking of an extensive programme of stakeholder engagement in the performance of the Authority's oversight functions. This includes a focus on the experience of diverse communities, including diversity in respect of: ethnicity, race, gender, socio-economic standing, etc.;
- Engagement with the research community, including the commissioning of research to capture and give voice the experience of minority and diverse communities; and,
- A focus on human rights in the consideration and assessment of policing performance and wider oversight activity.

The Authority allocates the necessary funds to ensure that appropriate accommodation is made for staff with disabilities to enable them to participate fully in the workplace.

Financial and Management controls

Appropriate financial controls are in place and documented, including financial procedures, separation of duties, appropriate supervision, authorisation and approval limits, accounting processes, control over physical assets and management review.

Appropriate budget and monitoring systems are in place, based on financial records maintained by the Financial Shared Services in the Department of Justice under a Shared Service Agreement. Assurance has been received from the Department's Accounting Officer of the adequacy of these systems and related internal controls. Further operational systems for the management of information by the Authority are in place or being developed in line with business activities and requirements.

The Authority is compliant with relevant current procurement rules and guidelines as set out by the Office of Government Procurement. A review of the effectiveness of the system of internal controls was conducted by Internal Audit in Q1 2024 and presented to the ARC in March 2024.

Internal Audit

An internal audit function for the Authority was established for the Authority in January 2017 and has been provided by an external service provider since that time. The Authority's internal audit function is supported by our internal audit provider, Crowleys DFK – contracted following a procurement process undertaken in 2020. The internal audit function, including the annual work plan, is overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). In 2023 there were three audits undertaken, the reports for

which were provided to the ARC, and an annual follow-up review of the implementation of previous internal audit recommendations. As of 31 December 2023, there were only six recommendations open for the period 2017-2023 (inclusive).

Conclusion

In reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of the Internal Control system, reliance has been placed on:

- The Internal Audit risk based audit planning and work undertaken in 2023, and associated internal audit reports, in particular the annual review of internal controls undertaken in February.
- Management reports and reviews, including on the progress in implementing audit recommendations, corporate priorities and Authority actions;
- The Authority's Risk Register;
- The work undertaken by the Audit and Risk Committee;
- The report of the C&AG on their audit of the Appropriation Account; and
- Assurances from external organisations to which functions have been outsourced, including:
 - From the Secretary General, Department of Justice in relation to Financial Shared Services;
 - Department of Justice Internal Audit report on Financial Shared Services;
 - From the OGCI0 in relation to ICT; and
 - From the NSSO in relation to the provision of HR and Payroll Shared Services.

The internal control system, including this Statement of Internal Control, is reviewed by the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office as part of the audit of the Appropriation Account to confirm the Authority's compliance with the requirements of Paragraph 1.9 (iv) of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and is consistent with the information of which they are aware from their audit work.



Dr Elaine Byrne BL

Chairperson

31 March 2024

Appendix 5 – Energy Usage 2023

The Policing Authority is located on one floor of a five-story building at 90 King Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7. The number of employees decreased by two over the year of 2023, with 35 members of staff in place at 31 December 2023.

The Authority remains committed to the all-of-Government plan for carbon abatement. The Authority was represented at the 2023 Public Sector Energy Forum and values all available opportunities to identify measures for improvements in energy efficiency and green initiatives.

All appropriate procedures for managing energy usage were in place within the Authority in 2023, including:

- The Authority has continued its efforts to minimise energy usage and has a number of initiatives in place including encouraging staff to use the stairs whenever possible and ensuring that all appropriate electrical equipment and all lighting and heating is switched off at close of business each day. Upgraded Led lighting has been fitted in high traffic areas such as corridors in 2023.
- A “Green Champion” has been designated at Director level with responsibility for driving improvements and innovation in this area.
- The Authority is represented on an Environmental, Health and Safety Committee, established and chaired by the main tenant, with representatives from all tenants in 90 North King Street where building-wide issues and ideas can be discussed.
- In 2023, the Authority produced its first Climate Action Roadmap, submitting it to the Department and took part in the Reduce Your Use campaign ran by the SEAI and the OPW.
- During 2023, staff worked remotely three days per week with office attendance on two days per week or for business needs. Due to the reduced occupancy of the Authority’s premises its energy requirements have been reduced. Lighting is only used while a staff member is present in the office and then only in areas that are in use. A continuing reduction in the use of printers, photocopiers and computers has also contributed to a lower use of power in the office. There has been a reduced carbon footprint arising from reduced travel by staff who are travelling to and from the office less.
- Due to the use of a shared building, specific details of energy savings at the Authority’s premises in 2023 are not currently available. However in June 2023, a meter was fitted to trial obtaining more specific Authority energy details.
- The energy consumption of the Authority is included in the annual report provided by the Department of Justice to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

The Policing Authority can be contacted:

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