

PFNI 2021 WORKFORCE SURVEY

Survey results for all respondents



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Executive Summary

- The final, useable sample consisted of 2,368 responses to this survey. This represents a response rate of 35% of all federated officers in Northern Ireland.
- The margin of error for this survey was 2%, with a confidence interval of 95%.

Pay, Allowances and the Cost of Living

- A high level of dissatisfaction was measured across all three measures for pay and allowances; 61% of respondents reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their basic pay, 57% reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their allowances and 60% reported being dissatisfied with their overall remuneration.
- A majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with each of the four fairness of pay statements including 68% who disagreed or strongly disagreed that they are fairly paid considering the amount of experience and training they have, 74% who disagreed or strongly disagreed that they are fairly paid considering the amount of effort they put into their job, 77% who disagreed that they are fairly paid considering the hazards they face and 83% who disagreed that they are fairly paid considering the stresses and strains of their job.
- Almost a third of respondents (31%) disagreed that their pay is adequate enough to provide for the basic things in life, whilst 42% disagreed that they get enough money from their pay to live comfortably. 72% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their pay increases have been enough to maintain their standard of living.
- 63% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they are better off now than they were five years ago whilst 73% disagreed that their household is financially better off now than before the Covid-19 crisis.
- 10% of respondents reported that, on a monthly basis, they never or almost never have enough money to cover all of their essentials, whilst 34% of respondents reported that they currently worry about their personal finances every day or almost every day.

Pension

- 1% of respondents reported that they have opted out of their police pension scheme with a further 6% intending to opt out after April 2022. A majority of respondents (59%) are currently undecided what to do regarding membership of their pension scheme in 2022.
- 63% of respondents reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their pension.
- 36% of respondents reported that their police pension scheme increases or strongly increases their intention to stay within the police, with 31% reporting that it increases or strongly increases their intention to leave.

Promotion and Career Progression

- 57% of respondents reported that they have *not* applied for promotion to the next rank. The top three reasons cited as barriers to applying for promotion included that it would not be worth it for the responsibilities and pressures of the job (21%), that the promotion process is too time consuming (16%) and that it would not be worth it for the salary (14%).

- Of the respondents who reported they *had* been through the promotion process, 59% reported that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the process.
- Almost three quarters of all respondents (73%) reported that the process of transferring between roles within the PSNI was either difficult or very difficult, with a further 50% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that opportunities to apply for specialist posts are available to them.
- A majority of respondents (54%) reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the career progression pathway within the PSNI.

Training

- 57% of respondents reported that they have *not* been able to complete all of their mandatory or refresher training over the previous year. The top three reasons for this include the impact of Covid-19 restrictions (49%), an inability to get an allocated training slot (23%) and issues associated with workload (13%).
- 78% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that online firearms training represented an affective training method. 65% disagreed that online training was an effective method for Personal Safety Programme (PSP) training, whilst 55% disagreed that online first aid training was effective. 35% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that spit and bite guard online training was an effective training method.
- At 54%, a larger proportion of respondents reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their opportunities for training, relative to the level of dissatisfaction with the training they receive, at 33%.
- 41% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the PSNI had met its obligation with respect of providing refresher training to keep skills up to date, 53% disagreed that they had met their obligations for up-to-date training and development. 55% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the PSNI provide the necessary training for them to do their job well, whilst 62% disagreed that they are provided with support when they want to learn new skills.

Misconduct and Discipline

- More than three quarters of survey respondents (78%) reported that they have *never* been subject to an internal misconduct/disciplinary process, whilst 21% stated they have.
- 67% of respondents who had been subject to a misconduct / disciplinary investigation reported that the investigation had a negative or very negative impact upon their physical health, alongside 92% who stated that it had a negative or very negative impact upon their mental health. 86% of respondents reported a negative impact of internal misconduct / disciplinary proceedings on their personal life and 88% on their professional life.
- 61% of respondents reported that they received no support from the PSNI during misconduct / disciplinary proceedings.
- 77% of respondents reported that they have been subject to an external Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI) investigation.

- 38% of respondents reported a negative or very negative impact of a PONI investigation on their physical health and 72% on their mental health. 54% reported a negative or very negative impact on their personal life and 63% on their professional life.
- Almost three quarters (73%) of all respondents who stated that they have been subject to a PONI investigation reported that they received no support from the PSNI.

The Policing Environment

- 50% of respondents reported that high profile international, national and local events have had a negative effect on their ability to perform their day-to-day policing role, whilst 61% reported that these events have had a negative effect on how they feel about being a police officer.
- 56% of respondents reported that their own perception of the PSNI as an impartial police service had been negatively affected by these high-profile events, whilst 85% stated that they felt the public perception of an impartial police service has been negatively or very negatively affected.

Procedural Justice

- 43% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they are treated fairly within the PSNI, with 49% disagreeing that the people they work with in the PSNI are treated fairly.
- 58% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that decisions which affect them are usually made in a fair way compared to 77% who disagreed that there is a general sense that things within the PSNI are handled in a fair way and 76% who disagreed that the PSNI management takes account of their views and opinions.

Health, Sickness and Wellbeing

- 64% of respondents self-reported their physical health as good or very good, with 14% reporting it as poor or very poor.
- 62% of respondents reported zero sickness absence days during the preceding 12 months, with 38% reporting one or more days of sickness absence. According to respondents, the average number of sickness absence days for 11.14.11% of respondents reported sickness absence associated with mental ill-health, with the average number of days at 12.83.
- Almost half of respondents (48%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the PSNI encourage officers to talk openly about mental health and wellbeing, alongside 58% who disagreed or strongly disagreed that they would feel confident disclosing any difficulties with their mental health with their line manager. Despite this, 55% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their line manager would be supportive of difficulties they may experience with their mental health and wellbeing. 23% of respondents disagreed.
- However, 47% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a person would be treated differently (in a negative way) if they disclosed difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing.
- 69% of respondents reported at least one occurrence of presenteeism associated with their physical health in the previous 12 months and 67% reported at least one occurrence associated with their mental health and wellbeing.

- 47% of respondents reported at least one episode of leavism associated with their physical health in the previous 12 months and 51% associated with their mental health.

Policing and Covid-19

- Half of all respondents (50%) stated that they did not have, or did not think they have had, Covid-19 since the pandemic began. 33% of respondents reported that they had, or think they had, Covid-19.
- 48% of respondents reported that they think they contracted Covid-19 through work-related activities, with 25% reporting through non-work-related activities.
- Half of all survey respondents (50%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the PSNI managed the service well during the Covid-19 pandemic, whilst 47% agreed or strongly agreed that they had access to all of the equipment they personally needed to protect them from Covid-19 whilst at work.
- 80% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the new policing powers which were introduced to manage Covid-19 were clear, alongside 65% who disagreed that the exposure to risk of policing during the pandemic has been fully understood.
- A majority of survey respondents (72%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the degree of priority given to police officers during the vaccination programme was fair.

Morale and Organisational Commitment

- 60% of respondents reported their personal morale as low or very low, followed by 66% who reported low team morale and 89% who reported low service wide morale.
- The top three most commonly selected factors in negatively impacting personal morale were the delay in implementing pay increases and pay awards (92%), how the police are treated (86%) and the impact of NI's political environment (80%).
- 69% of respondents reported that they are intending to remain with the PSNI until pension age or at least for the next two years with a further 13% stating their intention to leave the service within the next two years or as soon as they can.
- The top three most commonly selected factors in having a major effect on intention to leave the PSNI included personal morale (70%), the impact of policing on health and wellbeing (56%) and how the police are treated (57%).
- 80% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that members of the PSNI are respected by society, alongside 75% who disagreed that they feel valued by the PSNI and 73% who disagreed that they feel valued by society.
- 69% of respondents disagreed that the PSNI motivate them to help it achieve its objectives whilst 61% disagreed that the PSNI inspires them to do the best in their job.
- 57% of respondents would not recommend joining the police to others. Despite this, 51% agreed or strongly agreed that they feel proud to be in the police.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Policing across the UK has faced significant challenges over the last decade, with unprecedented budget cuts, harmful reductions in officer numbers, declining mental health and wellbeing and soaring demand. These challenges are as evident in Northern Ireland as they are elsewhere, and they show little sign of abating. This context is not new, it has formed the backdrop for the last two Workforce Surveys conducted by the Police Federation for Northern Ireland (PFNI), and it continues to do so for the third PFNI Workforce Survey. However, in 2021 this context is further complicated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and real concerns regarding the independence of the process by which police officers pay, terms and conditions are set within the UK.
- 1.2. This is the third Workforce Survey conducted by the PFNI. The first Workforce Survey, which was carried out in 2015, provided a benchmark for the analysis of key workforce issues as identified by federated officers serving in the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The results from the 2015 survey provided, for the first time, first-hand indisputable evidence from serving police officers of areas of strain across the PSNI workforce. This paved the way for a greater recognition of the importance of listening to the views of serving officers.
- 1.3. The PFNI's second Workforce Survey was conducted in 2018 and this enabled an analysis of how the views and opinions of serving PSNI officers had changed in the three years since 2015. The data from this survey formed an integral part of the evidence submitted to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) in 2019 and 2020, helping to secure a 2.5% increase in the salaries of police officers in Northern Ireland in both years. This survey also focussed on the importance of wellbeing within policing, providing, for the first time, a standardised wellbeing score for police officers in Northern Ireland as well as investigating issues such as presenteeism and leavism.
- 1.4. The 2021 Workforce Survey is the first PFNI survey conducted since the appointment of the new PSNI Chief Constable, Simon Byrne. This survey provides updated evidence relating to many of the workforce issues previously explored including satisfaction with pay, allowances and pensions, procedural justice, health and wellbeing and morale. However, it also provided the opportunity to obtain evidence from officers on issues which are currently of interest to policing in NI including in relation to the promotion process, training opportunities, misconduct and disciplinary processes, the wider policing environment and the impact of Covid-19.

Aims

- 1.5. In keeping with our previous Workforce Surveys, the PFNI 2021 Workforce Survey has the following five key aims:

- 1) To gather the views of serving federated police officers in NI regarding various workplace issues
- 2) To conduct a comparative analysis of changes in the views and attitudes of PSNI officers overtime based upon the results from the 2015 and 2018 Workforce Surveys
- 3) To conduct a comparative analysis of the views and opinions of serving police officers in NI with their counterparts in England and Wales, where comparisons are possible
- 4) To provide evidence to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) as part of the annual pay review process regarding elements of pay and reward and the impact on morale and motivation
- 5) To provide updated evidence to the PSNI regarding key workforce issues, with the aim of encouraging debate and discussion to assist with the implementation of positive change within the service.

Research design

- 1.6. As with the PFNI's previous Workforce Surveys, the 2021 Workforce Survey utilised a single data collection method: namely the distribution of an online survey to all serving, federated PSNI officers. The survey was developed using the online survey tool Snap Surveys. The survey launched to respondents on Tuesday the 9th of November 2021 and remained open for a period of three weeks, closing on Tuesday the 30th of November 2021.
- 1.7. Respondents were provided with detailed information regarding their participation before freely providing their consent for their participation in the study. Participation was dependent upon this consent which included confirmation that participants had read and understood the information provided, that they understood that their participation was made on a voluntary basis, that their responses would be anonymous and that only anonymised data would be published. Respondents were also informed that whilst they could end their participation at any point during the completion of the survey, any responses they had already provided could not be withdrawn due to the anonymous nature of the online survey tool.
- 1.8. The questionnaire was designed by the PFNI Research Department, in collaboration with the PFNI Permanent Officials and with reference to previous PFNI Workforce Surveys as well as surveys distributed by the Police Federation for England and Wales

(PFEW) in 2020. A central design feature of this survey was the use of adaptive questioning to help reduce the number of questions seen by respondents depending upon previous answers given, thus reducing respondent burden. The only mandatory questions included in this survey were those questions which determined the adaptive questioning.

- 1.9. The questionnaire covered a wide range of topics which reflect some of the most pressing issues within policing in NI at the time of design. However, as evidenced from the research aims, the design also aimed to provide an over time comparison with the results from both the 2015 and 2018 Workforce Surveys, as well as a comparison with police forces in England and Wales. This is an important comparative base, providing evidence of how workplace issues in policing in NI are viewed within a wider UK policing context. This England and Wales comparator utilises two specific surveys, namely the 2020 PFEW Demand, Capacity and Welfare Surveyⁱ, as well as the 2020 Pay and Morale Surveyⁱⁱ.
- 1.10. All the data analysis was conducted by the PFNI Research Department, including both the analysis of the quantitative survey responses as well as the qualitative ‘free text’ responses. The quantitative analysis was conducted via SPSS 24 which involved the statistical analysis of the demographic and workforce data in order to assess sample representativeness, as well as the analysis of each survey question as provided by the full sample and when split by key demographic and workforce characteristics. All the results presented in this report have been rounded to the nearest whole number, however, please note that due to rounding not all of the results will add to 100%. Furthermore, as the majority of the questions were not mandatory or involved survey routing, the base number will change for each question.
- 1.11. When analysing and interpreting the quantitative data, some data groups have been combined for ease of interpretation. For example, in the use of a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, the two agree categories will have been grouped as well as the two disagree categories; this enables reporting based upon the *overall* level of agreement or disagreement. In addition, in order to protect the identity of all respondents and to ensure no data disclosure, no cells with counts less than 5 will be reported upon. Furthermore, where calculation may lead to the identification of such cells, numeric values have been excluded or categories have been combined.
- 1.12. The second phase of the data analysis involved the detailed examination and thematic coding of more than 1,000 qualitative responses. This was a largely manual process, and the initial themes were chosen based upon the key topics in the survey. These themes were then expanded upon to include key issues emerging from the text.

Sample

- 1.13. As with the previous PFNI Workforce Surveys, the 2021 survey utilised a random sampling strategy, providing all federated police officers in NI with the opportunity to participate. This strategy, the response rate achieved, and the statistical representativeness of the data are the three key strengths of this study. In total, 2,672 responses were submitted to the 2021 Workforce Survey, however following detailed data cleansing¹, the final useable sample was reduced to 2,368 cases. As of 1st November 2021, there were 6,711 federated officers serving in the PSNIⁱⁱⁱ, giving a response rate of 35% of all federated officers. This compares with the 37% response rate achieved for the 2015 Workforce Survey and the 38% achieved for the 2018 Workforce Survey.
- 1.14. In determining the representativeness of the survey sample, relative to the population, the margin of error and confidence intervals were calculated. These statistics identify how much the survey results would be *expected* to reflect the views of the overall population. Without surveying every individual in the target population, some degree of error is inevitably involved. The margin of error statistic highlights how much more or less the results may be in reality. The smaller the margin of error, the more confidence can be gained from the results. In academic studies a 5% margin of error is the commonly recognised standard.
- 1.15. The margin of error for the 2021 PFNI Workforce Survey is 2%, with a confidence interval of 95%. This means that 95% of the time the results will be within -2% and +2% of the numbers cited. For example, if 75% of respondents selected 'satisfied' to a survey question, we can estimate, with 95% confidence, that 73%-77% of the total PSNI federated population would answer the same.

Demographic characteristics

- 1.16. Information was gathered on eight demographic characteristics, the results of which can be seen in Table 1 below. To protect the identity of all respondents and to ensure no data disclosure, no cells with counts less than 5 have been reported. Furthermore, where calculation may lead to the identification of such cells, categories have been combined.

¹ Data cleaning involved the removal of any 'partial' responses who had not completed *at least* two thirds of the survey, as well as a 'time check' to ensure no respondents had sped through the survey in an unrealistic completion time i.e. less than 2 minutes. A thorough sense checking of the data was also conducted to ensure no respondents had provided a service length which was greater than their age or a rank/role length which was greater than their service length. A sense check was also conducted to ensure no respondent reported more sickness absence for mental ill-health reasons, than their total number of sickness absence days.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	N (valid %)
Gender	
<i>Man</i>	1,672 (71%)
<i>Woman</i>	655 (28%)
<i>Trans/non-binary/gender non-conforming/prefer not to say</i>	25 (1%)
Age	
<i>18-25</i>	58 (3%)
<i>26-33</i>	359 (16%)
<i>34-41</i>	665 (29%)
<i>42-49</i>	760 (33%)
<i>50-57</i>	426 (18%)
<i>58+</i>	48 (2%)
Sexual orientation	
<i>Heterosexual/straight</i>	2,220 (94%)
<i>Bisexual</i>	20 (1%)
<i>Gay/lesbian</i>	66 (3%)
<i>Prefer not to say</i>	54 (2%)
Disability	
<i>No</i>	1,996 (85%)
<i>Yes</i>	276 (12%)
<i>Prefer not to say</i>	69 (3%)
Marital status	
<i>Single</i>	257 (11%)
<i>Long term/established relationship</i>	426 (18%)
<i>Married/in a civil partnership</i>	1,489 (63%)
<i>Separated, but still legally married/in a civil partnership</i>	77 (3%)
<i>Divorced/widowed</i>	116 (5%)
Ethnic background	
<i>White</i>	2,329 (99%)
<i>Traveller/Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi/Chinese/Black/Mixed</i>	15 (1%)
Educational qualification	
<i>No qualifications</i>	38 (2%)
<i>Below degree level</i>	1,120 (48%)
<i>Degree or equivalent</i>	950 (40%)
<i>Higher degree or equivalent</i>	248 (11%)
Religion	
<i>Protestant</i>	1,168 (50%)
<i>Catholic</i>	608 (26%)
<i>Muslim/Buddhist/Hindu/Jewish/Sikh/Other</i>	75 (3%)

<i>None</i>	505 (21%)
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- 1.17. Of the 2,368 respondents included in the final, useable sample 71% were men, 28% were woman and 1% reported as trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming or preferred not to say. As of the 1st of November 2021, the PSNI workforce composition statistics^{iv} reported that 70% of the PSNI workforce were men and 31% were women.
- 1.18. Respondents were aged between 21 and 65+, with an average age of 42. 3% of respondents were aged between 18 and 25, 16% were between 26 and 33, 29% were between 34 and 41, 33% were between 42 and 49, 18% were between 50 and 57 and 2% were aged 58+.
- 1.19. 94% of respondents reported their sexual orientation as heterosexual/straight, whilst 1% reported being bisexual, 3% report being gay or lesbian and 2% preferred not to say. 12% of respondents reported that they had a disability, defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial long term adverse impact on their ability to carry out day to day activities. 85% of respondents did not report having a disability whilst a further 3% preferred not to say.
- 1.20. 11% of respondents reported that they are currently single, 18% are in long term/established relationships and 63% are married or civilly partnered. A further 3% are separated and 5% are divorced or widowed. 99% of respondents reported that their ethnic background is white and due to the presence of small numbers, the remaining ethnic backgrounds have been combined, with just 1% of respondents either from a Traveller, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Black Caribbean, Black Africa, Black other or mixed ethnic background. This compares with the PSNI workforce composition statistics^v, which identify that as of the 1st of November 2021, just 0.58% of the PSNI officer workforce are from an ethnic minority background.
- 1.21. 2% of respondents reported having no formal qualifications, with 48% stating that they below degree level qualifications. 40% reported having a degree or equivalent qualification and 11% a higher degree or equivalent. As such, 51% of all respondents were educated to at least degree level.
- 1.22. As a key demographic identifier in NI, respondents were asked to outline their religion or belief. 50% of respondents reported their religion as Protestantism and 26% reported that they are Catholics. Due to the presence of small numbers the remaining religion groups have been combined, with 3% of respondents stating they are Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Sikh or other. An additional 21% of respondents stated they are of no religion. This compares to data released by the PSNI^{vi} which identifies that as of the 1st of November 2021 67% of PSNI officers were Protestant, 32% were Catholic and just 1%

were 'not determined'. This poses questions about how religion is determined and recorded within the PSNI and the importance of the 'third group' i.e., no religion.

Workforce characteristics

1.23. Information was also gathered on five workforce characteristics, with the results shown in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: WORKFORCE CHARACTERISTICS

	N (valid %)
Rank	
<i>Constable</i>	1,762 (74%)
<i>Sergeant</i>	389 (16%)
<i>Inspector</i>	177 (8%)
<i>Chief Inspector</i>	40 (2%)
Role	
<i>Neighbourhood (NPT)</i>	290 (12%)
<i>Response (LPT)</i>	549 (24%)
<i>Call management, CTC, Criminal Justice</i>	170 (7%)
<i>Custody</i>	44 (2%)
<i>Operational Support</i>	352 (15%)
<i>Crime Operations</i>	853 (37%)
<i>Training</i>	78 (3%)
Service length	
<i>0-2 years</i>	132 (6%)
<i>3-5 years</i>	223 (9%)
<i>6-10 years</i>	263 (11%)
<i>11-15 years</i>	598 (25%)
<i>16-20 years</i>	612 (26%)
<i>21-25 years</i>	255 (11%)
<i>26-30 years</i>	219 (9%)
<i>31+ years</i>	61 (3%)
Rank length	
<i>0-2 years</i>	398 (17%)
<i>3-5 years</i>	401 (17%)
<i>6-10 years</i>	333 (14%)
<i>11-15 years</i>	521 (22%)
<i>16-20 years</i>	421 (18%)
<i>21-25 years</i>	152 (6%)
<i>26-30 years</i>	104 (4%)
<i>31+ years</i>	32 (1%)

Role length	
<i>0-2 years</i>	1,106 (47%)
<i>3-5 years</i>	638 (27%)
<i>6-10 years</i>	293 (12%)
<i>11-15 years</i>	227 (10%)
<i>16-20 years</i>	75 (3%)
<i>21-25 years</i>	11 (1%)
<i>26+ years</i>	11 (1%)

1.24. Of all the respondents, 74% reported their current rank as Constable, followed by 16% who reported their rank as Sergeant. A further 8% reported they are at the rank of Inspector, and 2% at the rank of Chief Inspector. This compares to the PSNI strength of police service statistics^{vii} from the 1st of November which reported that 76% of PSNI officers are at the rank of Constable, 16% are Sergeants, 5% are Inspectors and 1% are Chief Inspectors.

1.25. 12% of respondents stated that they are currently deployed in a Neighbourhood Policing (NPT) role, with a further 24% deployed in a response (LPT) role. As such, 36% of respondents report working on the front line of policing. 7% of respondents reported operating in call management, CTC, criminal justice, whilst 2% reported working in a custody role. 15% of respondents stated their current role was in operational support, 37% in crime operations and 3% in training. Data provided to the PFNI by the PSNI^{viii} identifies that as of the 10th of November 2021 13% of PSNI officers were in Neighbourhood teams, 35% were in response roles, 9% were in call management, CTC, criminal justice, 1% were in custody roles, 13% were in operational support functions, 26% were in crime operations and 3% were in training.

1.26. The average service length of all respondents was 15 years, with a minimum of zero years and a maximum of more than 40 years' service. 6% of respondents reported being in their initial 2-year probation period, with 9% reporting having between 3 and 5 years' service. A further 11% reported having between 6 and 10 years' service and 25% between 11 and 15 years' service. 26% of respondents reported serving as a police officer for between 16 and 20 years, 11% between 21 and 25 years, 9% between 26 and 30 years and 3% more than 31 years' service.

1.27. The average length of time respondents had served in their current rank was 11 years. 17% of respondents reporting being at their current rank for between 0 and 2 years, with 17% reporting having been at their rank for between 3 and 5 years. A further 14% reported being at their current rank for between 6 and 10 years, with 22% reporting between 11 to 15 years. 18% have been at their rank for 16 to 20 years, 6% for 21 to 25 years, 4% for 26 to 30 years and 1% for more than 31 years.

1.28. The length of time respondents reported being in their current role ranged from zero years to more than 26 years; the average number of years was 5. 47% of respondents reported being in their current role for 0 to 2 years, with 27% between 3 and 5 years. 12% reported being in their current role for 6 to 10 years, 10% for 11 to 15 years and 3% for 16 to 20 years. 1% of respondents had been in their role for 21 to 25 years and 1% for more than 26 years.

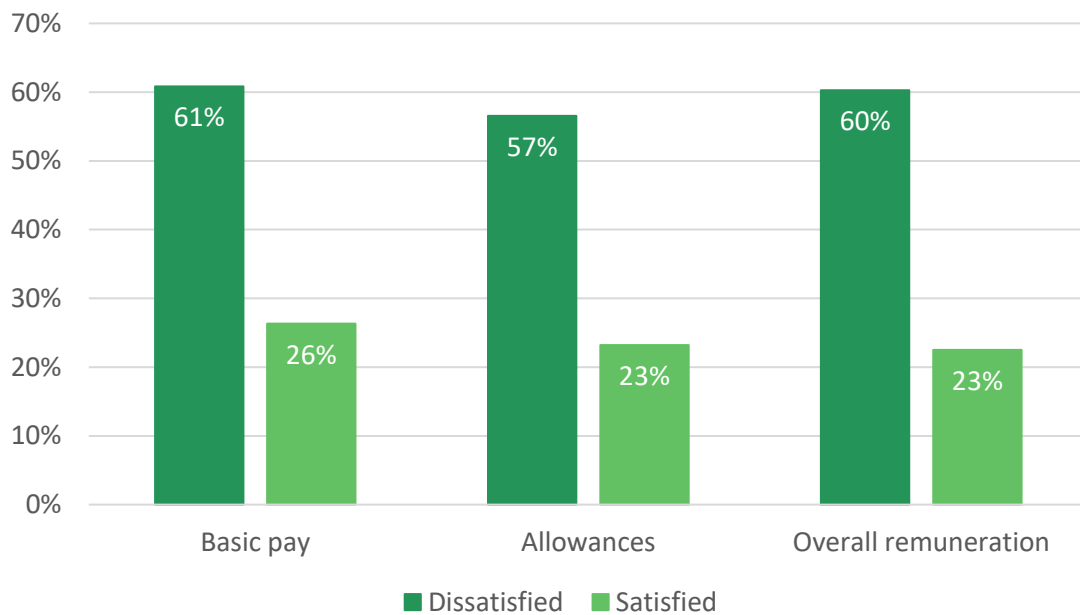
2. Pay, Allowances and the Cost of Living

- 2.1. To assist with understanding the views and opinions related to issues associated with remuneration, all survey respondents were asked to identify if they were at the top of their respective pay scales, if so, how long they had been at the top and if not, how many years they had remaining until they reached the top. This data provided an understanding if respondents were continuing to receive incremental pay increases or relied solely upon pay awards to see any positive change in the value of their take home pay.
- 2.2. Just under a third of respondents (31%) reported they are *not yet* at the top pay point for their rank, indicating they continue to receive incremental pay increases on an annual basis. In contrast 68% of respondents reported that they are currently at the top pay point for their rank, indicating that outside of promotion, pay awards are the only means by which their pay can and will increase.
- 2.3. Of those who are already at the top of their pay scale, more than a quarter (26%) have been there for more than 10 years, meaning that in the last 10 years these officers have seen their salaries increase by just 11%. A further 23% of respondents have been at the top of their pay scale for between 6 and 9 years, with 40% reaching their top pay point between 2 and 5 years ago and 11% less than 2 years ago.
- 2.4. Of those respondents who have yet to reach the top of their pay scale, 10% will do so within the year with a further 13% by the end of the following year. 62% of these respondents will be at the top of their pay scale within 2 to 6 years, with the remaining 8% having 6 or 7 years of incremental payments remaining.

Satisfaction with pay

- 2.5. All survey respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with their basic pay, their allowances and their overall remuneration (pay and allowances combined). **A high level of dissatisfaction was measured across all three measures for pay and allowances.** 61% of respondents reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their basic pay, alongside 57% who reported dissatisfaction with their allowances. In total, 60% of respondents stated they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their overall remuneration. In contrast, the level of satisfaction with basic pay (26%) was slightly higher than the satisfaction levels for either allowances or overall remuneration, at 23% for both.

Figure 1: How satisfied are you with each of the following...? (All respondents) %



- 2.6. The analysis of levels of satisfaction with basic pay by position within the pay scale identifies that respondents who are *not* at the top of their pay scale are more likely than those who are, to report being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their basic pay, at 66% and 59% respectively. This trend is also mirrored in the levels of satisfaction with 24% of those *not* at the top of their pay scale reporting satisfaction with their basic pay, relative to 27% of those who are. This hints at the relative importance of the financial value of take-home pay (particularly for those with a number of years to go until they reach the top of the pay scale), rather than the perceived positive impact of the anticipated receipt of incremental increases in pay overtime.
- 2.7. **The level of dissatisfaction among serving PSNI officers regarding their remuneration has remained stable since the 2018 Workforce Survey** with a 3p.p. increase in dissatisfaction with allowances and a 1p.p. decrease in dissatisfaction overall. At 60%, the level of dissatisfaction with basic pay has remained the same as that reported in 2018. However, as reported in the previous workforce survey report, this remains a significant increase in the level of dissatisfaction reported since 2015, up from 44% dissatisfaction in allowances, 40% dissatisfaction in overall remuneration and 32% dissatisfaction in basic pay.
- 2.8. Respondents to the PFEW 2020 Pay and Morale Survey were more likely than respondents in NI to report dissatisfaction with these areas of remuneration. Whilst 61% of respondents in NI reported dissatisfaction with their basic pay, this increased to 69% in England and Wales. In addition, when compared with 57% of respondents

reporting dissatisfaction with their allowances in NI, 67% of respondents in England and Wales did so. Furthermore, dissatisfaction with overall remuneration was 71% in England and Wales compared to 60% in NI.

- 2.9. When provided with the opportunity to voice their opinion on issues of pay, respondents were consistently vocal in their dissatisfaction and often provided an understanding of how this is viewed relative to alternative employment opportunities.

“In regard to pay and benefits, new officers are paid a disgraceful amount, an amount that has fallen in direct comparison to officer that joined 20 years ago. How can Policing be an attractive career prospect at £1 more an hour than a job where your major responsibility is stacking shelves? (Inspector, 16-20 years’ service)

“...top rate Police Constable pay is being overtaken by low skilled jobs such as building site labourer...It is no longer a well-paid job. I know many officers now seeking an additional job or looking to leave the PSNI due to the pay. Every year there is an issue with a 1 percent pay rise which in real terms is a pay cut year on year and has been like that for a long time... Basic living is now a struggle on a top rate Constables pay” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

“Pay scales within PSNI are extremely poor. Starting salary is terrible when compared to likes of low responsibility jobs like Tesco etc. With minimum wage etc being increased makes PSNI pay bad compared to other low skilled jobs. It is becoming more difficult to justify staying as a police officer when for a minor pay cut, work life balance, job satisfaction and stress could be reduced significantly” (Constable, 6-10 years’ service)

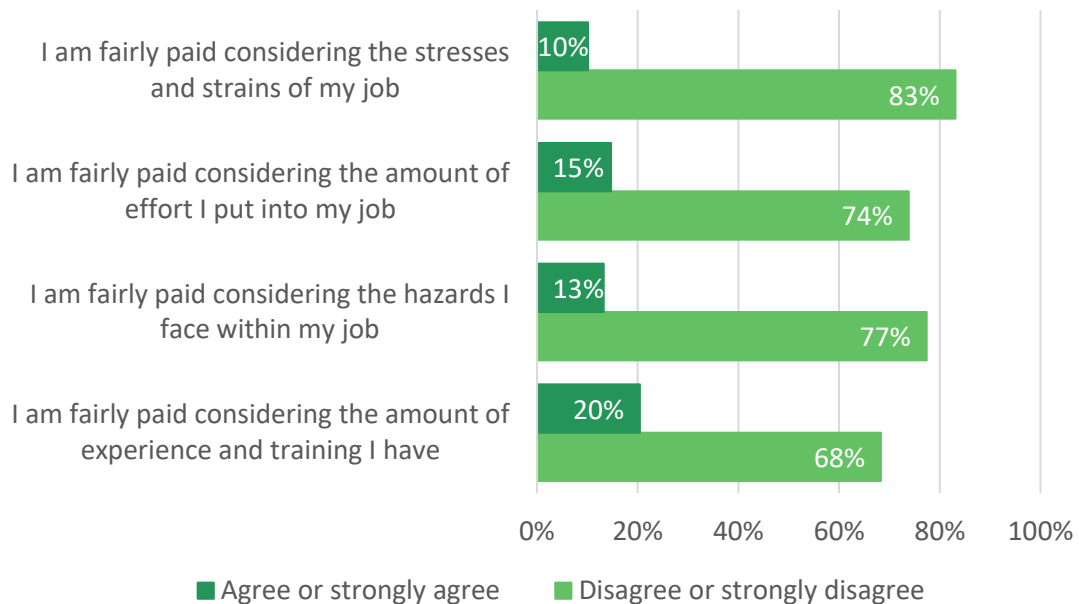
“Part of the considerations for joining was the Pension and pay and conditions, but over the past 12 years we have basically taken a pay cut every year due to inflation and the benefits e.g. food and NI allowance are being eroded. This has affected my wellbeing and I am deeply worried about my financial future after 25 years of service. I feel totally undervalued by the Government and public for doing a dangerous job and keeping the public and other officers safe” (Constable, 21-25 years’ service)

Perception of fairness in pay

- 2.10. **A majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with each of the four fairness of pay statements**, this includes 68% who disagreed or strongly disagreed that they are fairly paid considering the amount of experience and training they have. However, one in five respondents did agree or strongly agree with this statement. 74%

of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they are fairly paid considering the amount of effort they put into their job, whilst 15% agreed with this statement.

Figure 2: Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements...? (All respondents) %



2.11. Almost four in five respondents (77%) disagreed that they are fairly paid considering the hazards they face, with 13% agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. However, the highest level of disagreement with the perception of fairness statements involved fairness relating to the stresses and strains of the job, with 83% of respondents disagreeing with this statement and only 10% in agreement with it.

2.12. The perception of fairness in pay provided to serving police officers has altered slightly over time, with a greater proportion of survey respondents agreeing with the statement that they are fairly paid considering their training and experience in 2021, at 20%, compared to 13% in 2018. However, this is a reduction from a series high of 24% in 2015. The level of disagreement with the perception of fair pay with regards to the hazards faced has remained stable over the three survey periods, at 76%, 76% and 77% respectively. In contrast, disagreement with fairness of pay relating to the stresses and strains of the job reduced from 80% in 2015 to 69% in 2018. However, in 2021 this increased to a series high of 83%. No time-based comparator is available for perceptions of fairness pay in relation to effort.

2.13. The results obtained from police officers in NI are similar to those collated from police officers in England and Wales in 2020, with disagreement in the perception of fairness in pay related to experience and training at 68% and 69% respectively, disagreement in

relation to hazards in the job at 77% and 77% respectively and disagreement with regards to stresses and strains at 83% and 86% respectively. No comparator is available for perceptions of fairness in pay in relation to effort.

2.14. Respondents also expressed their dissatisfaction with the fairness of their pay through their qualitative responses:

“Taking into consideration the risks involved with the job and the fact that I have to travel a total of over 120 miles round trip to go to station, I believe I am not paid anywhere near enough for the rank of a Constable. I am now worse off financially than what I was 5 years ago” (Constable, 0-2 years’ service)

“Pay is terrible, and the threat of pay freezes...Pay is very low to start with and the increments are too long to receive over the years considering the stress and lack of work life balance” (Constable, 0-2 years’ service)

“Police pay and pension links closely to mental health and feeling valued in the workplace. If we were treated and paid fairly then perhaps working within the Police would be a positive experience... I was threatened and lost money as I had to move out of my home and sell my car” (Sergeant, 16-20 years’ service)

“Pay: Very poor considering the work we do within the community and the risk that we regularly take within the course of our duties. Nearly two years out on the ground and working for £1550 per month in hand is simply not worth what we go through” (Constable, 0-2 years’ service)

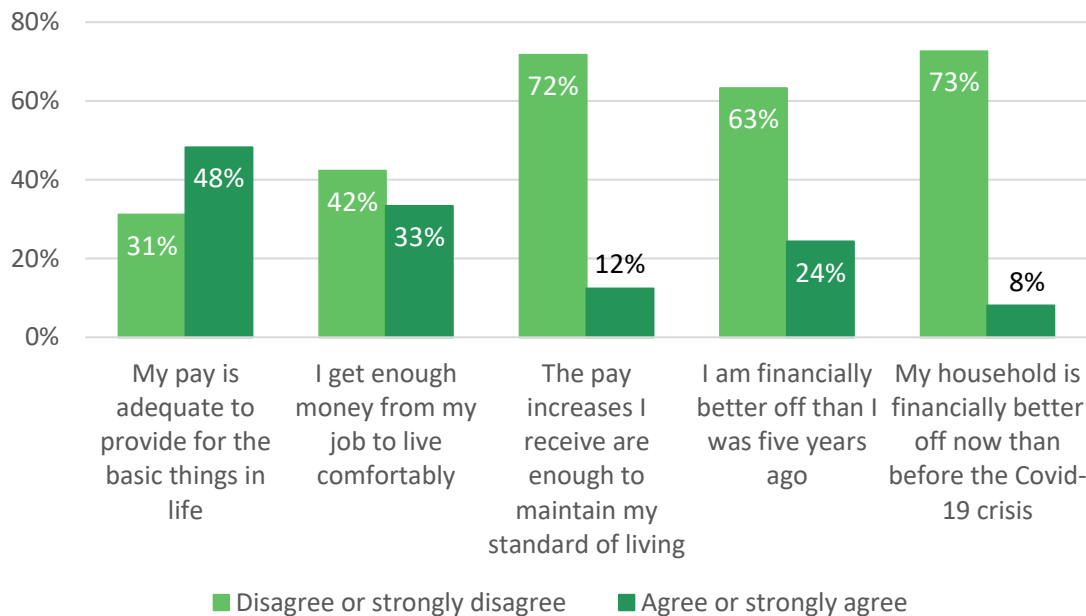
Adequacy of pay

2.15. In assessing the adequacy of police pay at the most rudimentary level i.e., in its ability to provide for the basic things in life, almost half (48%) of all survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. However, almost a third (31%) of survey respondents disagreed. This was the only adequacy of pay statement to produce a greater proportion of respondents in agreement with it. 42% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they get enough money from their pay to live comfortably, with a third of respondents (33%) in disagreement with this statement.

2.16. **Almost three quarters (72%) of respondents disagreed that the pay increases they receive are enough to maintain their standards of living.** Just 12% of respondents were able to agree with this statement. Furthermore, just 24% of respondents reported being financially better off now than they were five years ago, with 63% in disagreement. In

addition to this, just 8% of respondents stated that their household is financially better off now than it was before the Covid-19 pandemic. Almost three quarters of respondents (24%) disagreed with this statement.

Figure 3: Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following...? (All respondents) %



2.17. These statements were not included in the 2015 Workforce Survey, however when compared to the results obtained in the 2018 Workforce Survey, they do highlight some improvement in perceptions of adequacy of pay. Since 2018 the percentage of officers agreeing or strongly agreeing that their pay is adequate enough to provide for the basic things in life has increased from 29% to 48%, whilst the proportion agreeing that they get enough money to live comfortably has increased from 27% to 33%.

2.18. However, the level of *disagreement* related to the impact of pay increases and the maintenance of a standard of living has increased from 69% in 2018 to 72% in 2021. Nevertheless, in comparing the financial position with five years previous, 71% of respondents in 2018 disagreed that they were financially better off, compared to 63% in 2021.

2.19. No comparator data is available for the analysis of the difference in the perception of the adequacy of pay between police officers in England and Wales with those in NI.

2.20. These questions and the link between remuneration and personal living standards resulted in a large number of qualitative responses aimed at highlighting the personal and family impact of police pay.

“Pay and Benefits have been continually eroded, so many benefits have just been removed from us. Basic pay has not kept up with inflation so in real terms I am worse off now than when I joined the job” (Constable, 26-30 years’ service)

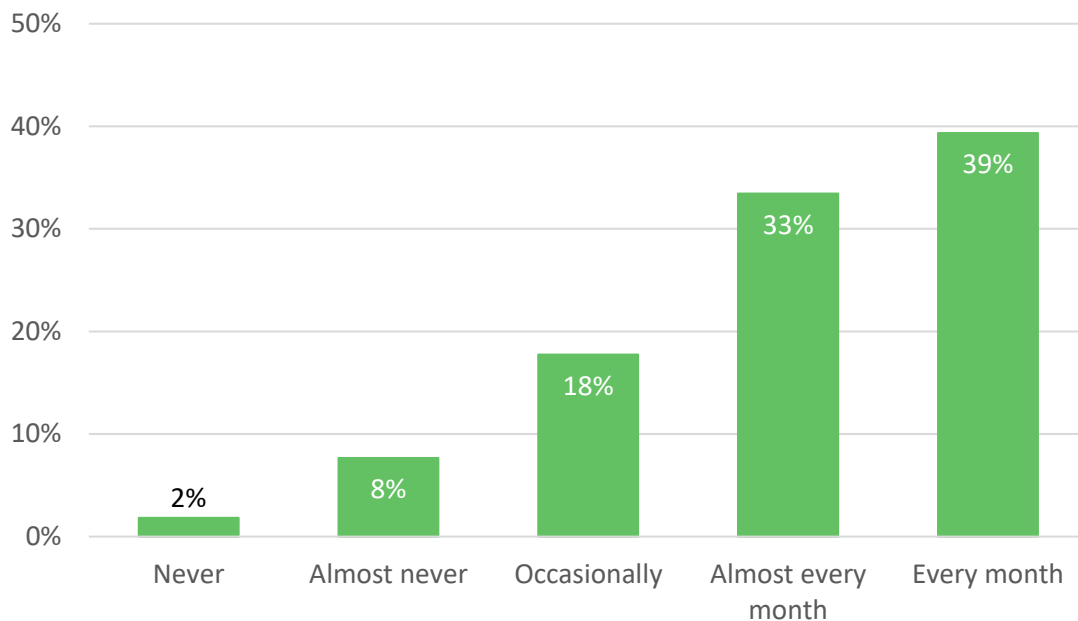
“I genuinely don’t understand how after reaching 20years in service and being promoted to Sgt I am financially worse off than a few years ago. The cost of living has risen exponentially whilst Police pay has plateaued. (Sergeant, 16-20 years’ service)

“Generally, I view the organisation as a vocational job. I love what I do. A number of external factors affect that: 1. The pay scale is dreadful I accept that I am generally inexperienced, but I barely get enough money to cover my needs, wants are a real stretch. The pay is dreadful I feel a fair pay take home should be approx. £2000 per month including NI allowance” (Constable, 0-2 years’ service)

Cost of living

2.21. Respondents were asked a number of questions to ascertain their opinions on the cost of living and the impact of this on their personal circumstances. **10% of respondents reported that, on a monthly basis, they never or almost never have enough money to cover all of their essentials.** Almost three quarters of survey respondents (73%) identified that they almost always have enough money to cover their essentials. This compares to 84% of respondents in England and Wales in 2020 who reported that they almost always had enough money to cover their essentials, and 7% who stated the never or almost never did.

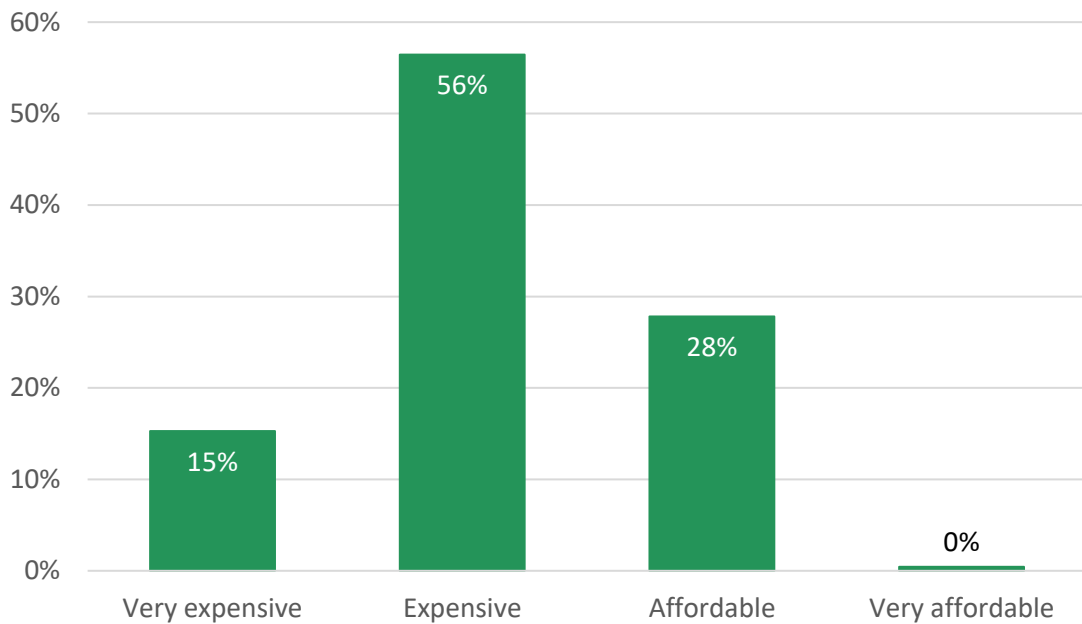
Figure 4: Thinking about your expenditure each month, how often do you have enough money to cover all of your essentials? (All respondents) %



2.22. The affordability of housing is a significant element of the cost of living. As such, respondents were asked to rate their perception of the affordability of housing in the area in which they live. 28% of respondents reported this as affordable or very affordable, compared to 57% who stated it is expensive and 15% who reported it as very expensive.

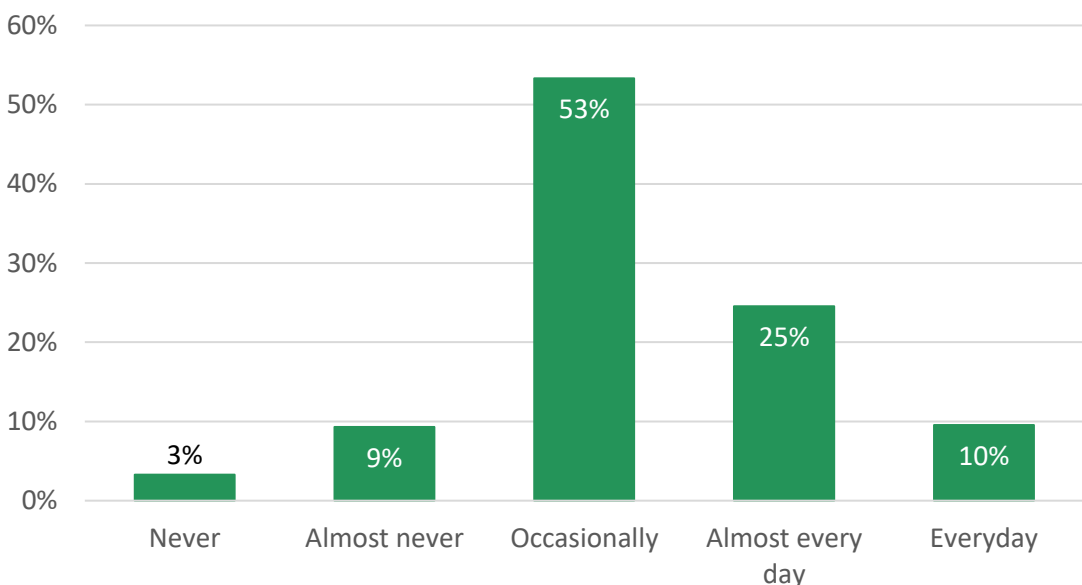
2.23. The issue of housing affordability is compounded in NI as many police officers report having to live in a small number of specific areas in order to safeguard their personal security. This can have significant implications for the cost of housing for police officers in NI (as evidenced in this survey data), with some of the more affordable locations deemed less appropriate. Furthermore, this also has implications for travel, transport and work-life balance as often living close to their main place of work is not considered possible, resulting in many officers having to travel significant distances to their work. According to the NI Travel Survey, the average commuting distance in NI between 2017 and 2019 was 9.6 miles^{ix}. In contrast, the average commuting distance reported by police officers in this survey was 18.9miles; almost double the average NI commuting distance. This is an indication of the additional commuting time and cost burden placed on police officers as a result of their public service.

Figure 5: How would you rate the affordability of housing in the area you live in? (All respondents) %



2.24. More than one third of all survey respondents (34%) reported that they currently worry about the state of personal finances every day or almost every day, with just 13% of respondents stating that they never or almost never have to worry about their finances. No time-based benchmark is available to understand how this has altered over time, however respondents to the PFEW 2020 Pay and Morale Survey returned similar results, with 37% of respondents stating they worry every day or almost every day and 13% stating they never or almost never worry about the state of their personal finances.

Figure 6: How often do you find yourself worrying about the state of your personal finances? (All respondents) %



2.25. The qualitative data identified a high level of awareness of the impact of inflation on the cost of living and how police pay had performed relative to this.

“With the increases in household bills and the cost of living I am now thinking about what luxury items I can afford, whereas this was not the case before as the police was considered a well-paid job” (Sergeant, 16-20 years’ service)

2.26. However, in addition the inclusion of questions relating to commuting distance and the perception of the affordability of housing provoked a strong response from survey respondents.

“I...believe there should be a maximum distance for Officers to have to travel to work. I am based more than 60 miles from home and after a series of night shifts, travelling home can be extremely dangerous.... this issue is not only a health and safety risk but financially, I am being subjected to very expensive fuel costs” (Constable, 0-2 years’ service)

“I travel 82 miles daily to and from work which per 4-week pattern is a total of 1,312 miles and with an increase in fuel of about 15p this certainly adds up” (Constable, 3-5 years’ service)

“I travel 108 miles a day to work, my costs to actually get to my normal place of duty compared to my pay is terrible. Any expendable income I have is spent on travelling to work” (Constable, 3-5 years’ service)

“I greatly enjoy my job and where I am based however in relation to pay, I live 58 miles from work and had no choice in where I was stationed. I have to complete a 116-mile trip for work each day and this is expensive in fuel, services of my vehicle and new tyres every 3/4 months. This can...be hard on some of the tighter turnarounds due to tiredness” (Constable, 0-2 years’ service)

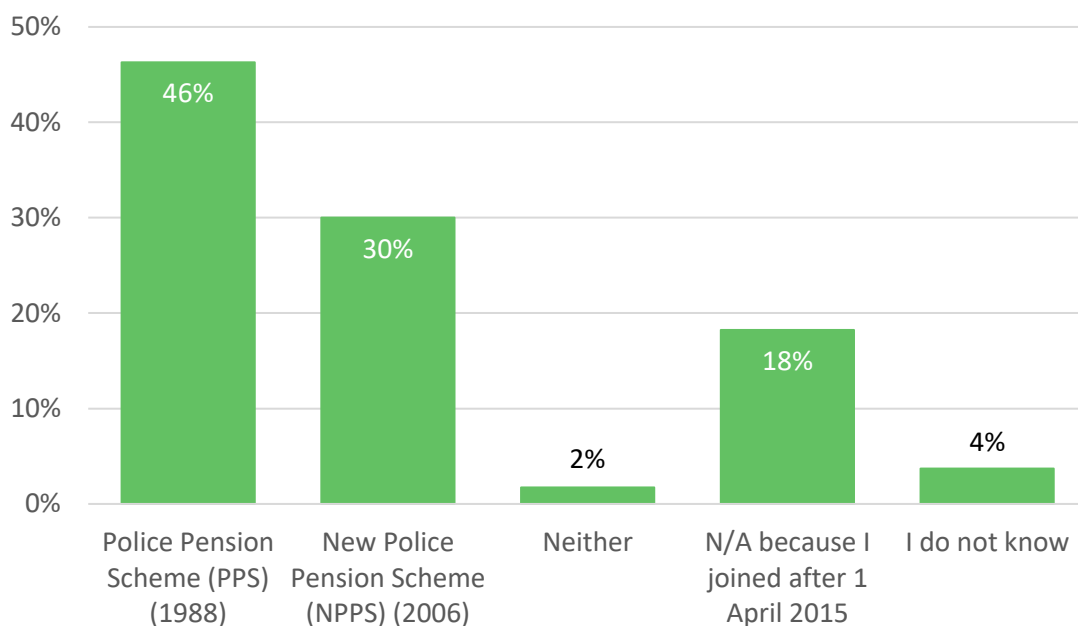
“Due to the threat level, it is not safe to reside in the majority of lower class/republican areas meaning limited options of areas to purchase properties which are often very expensive & puts people from these demographics off joining the police” (Constable, 3-5 years’ service)

“The security risk is very high but because of the pay and reward I am handcuffed to the places I live because of the cost of housing. I come from a working-class nationalist area and have had to sacrifice a lot to become a police officer” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

3. Pension

- 3.1. The pension package provided to police officers forms a key element of their overall remuneration package and therefore the views and opinions of officers regarding their pension has significant implications for job satisfaction. Furthermore, with recent changes to (and subsequent legal action related to) the police pension scheme, this survey provided an opportunity to assess the intentions of officers regarding membership of their pension, and what implications this may have for their future policing career.
- 3.2. Respondents were initially asked to identify which police pension scheme they were a member of prior to April 2015 and the introduction of the new CARE pension, tapered protections and associated legal challenges.

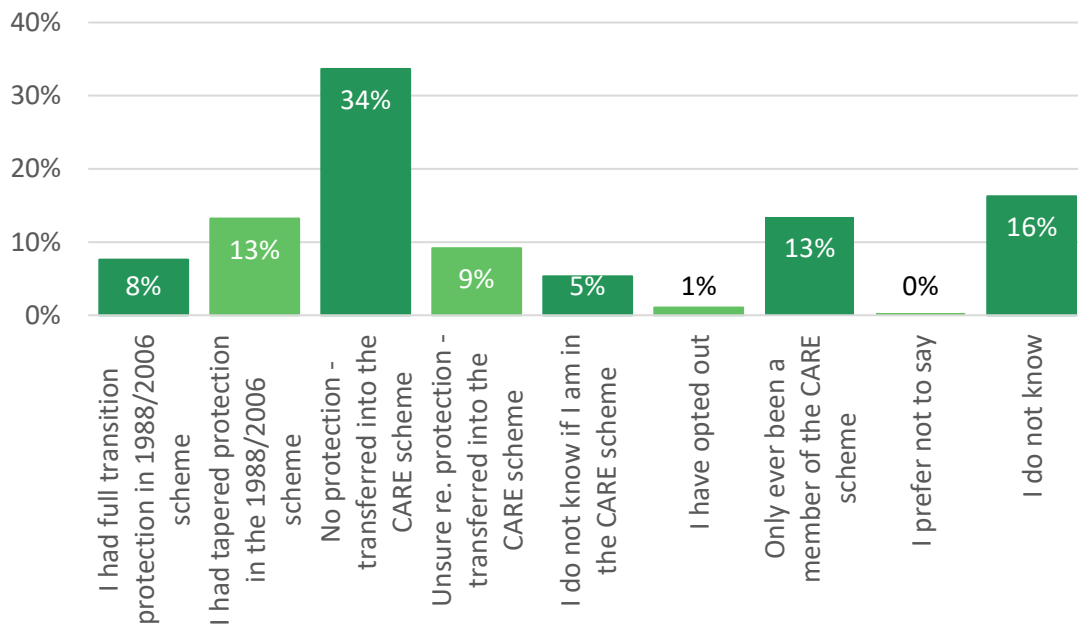
Figure 7: Up until 1st April 2015, what pension arrangements were you a member of? (All respondents) %



- 3.3. 46% of respondents reported membership of the 1988 police pension scheme, with a further 30% stating they were members of the 2006 police pension scheme. These respondents would have been directly impacted by the introduction of the 2015 CARE scheme, with outcomes differing depending on age. 2% of respondents stated they were not a member of either scheme, with a further 4% unsure of what scheme they were a member of. 18% of respondents noted that they had joined the service post 2015, meaning they were automatic members of the 2015 CARE scheme.
- 3.4. Respondents were asked to identify what action was taken regarding their pension following the introduction of the CARE scheme in 2015. 21% of respondents reported

some degree of protection in their original pension scheme, including 8% with full protection and 13% with tapered protection. The largest proportion of respondents reported having no protections in their original pension scheme and being transferred into the CARE scheme on the 1st of April 2015, a further 9% were unsure if they had any level of protection, but noted they were also transferred to the new scheme in 2015.

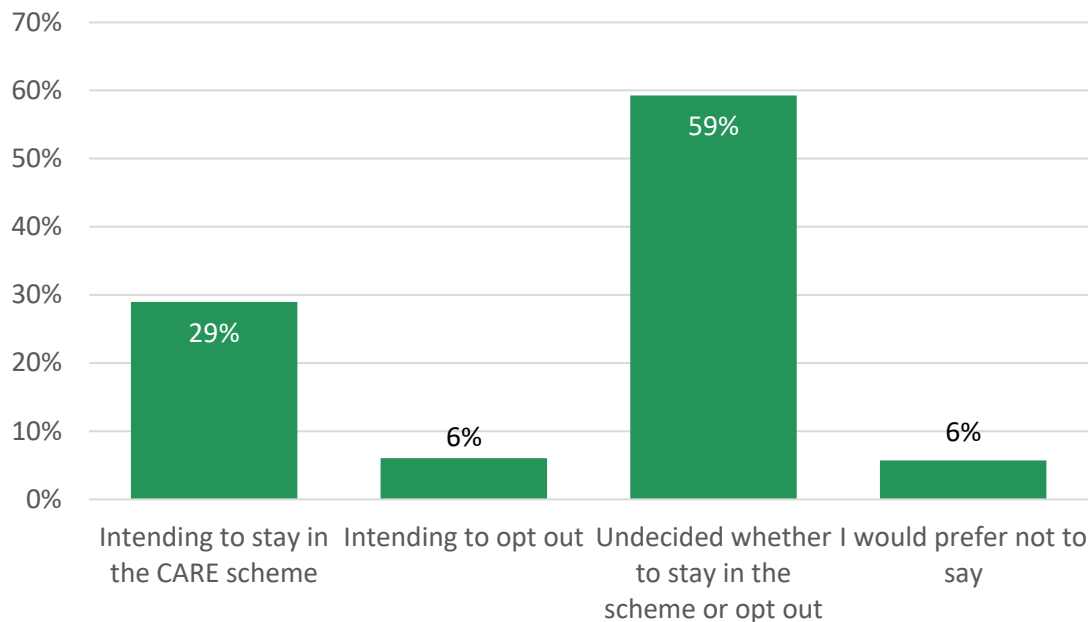
Figure 8: From the 1st April 2015 many officers automatically became a member of the CARE scheme, which statement applies to you? (All respondents) %



3.5. 13% of respondents stated they started with the PSNI after 2015 and have therefore only ever been a member of the 2015 scheme. 5% stated they are unsure if they are currently in the CARE scheme or not alongside 16% who were unaware of their answer to this question; there remains a lack of knowledge regarding personal pension provisions. 1% of respondents stated that they have opted out of their pension scheme. However, of those respondents who have stated that they have already opted out, 70% are aged over 50 years old, with 56% having more than 31 years' service.

3.6. With further changes to the police pension due in April 2022, following the outworking's of the legal action regarding the age discrimination case relating to the 2015 CARE scheme, respondents were also asked to outline their intentions regarding their pension post April 2022.

Figure 9: Post 1st April 2022, what are your intentions in respect of membership of the police pension scheme? (All respondents) %

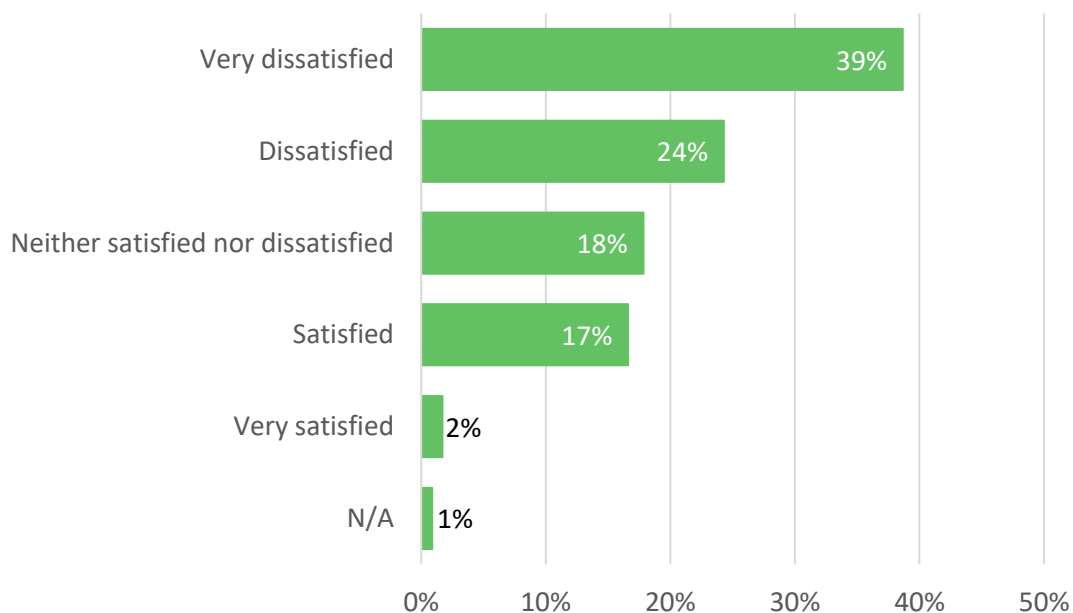


- 3.7. Less than a third of respondents (29%) report that they are intending on remaining in the CARE scheme after April 2022, with a further 59% unsure at this time. However, 6% of respondents report that they are intending to opt out of the scheme at that point. Contrary to the characteristics of those who reported they have already opted out of their pension scheme, less than half (49%) of those who stated that they *intend* to opt out post April 2022 were aged over 50 years old, with just 20% having more than 31 years' service.
- 3.8. The qualitative data identifies a significant proportion of respondents who have opted out or who are intending to opt out due to issues of affordability, with respondents reporting the need for the money at the present time; *"I need the extra money at the minute whilst kids are growing up"* (Constable, 3-5 years' service); *"Current cost of living and cost of pension scheme – I don't have enough extra money right now to make these payments"* (Constable, 0-2 years' service)
- 3.9. However, there is also a distinct lack of detailed knowledge regarding a number of elements relating to the police pension. For example, there is a belief that the police pension scheme is significantly worse than pensions offered elsewhere in the public sector, alongside a belief that it is *'not financially beneficial'* which may be driving a desire to opt out of the scheme. A well-designed, succinct and simple education campaign may assist in reducing the level of opt-outs.

Satisfaction with pension

3.10. Similarly to pay and allowances, respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with their pension. **63% of respondents reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their pension, this is higher than the level of dissatisfaction reported for basic pay (61%), allowances (57%) and overall remuneration (60%).** In a similar trend, the proportion of respondents who reported that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their pension was lower, at 18%, than the proportion who reported being satisfied with their basic pay (26%), allowances (23%) and overall remuneration (23%).

Figure 10: How satisfied are you with your pension? (All respondents) %



3.11. The proportion of respondents who reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their pension was highest, at 85%, for those who stated that they had no transitional protection and were transferred onto the CARE scheme in 2015. This reduced to 78% of those who had tapered protection and 72% of those who are unsure if they had protection but were transferred onto the CARE scheme. In contrast, 42% of those who had full tapered protection said they were dissatisfied with their pension alongside 27% of those who joined the PSNI after 2015 and were automatically enrolled in the CARE scheme. It is unsurprising therefore that satisfaction levels were amongst the highest for those who joined after 2015 (39%) and those with full transitional protection (32%), whilst satisfaction levels were lowest for those with no tapered protection (6%). The events surrounding the introduction of the CARE pension scheme in 2015 continue to strongly influence (dis)satisfaction with the police pension scheme.

3.12. The proportion of respondents who reported dissatisfaction with their pension has remained stable since 2015 when 61% of respondents reported being dissatisfied or

very dissatisfied, and 2018 when 65% of respondents reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. However, **the level of satisfaction with pensions has continued to decline from a series high of 25% of respondents in 2015, to 20% in 2018 and 18% in 2021.**

- 3.13. No comparator data is available for the analysis of (dis)satisfaction with pensions between police officers in England and Wales with those in NI.
- 3.14. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the impact of the introduction of the CARE pension scheme in 2015 continues to have a significant impact upon how officers view their pension arrangements and the feelings of value they attribute to their worth as a police officer. Furthermore, as will be outlined in Section 11, the police pension continues to have a significant impact upon morale within the PSNI.

“We have had token pay rises, if any for the past 9 years or so, seem set to be hit with a pay freeze for 2021/22 and worst of all, that nice pension (1988 scheme) that we signed up to has been snatched from under our feet” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

“The pension issue is my major worry at this current time” (Constable, 21-25 years’ service)

“The pension issue needs to be addressed...At this stage I feel that I have been robbed of my pension and have no idea when I could actually retire. This has an adverse effect on me and my colleagues who now feel undervalued and under appreciated doing their role” (Constable, 21-25 years’ service)

“Pension reforms have had a very negative affect on me personally to the point it has demotivated me to progress further for promotion” (Inspector, 21-25 years’ service)

- 3.15. However, the results also identified a significant lack of knowledge in relation to the police pension, both in terms of the benefits available under the CARE relative to other public sector pensions, and in relation to the ongoing changes to the scheme and what this means for individuals who are considering their retirement options.

“I would like to see the pension issues resolved now as time is running out between now and April 22, as it stands, I have no information to make an informed decision on my future” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

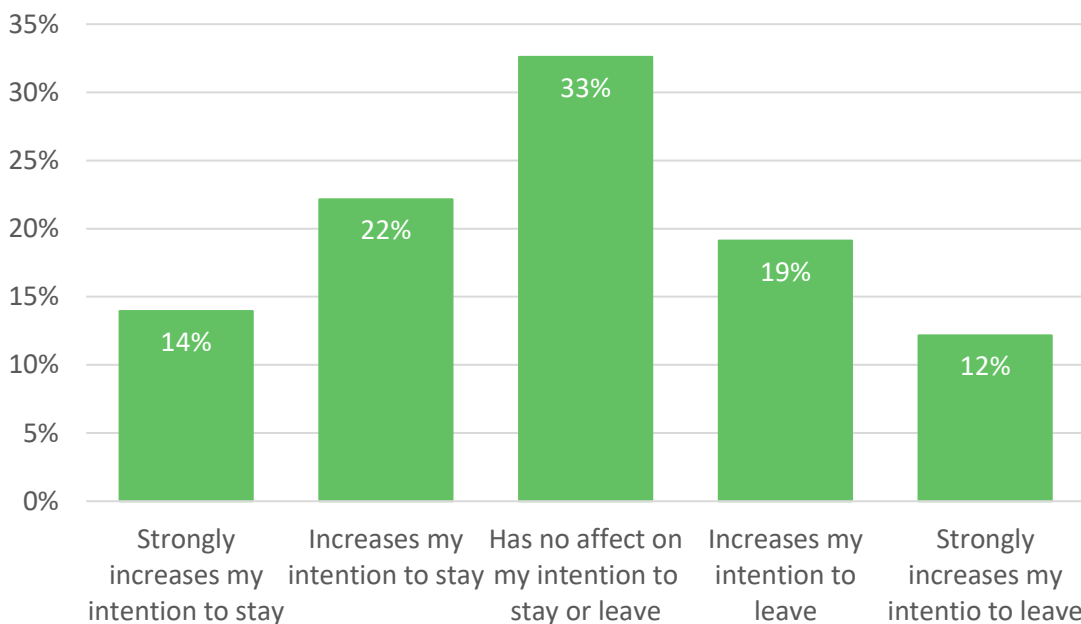
“I have 28 years served, I'm 48 years old, however I'm caught waiting on the pension 'remedy' from the government. I cannot accurately plan my future and feel as if I'm trapped having to work 35-40 years in the police instead of the 30 I had planned for” (Constable 26-30 years' service)

“The uncertainty regarding the pension is having a very negative effect on my wellbeing. It effects my financial/personal/work decisions and how my future looks. I need clarity and information to make my plans” (Sergeant, 21-25 years' service)

Impact of pension on intention to stay

3.16. As the data above indicates, the police pension scheme and the introduction of change within the scheme can have significant impact upon perceptions of fairness and job satisfaction within the police. As such, respondents were asked to identify what impact the police pension scheme has on their intentions to stay in or leave the police service.

Figure 11: What impact does your pension have on your intention to stay in or leave the police service? (All respondents) %

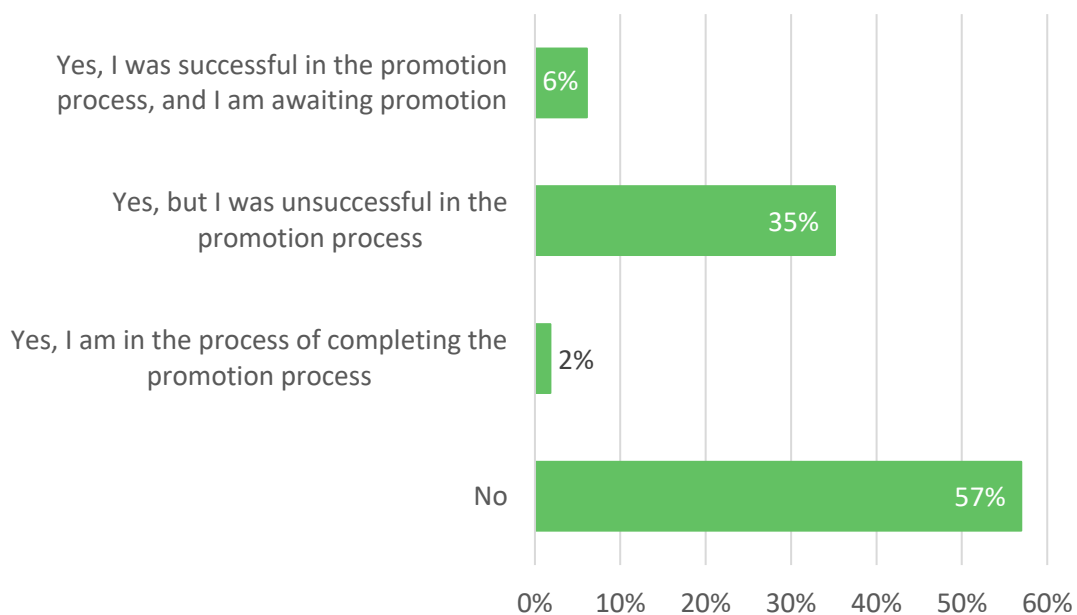


3.17. **Despite the high levels of dissatisfaction with the police pension, 36% of respondents reported that their police pension increases or strongly increases their intention to stay within the police service, with a further 33% reporting it has no effect on their intention to stay or to leave. At 31%, a smaller proportion of respondents reported that their pension increases or strongly increases their intention to leave the service.**

4. Promotion and Career Progression

- 4.1. Career progression, opportunities for promotion and role transfer are important workforce issues which can have implications for job satisfaction if not appropriately managed or not generally understood. Within literature there is a consensus regarding the value of career development to employee satisfaction, with positive job satisfaction scores associated with good career development systems as well as an understanding of how the system works and how it is accessed. Good career development systems can enhance employee engagement in the workplace and in-turn improve organisational effectiveness, via the appropriate matching of employee aspirations with organisational challenge and direction^x.
- 4.2. In order to analyse the impact of career progression on job satisfaction within the PSNI, survey respondents were asked a range of questions relating to the promotion process and opportunities for role transfer. All survey respondents were asked to identify if they have applied for promotion to the next rank up from the rank they are currently in.

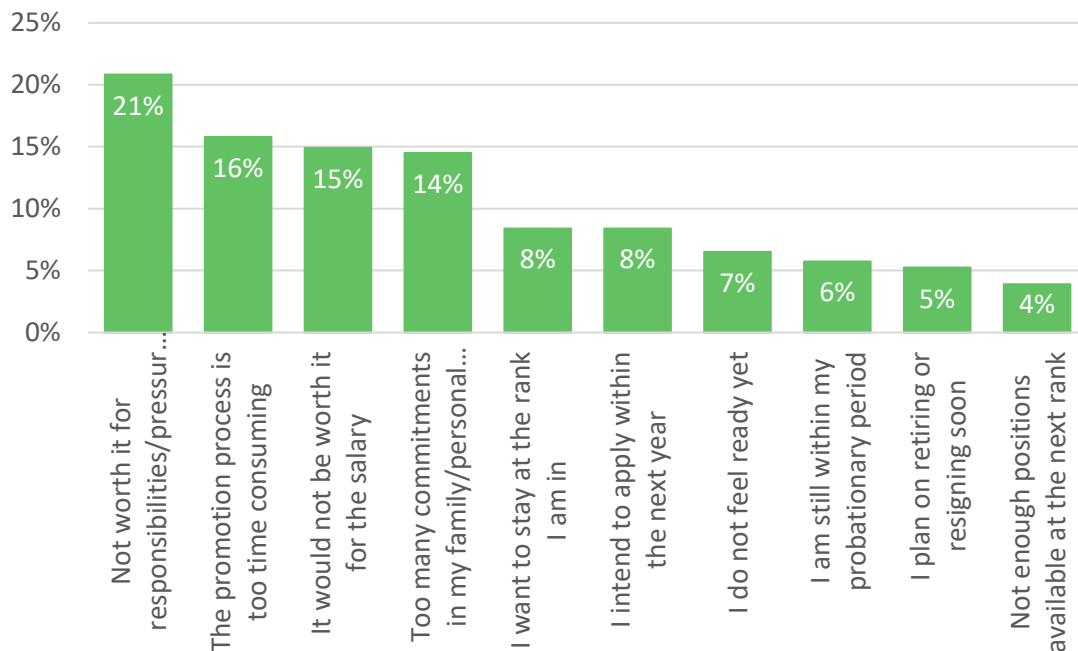
Figure 12: Have you applied for promotion to the next rank up? All respondents (%)



- 4.3. **57% of respondents reported that they had not applied for promotion to the next rank, with the remaining 43% reporting they had applied.** This compares to 67% of respondents in 2015 who, at the time, had not applied for promotion and 81% of respondents to the 2020 PFEW Pay and Morale survey who stated they had not applied for promotion. 35% of respondents reported they had applied for promotion but had been unsuccessful, compared to 6% who were successful and who were awaiting appointment. The remaining 2% of respondents were in the process of applying.

4.4. All of the respondents who stated they had *not* applied for promotion were then asked to identify, from a list of ten response options, their *main* reasons for *not* applying. Respondents were able to select more than one response and an ‘other please specify’ option was also available.

Figure 13: What are your main reasons for not applying for promotion? (Routed question) %



4.5. **The most commonly selected response, as selected by more than one in five respondents to the question, was that it promotion would not be worth it for the responsibilities and pressures of the job.** The second most commonly selected response related to the time-consuming nature of the promotion process, selected by 16% of respondents. 15% of respondents reported they had not applied for promotion as it would not be worth it for the salary, whilst 14% stated they had too many commitments in their personal/family life.

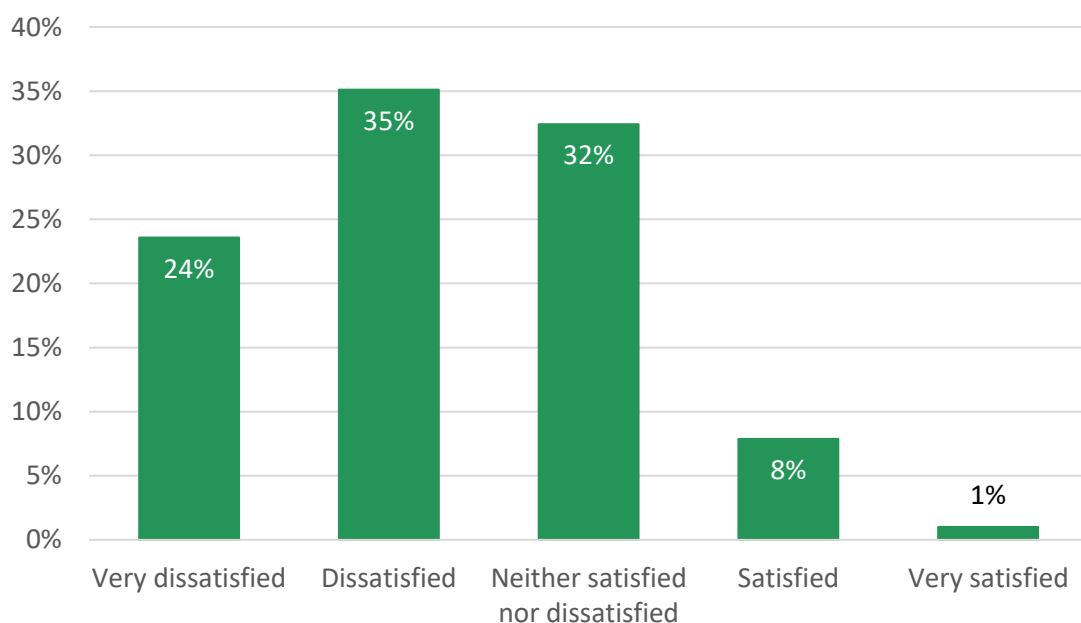
4.6. Although fewer response options were available to respondents in the 2015 PFNI Workforce Survey, a comparison of barriers to applying for promotion remains of interest. In 2015 the most commonly reported reason for not applying for promotion was a desire to remain in their current rank, as selected by 26% of respondents. In 2021 just 8% of respondents selected this option. The second most commonly selected option in 2015 was the negative impact of promotion on personal/family life, as selected by 22% of respondents, whilst 16% of respondents reported that it would not be worth it for the salary on offer.

4.7. Concerns regarding the increasing level of responsibility and pressure at the next rank was also cited as the greatest barrier to applying for promotion in England and Wales, with 44% of respondents to the 2020 PFEW Pay and Morale Survey selecting this option. Salary was the next most significant barrier in England and Wales, with 40% of respondents identifying that the salary is simply not worth it and similarly to police officers in NI, officers in England and Wales ranked the time-consuming nature of the process as a barrier, at 32% of respondents.

Satisfaction with the promotion process

4.8. **Of the respondents who reported they had been through the promotion process, 59% reported that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the process.** Just 9% of respondents reported a level of satisfaction with the process. This is similarly to results provided by officers in England and Wales in 2020 with 65% reporting dissatisfaction with the process and 10% reporting they were satisfied.

Figure 14: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the promotion process? (Routed question) %



4.9. The results from these questions have highlighted a that a majority of survey respondents have not applied for promotion from their current rank, with issues including concerns about responsibilities and work pressures, the slow promotion process, inadequate pay and reward and the potential detrimental impact on personal and family lives as key barriers to applying for promotion within the PSNI. This is then compounded with almost one in seven respondents reporting dissatisfaction with the promotion process.

4.10. This high level of dissatisfaction with the promotion process was also evident in the responses provided through the qualitative data.

“I'm an officer with more than 23 years' service in Northern Ireland. Up until the last process I was always motivated to serve and in my years as a Sgt I have been T/Promoted to Inspector. I've never had any issues performing at this rank and feel I have led people...I feel extremely disappointed and let down by our organisation that after proving myself continually at Inspector rank that I'm given 40 minutes with 3 strangers. This has had a massive impact of my confidence, mental health and my finances. We need to seriously take a look at our promotion processes and reward the people who demonstrate their capabilities” (Sergeant, 21-25 years' service)

“The promotion process at board stage has shown inconsistencies with the application of the CVF. It has resulted in personal interpretation of values by panel members rather than a definition, and for a system that staff are to be measured against, very few officers have received training in it unless part of panels” (Sergeant, 16-20 years' service)

“I believe the promotion process should include consultation with line managers and an interview, not just a board where marks are earned for 'buzz words” (Constable, 3-5 years' service)

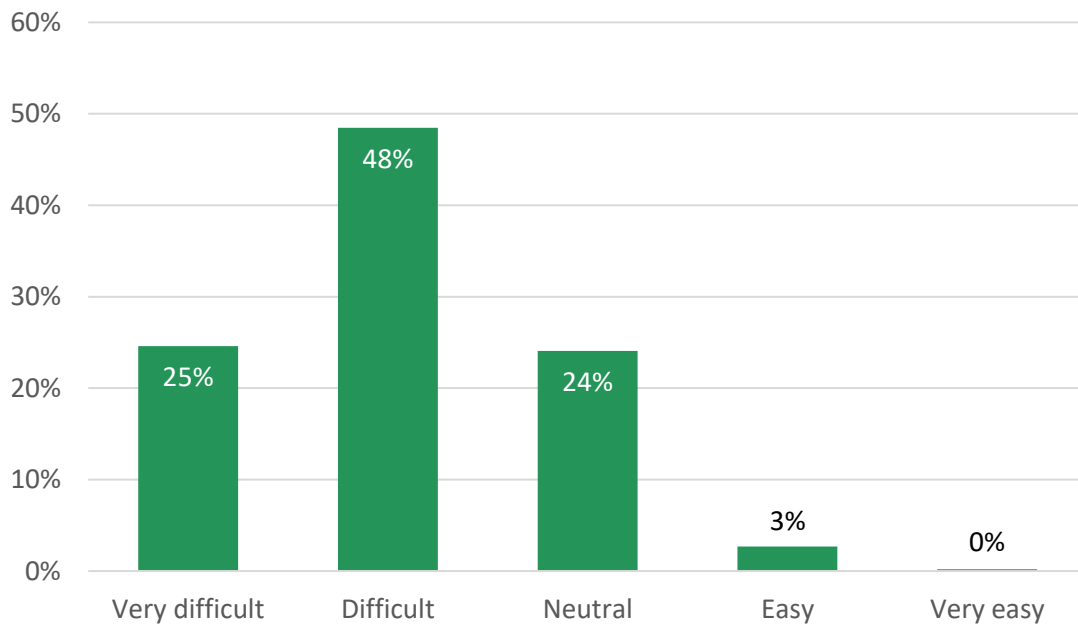
“The process needs overhauled and assessment days needed. The exam does not pick the best colleagues for promotion” (Sergeant, 16-20 years' service)

“Promotion Process - The board process is too subjective and the result depends more on the panel than the performance of the candidate. There is no review of the person's ability to operate outside of what they say they have done...No critical assessment of any work is performed by the organisation. An ongoing portfolio of evidence could be recorded and presented to demonstrate a capability for the role. This can then be discussed and CVF assessed on real world achievements and actions” (Sergeant, 16-20 years' service)

Relative ease of role transfer

4.11. Career progression includes more than promotion from one rank to another, with issues of role transfer and specialisation also of importance. A series of new survey questions were designed to gather the views of federated officers on the availability and ease of such opportunity within the PSNI.

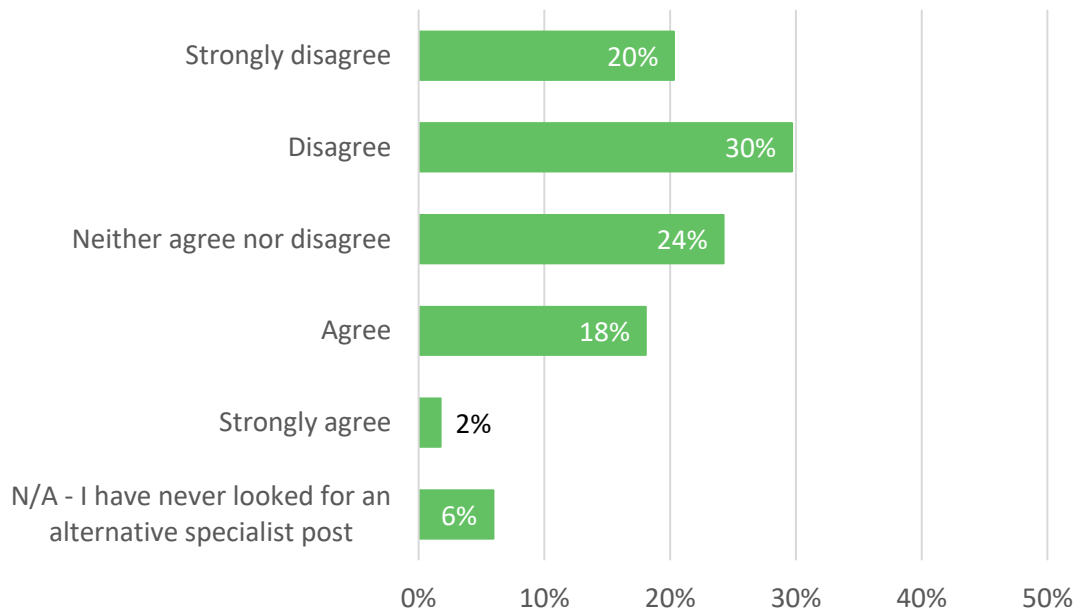
Figure 15: How difficult, if at all, do you feel it is to transfer between roles within the PSNI? (All respondents) %



4.12. Just 3% of all respondents reported that they found the process of transferring between roles within the PSNI as easy or very easy, a further 24% were neutral on the issue. However, **almost three quarters of all respondents (73%) reported that the process of transferring between roles within the PSNI was either difficult or very difficult**, indicating that officers can remain in roles for a significant period of time. This can have potential implications for job satisfaction.

4.13. Whilst just 3% of respondents reported some ease in transferring between roles in the PSNI, 20% agreed or strongly agreed that opportunities to apply for alternative specialist posts are available to them. However, half of all respondents (50%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Figure 16: To what extent do you agree or disagree that opportunities to apply for alternative specialist posts are available to you? (All respondents) %



4.14. The qualitative data also provided an insight into issues arising for individual officers in the transfer between roles.

“There is a shortage of detectives. Yet having been a C3 Detective Sergeant with multitude of experience across serious and organised crime - I have no ability to transfer into a 'real' detective role in C1 or C2. I can apply as a Constable or apply as an Inspector, but there is no option at Sergeant - there are loads willing to try!” (Sergeant, 16-20 years’ service)

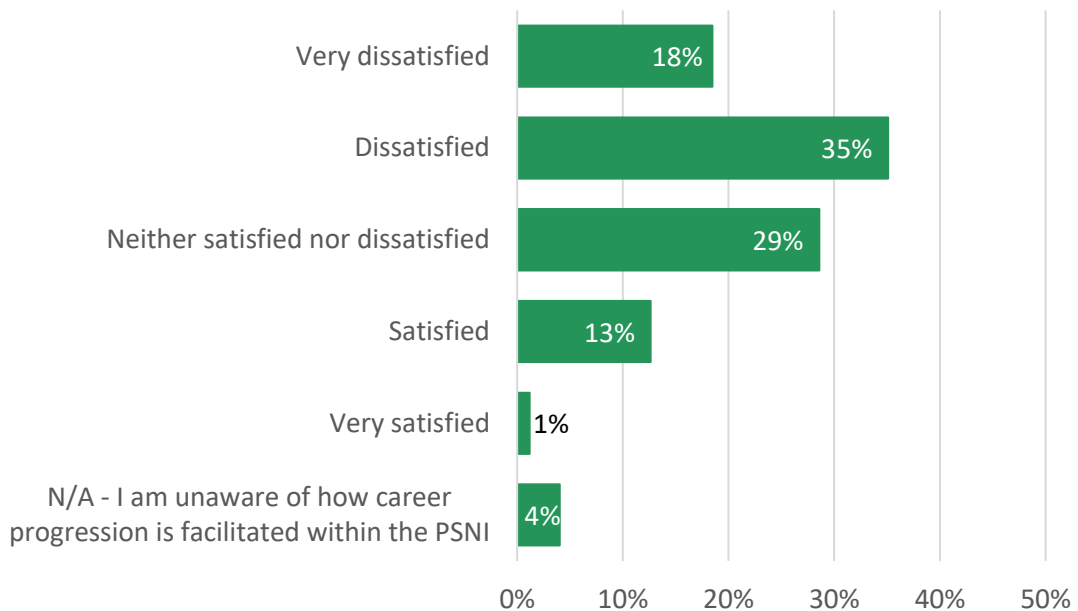
“As a Sgt in LPT I feel trapped in the role. There are no opportunities for uniform Sgts to move sideways or specialise as all promotions are now skills mapped for officers already within the departments... I understand the skills mapping process makes it easy for HR but it provides no development for current Sgts” (Sergeant, 11-15 years’ service)

“It is unfair that officers cannot apply for specialist roles as they have not been offered the chance to obtain police driving card of category 3.b when colleagues of significantly less service have been offered the opportunity. Career development opportunities should not be based on whether you have been lucky enough to get offered a course depending on your district” (Constable, 3-5 years’ service)

Satisfaction with the career progression pathway

4.15. With a majority of respondents (57%) reporting that they had not applied for promotion from their current rank, alongside a high level of dissatisfaction (65%) with the promotion process as reported by those who have applied for promotion and evidence of difficulty in transferring between roles, it is perhaps unsurprising that **a majority of respondents (54%) reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the career progression pathway within the PSNI**. Less than one in seven respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the career progression pathway, whilst a further 4% reported being unaware of how career progression is facilitated within the PSNI.

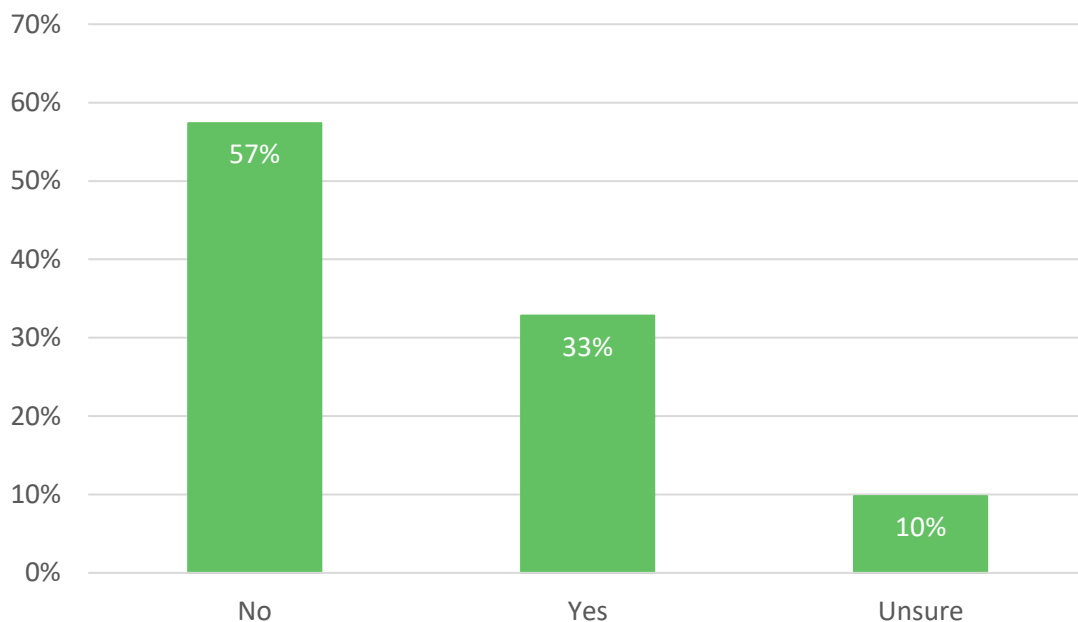
Figure 17: To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the career progression pathway within the PSNI? (All respondents) %



5. Training

- 5.1. Availability of, and satisfaction with, the training opportunities provided to employees combines with issues of promotion and career progression to provide an important insight into areas of job satisfaction. If employees are unable to access appropriate training, and perhaps more importantly, access appropriate refresher training on areas they have previously been trained in, this can have a negative impact upon feelings of value and confidence in the workplace and the employer.
- 5.2. To understand the baseline measure regarding current training uptake, all survey respondents were asked to identify if they had been able to complete all their mandatory or refresher training over the previous 12 months.

Figure 18: Have you been able to complete all your mandatory or refresher training over the past 12 months? (All respondents) %



- 5.3. **A majority of respondents (57%) reported that they had not been able to complete all of their mandatory or refresher training over the previous year**, with a further 10% unsure if they had. One third of respondents (33%) stated they had completed their training. All the respondents who reported that they had not completed their training were then asked to identify the *main* reason for this. **Almost half (49%) reported that Covid-19 restrictions had prevented them from doing so, whilst 23% reported that they were unable to get an allocated training slot** and a further 13% highlighted issues with workload and an inability to give time over to training as a result. A further 5% of respondents reported issues associated with restricted duties, restricted access or being repositioned/relocated as a barrier to completing their training, with 4% stating that

their supervisor did not allocate appropriate time to enable them to complete their training. Other barriers to completion included injury (3%) and sickness absence (2%).

Effectiveness of online training

- 5.4. Respondents were asked to highlight their level of (dis)agreement regarding the effectiveness of training in an online setting in several practical areas of policing, these include firearms training, personal safety programme (PSP), first aid training and spit and bite guard training. **A majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that online training was an effective training method for three of the four areas of police training**, however the level of disagreement varied significantly depending upon the training course.
- 5.5. The level of disagreement regarding the effectiveness of online training, as a training method, was highest for firearms training. Almost four in every five respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that online training is an effective training method for firearms training, including 57% who strongly disagreed. 9% agreed or strongly agreed that this was an effective training method.
- 5.6. At 65%, the level of disagreement regarding the effectiveness of online Personal Safety Programme training was also high, however 17% of respondents agreed this was an effective method to deliver PSP training. 55% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that as a training method, online training was not effective in delivering first aid training, whilst 27% agreed.
- 5.7. As the most recently introduced training package, 35% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that spit and bite guard online training was an effective training method, compared to 34% who agreed or strongly agreed.

“The self-training by common terminal is not proper training and only seems to be a backside covering process” (Constable, 21-25 years’ service)

“In respect of training I feel that where possible it should be done practically and not on a screen. I feel that much of the online learning is mundane, poorly designed and ineffective. Under no circumstances do I feel it appropriate or effective to complete Public Order or Firearms training online” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

Figure 19: Level of (dis)agreement with the effectiveness of online training as a training method for Firearms Training (All respondents) %

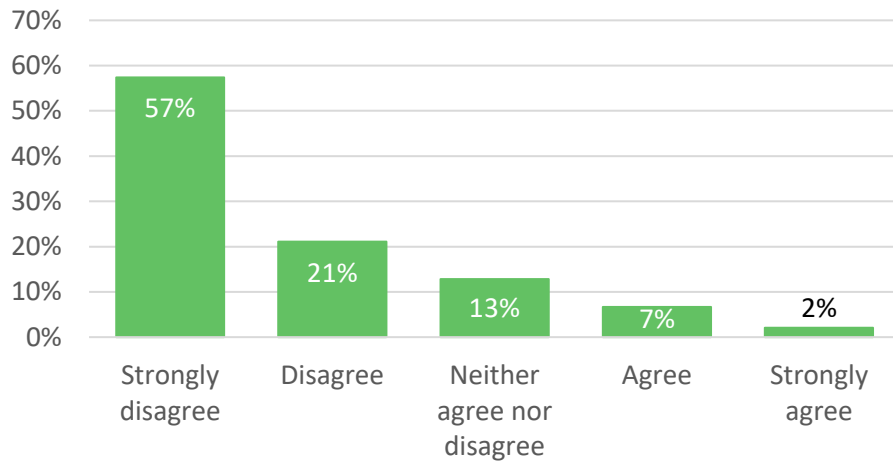


Figure 20: Level of (dis)agreement with the effectiveness of online training as a training method for Safety Programme Training (PSP) (All respondents) %

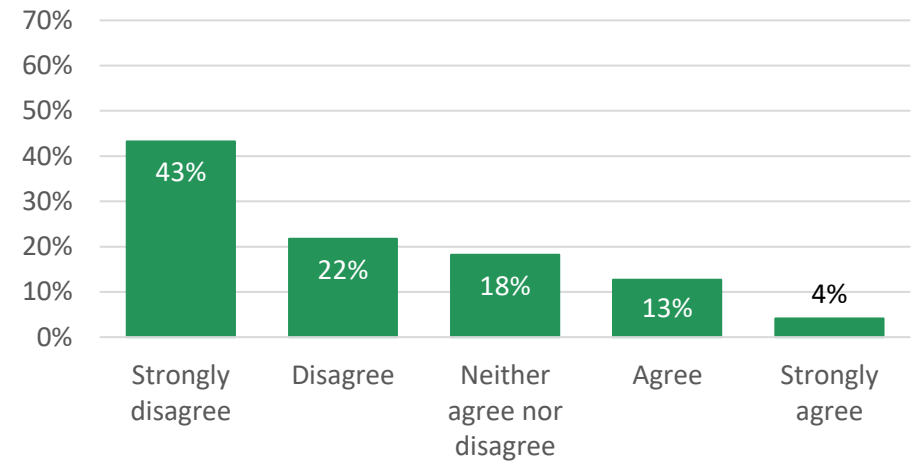


Figure 21: Level of (dis)agreement with the effectiveness of online training as a training method for First Aid Training (All respondents) %

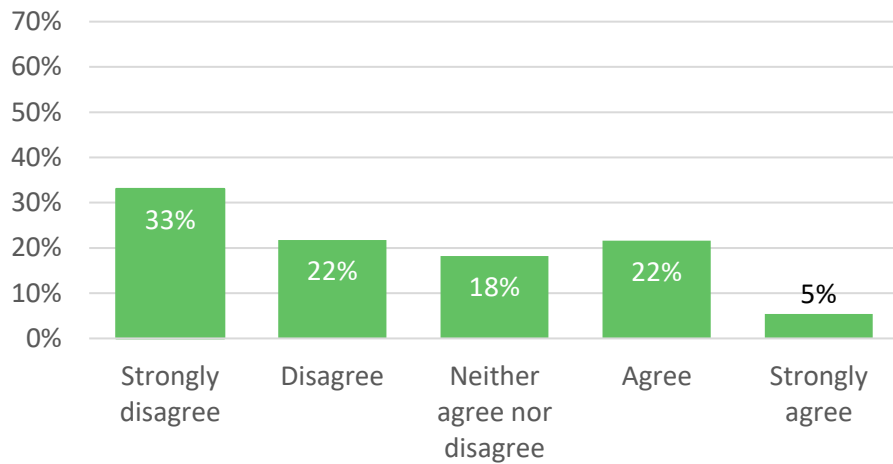
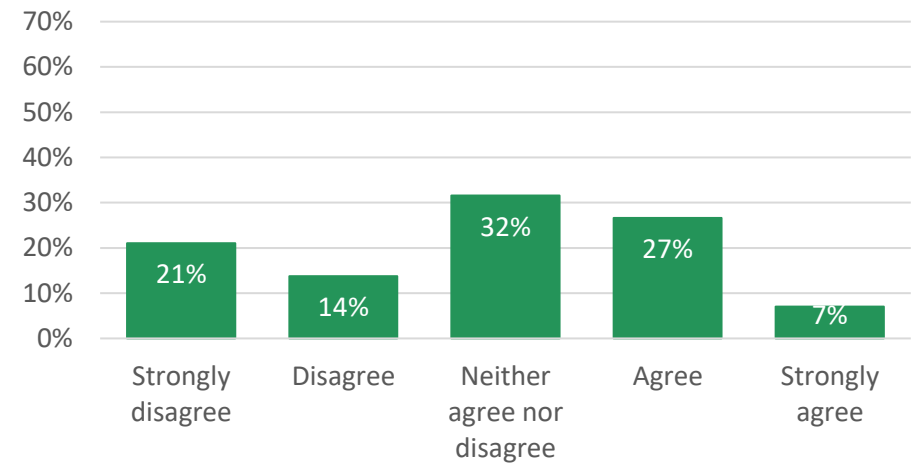


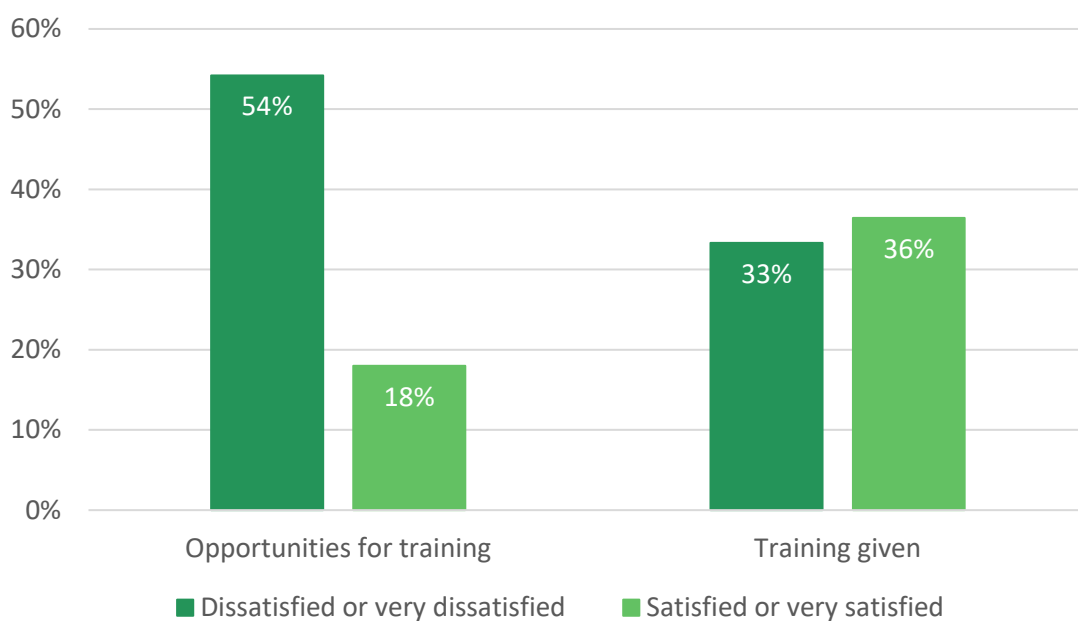
Figure 22: Level of (dis)agreement with the effectiveness of online training as a training method for Spit & Bite Guard Training (All respondents) %



Satisfaction with training

5.8. Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with their opportunities for training and the training they are given. **At 54%, a larger proportion of respondents reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their opportunities for training, relative to the level of dissatisfaction with the training they receive, at 33%.** Conversely, 18% of respondents reported feeling satisfied or very satisfied with their opportunities for training, relative to 36% who were satisfied or very satisfied with the training they are given.

Figure 23: How satisfied are you with your opportunities for training and the training you are given? (All respondents) %



5.9. These results suggest that when training *is* provided, respondents are more likely to report that they are satisfied with it, however a greater impact upon them and their satisfaction with their training packages, is the opportunities for training which are provided. However, when compared with the results obtained in the 2015 Workforce Survey (these questions were not asked in 2018), there has been some improvement in satisfaction levels. For example, the level of dissatisfaction in opportunities for training has declined from 60% 2015 to 54% in 2021 and from 46% dissatisfaction with the training given in 2015 to 33% in 2021. This trend is also mirrored in the levels of satisfaction, with 18% of respondents in 2021 satisfied with their opportunities for training compared to 16% in 2015 and 36% of respondents satisfied with the training given in 2021 relative to 25% in 2015.

5.10. However, when analysed alongside the results obtained from police officers in England and Wales in the 2020 Pay and Morale Survey there emerges a significant difference in

the levels of (dis)satisfaction with opportunities for training. 39% of respondents in England and Wales reported being dissatisfied with their opportunities for training, relative to 54% of respondents in NI, whilst 31% of respondents were satisfied in England and Wales, compared to 18% in NI. The difference in the levels of (dis)satisfaction with the training given is smaller between England and Wales and NI and the trend has been reversed. 37% of respondents in England and Wales reported being dissatisfied with the training they receive and 33% reported being satisfied, compared to 33% of respondents in NI who reported dissatisfaction with the training they receive and 36% satisfied.

Perception of PSNI training obligations

5.11. Respondents were presented with four statements designed to assist with understanding the perception of respondents regarding the PSNI’s met or unmet obligations with training. The level of disagreement with each of these statements varied, with the highest level of disagreement relating to support when respondents wish to learn new skills. 62% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, compared to 11% who agreed or strongly agreed.

Figure 24: Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree that the PSNI has met its obligations to you with regards to each of the following...? (All respondents) %



5.12. 55% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the PSNI provide the necessary training to do their job well. This is in line with the 54% of respondents who reported being dissatisfied with the training opportunities provided by the PSNI. Less than a

quarter of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they are given the necessary training to do their job well.

- 5.13. 53% of respondents stated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed that the PSNI provides them with up-to-date training and development, with less than one fifth agreeing with this statement. This result is underpinned by the 57% of respondents who reported they had not completed all of their mandatory or refresher training in the previous 12 months. However, it is worth noting that almost half of these respondents noted Covid-19 restrictions as the main reason for not completing their training.
- 5.14. The lowest level of disagreement was for the PSNI's obligation in providing refresher training to keep skills up to date. 41% of respondents disagreed that the PSNI have met their obligations in this regard, whilst 29% agreed.
- 5.15. Three of the four perception of PSNI training obligation statements are comparable with the 2015 PFNI Workforce Survey and with the 2020 PFEW Pay and Morale Survey. Between 2015 and 2021, the perception of police officers relating to the training obligations of their employer has remained stable, with 64% of respondents in 2015 disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that the PSNI support respondents when they want to learn new skills, compared to 62% in 2021. 50% of respondents in 2015 disagreed that the PSNI provides up to date training and development, compared to 53% in 2018. However, there has been a 10-percentage point increase in the proportion of respondents who reported that the PSNI provide the necessary training to officers to do their job well, increasing from 45% in 2015 to 55% in 2021. This coincides with the proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement remaining steady at 23% in 2021 and 22% in 2021.
- 5.16. When compared to the results obtained from the PFEW 2020 Pay and Morale Survey there emerges a significant difference in the levels of (dis)agreement relating to met or unmet obligations from the employer. 41% of respondents in England and Wales disagreed or strongly disagreed and 30% agreed or strongly agreed that their police service provides support to them when they want to learn new skills. This compared to 62% and 11% respectively in NI. 40% of respondents in England and Wales disagreed or strongly disagreed that their police service provides them with the necessary training to do their job well, compared to 55% of respondents in NI. Furthermore, 43% of respondents in England and Wales reported that they receive up to date training and development, compared to 53% in NI.
- 5.17. The information provided within the qualitative data identifies a general dissatisfaction at the lack of training opportunities as well as an understanding of the specific types of training which has caused issues and specific roles.

“Training very disappointing - been waiting to get my driving course for 2 years and my theory tests have now run out this month... Also applied for public order some time ago and nothing has come from this... Understand COVID has had an impact but no discussion or plan in regard to training / refresher in general” (Constable, 3-5 years’ service)

“Training needs- if you move role your new department will not keep up your training e.g. I waited for several years to be pursuit trained, I transferred to another role only to be told I wasn't eligible to be refresher trained - what a waste of money and skills” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

“Whilst I appreciate that back logs have been created as a result of Covid 19. In my experience the opportunities to partake in training programs or to learn new skills have been extremely poor with often enormous wait times being the issue. People often wait years for training courses” (Constable, 0-2 years’ service)

“Access to training is extremely poor and having a massive detrimental effect on response policing and putting the public at risk” (Constable, 3-5 years’ service)

“The level of training provided in particular to Custody Sgts in order to complete the job is completely unsatisfactory” (Sergeant, 16-20 years’ service)

“More opportunities for training are needed especially driving courses. Training opportunities need to be more fairly allocated” (Constable, 3-5 years’ service)

“Driving courses are near impossible to be placed on, leading to occasional shifts in LPT where due to training, annual leave or sick leave there may be no response trained drivers to cover a 10-hour shift thus causing multiple issues and depriving the community of a fully functioning Police service” (Constable, 0-2 years’ service)

“I believe the PSNI is not currently providing suitable training for LPT officers soon enough. LPT officers are on the ground and training such as Stinger, Driving Courses etc are not available. I understand there has been issues with this due to Cov19... Better training within LPT would allow officers on

the ground to deal with incidents more effectively” (Constable, 0-2 years’ service)

6. Misconduct and Discipline

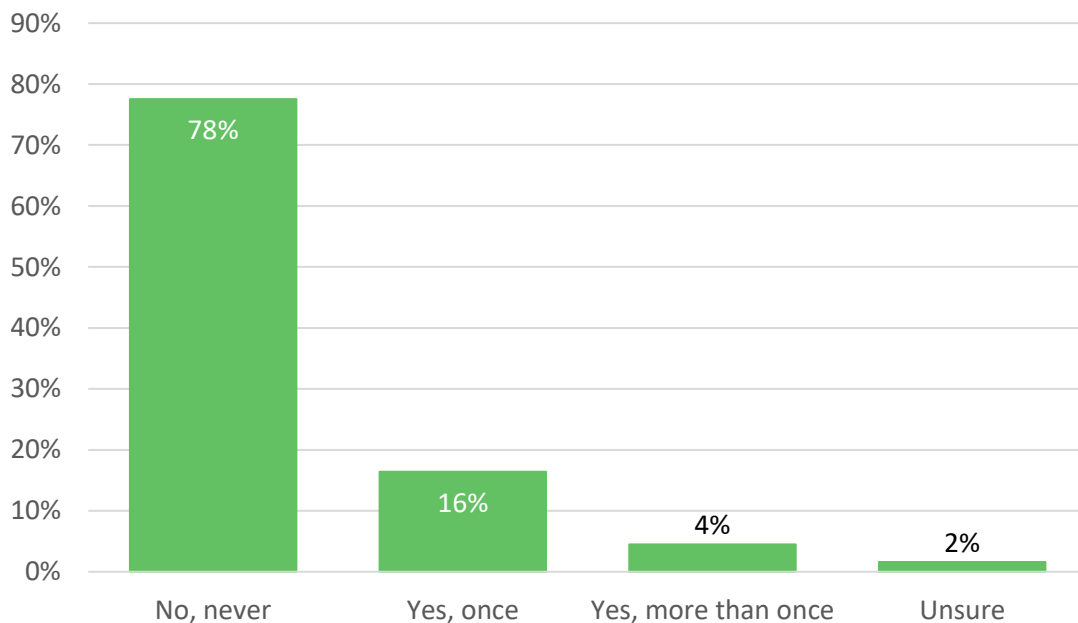
6.1. Respondents were asked several questions relating to both the internal PSNI misconduct and disciplinary process as well as questions regarding external investigations as conducted by the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (OPONI). These questions aimed to gain an understanding of the scale of misconduct and disciplinary proceedings as well as the impact of these processes on serving police officers in NI.

6.2. Respondents were first asked to identify if any action has been taken against their performance or attendance in previous 12 months using the formal Unsatisfactory Performance Process (UPP). 96% of respondents reported that they have not had any action taken against them using UPP in the previous 12 months, with 2% reporting they had and a further 1% reporting that they were unsure.

Internal PSNI misconduct / disciplinary proceedings

6.3. More than three quarters of survey respondents (78%) reported that they have never been subject to an internal misconduct/disciplinary process. 21% of respondents stated they have been subject to proceedings, including 16% who have undergone one investigation and 4% who have been the subject of more than one investigation.

Figure 25: As a serving PSNI officer, have you ever been subject to misconduct / disciplinary proceedings? (All respondents) %

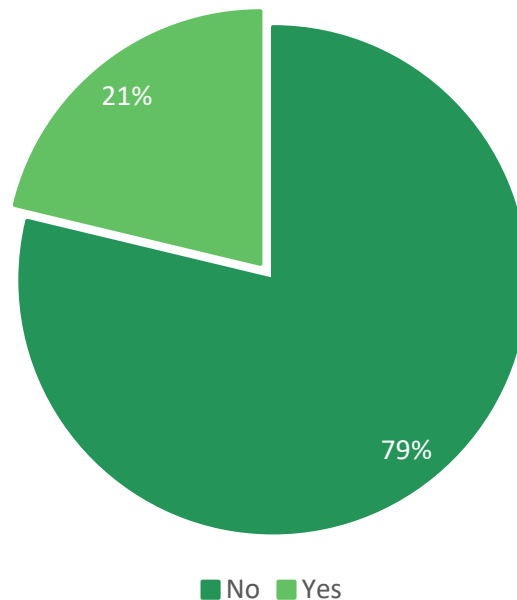


6.4. All the respondents who stated that they *have* been subject to a misconduct / disciplinary investigation were asked to identify how long their (most recent)

proceedings took to conclude. 61% of respondents reported that their investigation concluded in less than one year, including 10% in less than 2 months, 31% in 3 to 6 months and 20% in 7 to 12 months. 22% of respondents reported that their proceedings concluded within 1 to 2 years and 17% reported that their investigation lasted more than 2 years.

6.5. 3% of respondents identified that their most recent misconduct / disciplinary investigation is on-going. 40% of these respondents stated that their investigation has been on-going for less than one year. 16% reported that their investigation has been continuing for between 1 and 2 years, whilst the remaining 44% reported that their investigation has been on-going for more than 2 years.

Figure 26: Thinking about the most recent misconduct / disciplinary proceedings you were involved in, please identify if you were repositioned during the investigation? (Routed question) %



6.6. 21% of all of the respondents who have been subject to misconduct / disciplinary proceedings reported that this resulted in them being repositioned during the investigation. 79% of respondents were not repositioned. 31% of those who were repositioned, were repositioned for less than 6 months, 24% were repositioned for between 7 and 12 months, 17% for between 1 and 2 years and 28% for more than 2 years. 1% of respondents reported they are currently in a repositioned role owing to a misconduct / disciplinary investigation.

6.7. 6% of respondents who have been subject to misconduct / disciplinary proceedings reported that they were suspended from duty during the investigation. 61% of these

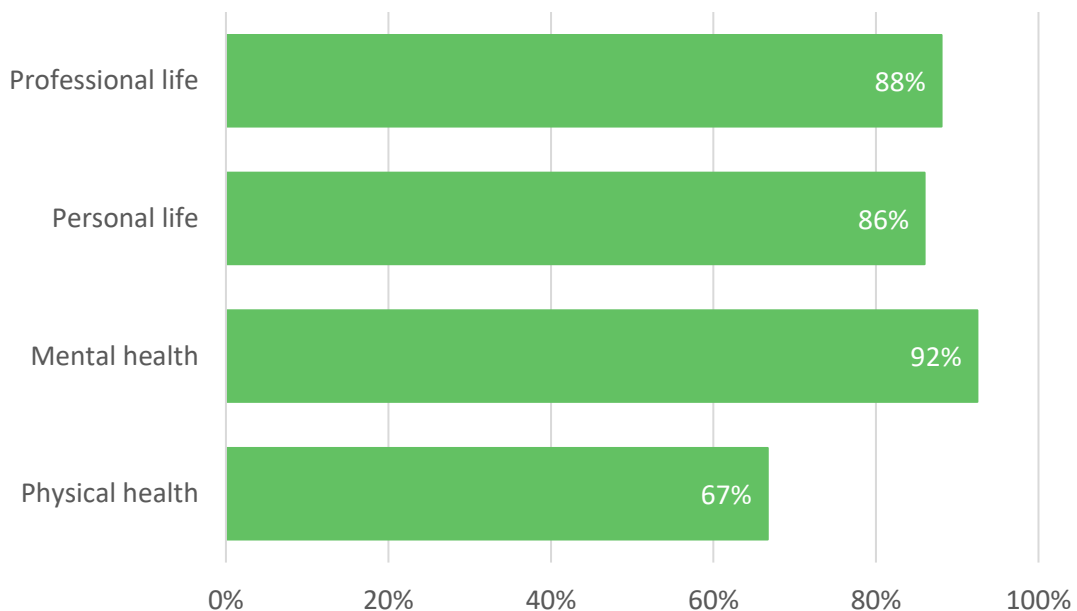
respondents were suspended for between 1 and 12 months, with 39% suspended for more than 1 year. Officers who are currently suspended pending a misconduct / disciplinary investigation have been unable to complete this survey.

The impact of an internal PSNI investigation

6.8. Little is currently known or understood about the impact of such investigations on an individual’s health and wellbeing. Respondents who had been subject of a misconduct / disciplinary investigation were asked to rate what impact the investigation had on their personal and professional life, as well as on their physical and mental health.

6.9. A total of **67% of respondents who had been subject to a misconduct / disciplinary investigation reported that the investigation had a negative or very negative impact upon their physical health**. 32% stated it had no impact. The proportion of respondents who stated that the investigation had a negative impact on their physical health increased in line with the length of time it took for the investigation to conclude, increasing from 36% of respondents who stated that the investigation concluded within one month, to 63% of those who stated that it concluded with 5 to 6 months and 81% of those who stated that it took more than 2 years for proceedings to end.

Figure 27: Percentage of respondents who reported that the internal misconduct / disciplinary proceedings had a negative or very negative impact on...? (Routed question) %



6.10. These results have been reported after the investigation has concluded. However, importantly 83% of those who reported that their misconduct / disciplinary

investigation is currently on-going also reported a negative or very negative impact upon their physical health.

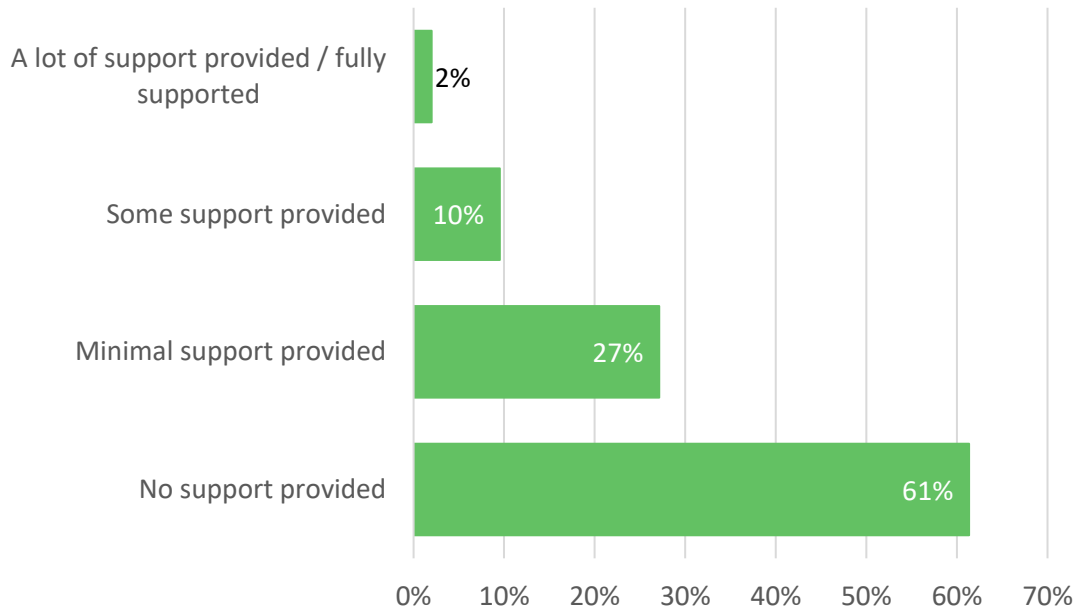
- 6.11. **At 92% a greater proportion of respondents who have been subject to a misconduct / disciplinary investigation reported a negative or very negative impact upon their mental health, relative to their physical health.** Just 6% reported that this investigation had no impact upon their mental health. Unlike the impact on physical health, the correlation with length of investigation is less clear, with a very high proportion of respondents in all investigation length categories reporting a negative or very negative impact upon their mental health. This includes 86% of those who reported the investigation concluded within 1 month, 90% who reported it concluded between 3 and 4 months, 100% who stated it concluded between 9 and 10 months, and 95% who reported that it took more than 2 years for the investigation to conclude. This suggests that the impact of an internal misconduct / disciplinary investigation is immediate and prolonged.
- 6.12. **Respondents reported that the negative impact of internal misconduct / disciplinary proceedings was similar for both personal and professional lives, at 86% and 88% respectively.** However, a clear trend again emerges identifying the correlation between length of investigation and proportion of respondents reporting a negative or very negative impact. 59% of respondents who stated that the investigation concluded within 1 month reported a negative or very negative impact upon their personal life, this increased to 88% of those who reported that the investigation concluded with 7 to 8 months and to 94% of those who reported the investigation did not conclude for more than 2 years.
- 6.13. Similarly, 68% of respondents who reported that the proceedings concluded within 1 month reported a negative impact upon their professional life, increasing to 90% who stated that the investigation concluded between 7 and 8 months and 95% who reported that the investigation did not conclude for more than 2 years. A high proportion of respondents who reported that the misconduct / disciplinary proceedings are ongoing reported a negative or very negative impact, including 87% who reported a negative impact on personal life and a 91% who reported a negative impact on their professional life.

Support

- 6.14. **Despite the high proportion of respondents reporting negative or very negative impacts on their health, their personal and their professional lives, a majority of respondents (61%) identified that they received no support from the PSNI during the misconduct / disciplinary proceedings.** 27% of respondents stated that they received

only minimal support, with 10% reporting that they received some support. Just 2% of respondents stated that they received a lot of support, or they were fully supported throughout the process.

Figure 28: What level of welfare support was provided to you by the PSNI during these misconduct / disciplinary proceedings? (Routed question) %



6.15. The qualitative results provided an insight into the views of officers regarding the length of time both internal and external investigations took to conclude as well as a stark insight into the realities of how this impacts an officers personal and professional life.

“I am currently undergoing an internal investigation... I had been removed from my role and repositioned. The stress and anxiety have caused my physical and mental health to fall. My family is also affected by this. I have had no help and guidance whatsoever. The PSNI are supposed to support mental health... I was a very keen and proactive officer, this process has now changed my outlook completely to which I feel I will never recover” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

“I always loved my job and worked hard throughout the course of my career. Unfortunately, the discipline procedure has changed my perception and I find it hard to recover from that even though totally cleared of any wrongdoing, the stress and anxiety will last indefinitely” (Constable, 21-25 years’ service)

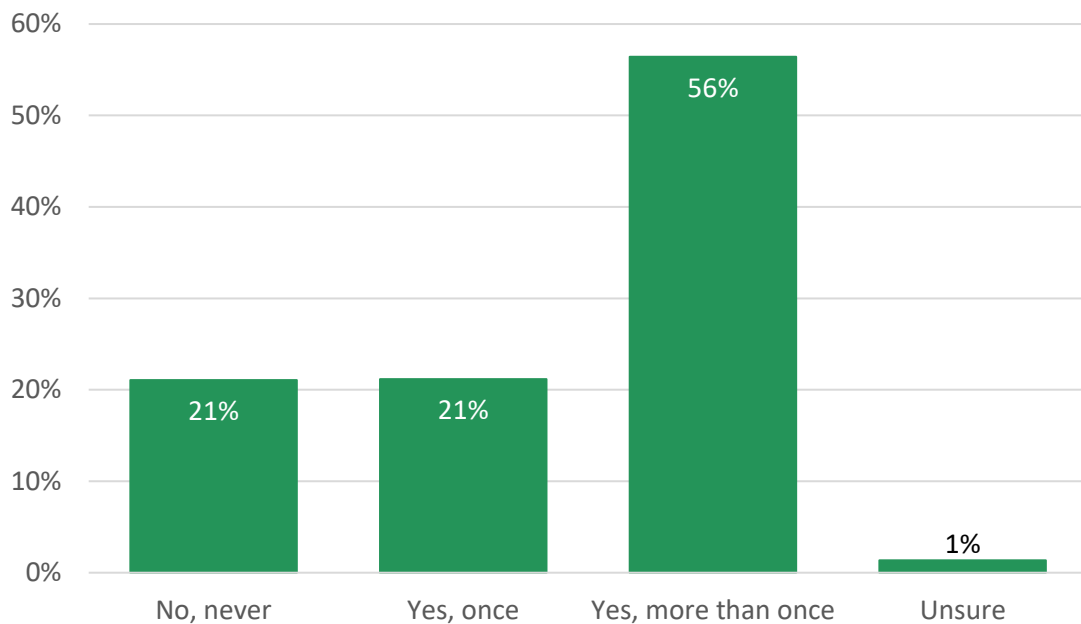
“The manner in which the PSNI handle disciplinary repositioning and suspension is woefully poor...There is no appeal process, no audit trail, no fairness or consistency. There is no transparency, and no voice is given to the officers concerned...In many cases the effects of re-positioning are far worse for the officer than what would be the punishment for the alleged misdemeanour. The damage that this approach causes to individual officers is huge and career changing... When an officer is subject to a disciplinary investigation, there should be an automatically triggered welfare support program. Officers who are re-positioned or suspended are at an extremely high risk of developing mental health conditions” (Constable, 11-15 years’ service)

Investigation by the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI)

6.16. Whilst 78% of respondents reported that they had never been subject to an internal misconduct / disciplinary investigation, just 21% of respondents reported that they have never been subject to an investigation by the Police Ombudsman for NI (PONI). In total **77% of respondents reported that they have been subject to a PONI investigation, including 21% who stated that they have been subject to a single investigation and 56% who reported that they have been subject to more than one investigation by PONI.**

6.17. All of the respondents who reported they have been subject to a PONI investigation were asked to outline how long the (most recent) investigation took to conclude. Those who are subject to an investigation which is on-going were asked to report how long the current investigation has been underway.

Figure 29: As a serving PSNI officer, have you ever been subject to an investigation by the Police Ombudsman for NI (PONI)? (All respondents) %



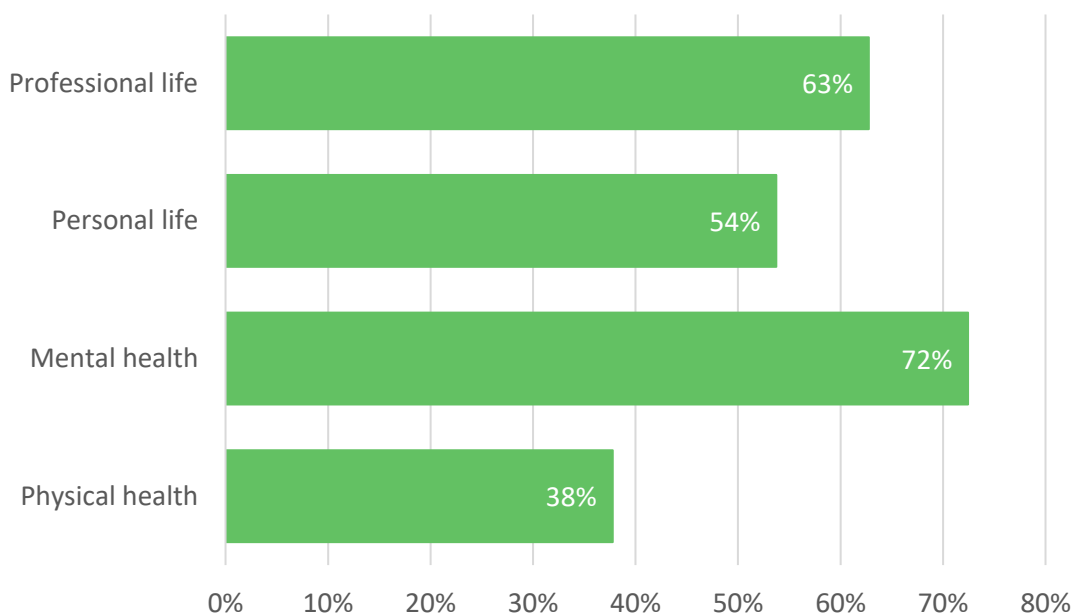
- 6.18. 9% of respondents reported that their (most recent) PONI investigation concluded in less than 1 month, with a further 51% reporting the conclusion of the investigation in less than 6 months. 18% of respondents stated that the PONI investigation concluded between 7 and 12 months. 13% reported investigations lasting between 1 and 2 years and 8% more than 2 years.
- 6.19. 9% of respondents reported that they are *currently* under investigation by PONI. 55% of these respondents stated that this investigation has been on-going for less than 1 year, with 25% reporting that it has been on-going for between 1 and 2 years and 20% on-going for more than 2 years.
- 6.20. Despite a significantly greater proportion of respondents reporting being the subject of an external PONI investigation, relative to an internal PSNI misconduct / disciplinary investigation, **the evidence indicates that the length of time taken by PONI to conclude an investigation is shorter than that undertaken by the PSNI internally.**
- 6.21. Whilst 21% of those who reported that they have been the subject of an internal PSNI misconduct / disciplinary investigation stated they were repositioned during the investigation and 6% suspended from duty, this reduces to 2% and 0% respectively for officers investigated by PONI.

6.22. Furthermore, 59% of respondents who were repositioned during a PONI investigation reported that they were repositioned for less than a year, with 17% repositioned for between 1 and 2 years and 28% for more than 2 years. Similarly, 61% of respondents were suspended for less than 1 year during a PONI investigation, with 39% suspended for more than 1 year.

The impact of a PONI investigation

6.23. **The proportion of respondents who reported that a PONI investigation had a negative or very negative impact on their health, their personal or their professional life was smaller than the proportion who cited a negative impact from an internal investigation.** At 38%, the proportion of respondents who reported a negative impact on their physical health was lower than the proportion who cited a negative impact on their mental health, at 72%.

Figure 30: Percentage of respondents who reported that the PONI investigation had a negative or very negative impact on...? (Routed question) %



6.24. There was also a greater difference in the proportion of respondents who reported a negative impact on their personal life, at 54%, relative to their professional life, than was reported for the impact of an internal investigation which yielded similar results for both. Nevertheless, the results indicate the significant personal implications of a PONI investigation on health and personal/professional lives.

6.25. Similarity to the trend which was previously observed which identified a increased likelihood of a negative or very negative impact on health, personal or professional lives

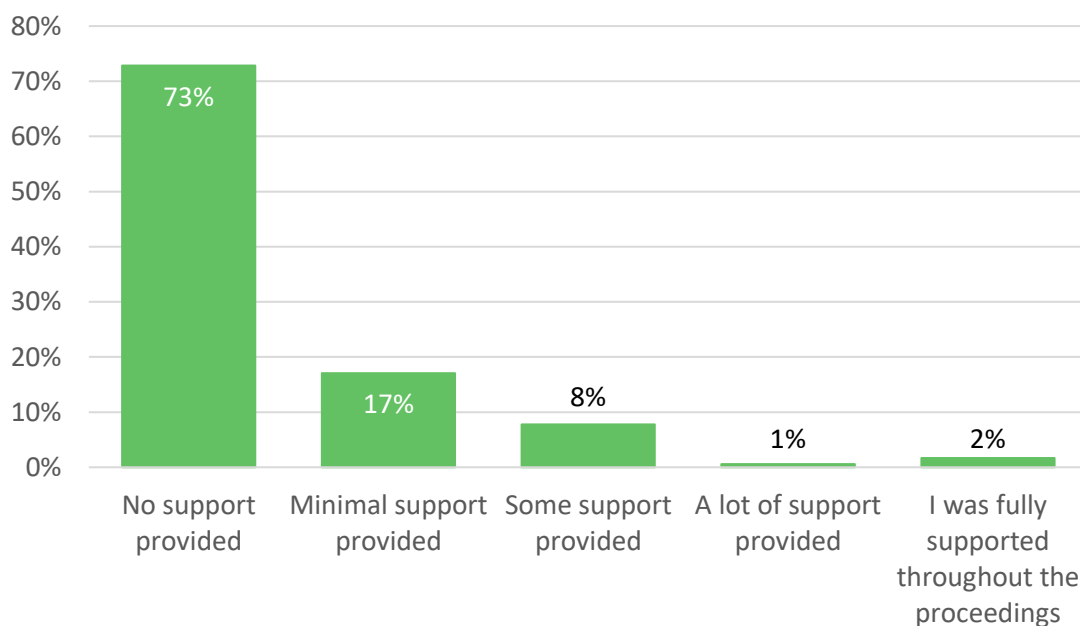
as an internal investigation increased in duration, the impact of a PONI investigation is comparable albeit less pronounced. In general, there emerges an increased likelihood of a detrimental impact of a PONI investigation the longer it takes for the investigation to conclude. For example, 67% of respondents who reported that their PONI investigation concluded in less than 1 month reported a negative or very negative impact on their physical health. This increased to 71% of those who reported it concluded in 9 to 10 months and to 77% of those who reported it took more than 2 years to conclude.

6.26. Again the impact on mental health is the outlier in this analysis, with the likelihood of reporting a negative or very negative impact on mental health similar regardless of the length of time it takes for a PONI investigation to conclude, at 94% of those who reported their investigation concluded in less than 1 month, 90% of those who reported it concluded in 11 to 12 months and 94% of those who reported that it took more than 2 years to conclude. As with an internal PSNI misconduct / disciplinary investigation, the impact on the mental health of police officers is immediate and prolonged.

Support

6.27. According to survey respondents, **the level of support provided to officers who are subject to a PONI investigation is less than that provided to officers who are subject to an internal misconduct / disciplinary investigation** i.e., lower than the already low levels of support reported by officers during internal investigations.

Figure 31: What level of welfare support was provided to you by the PSNI during these PONI proceedings? (Routed question) %



6.28. **Almost three quarters (73%) of all respondents who stated that they have been subject to a PONI investigation reported that they received no support from the PSNI.** This compares to 61% of those who had been subject to an internal misconduct / disciplinary investigation. 17% of respondents reported that they received only minimal support, with 8% stating that some support was provided. 3% of respondents stated that they received a lot of support or were fully supported throughout.

“I have now had two interviews by PONI. Doing my job properly, lawfully and as well as I could to sitting in an interview for 2.5 hours with them trying to incriminate you and report you for offences. The stress and impact this has on the mental health and morale of police officers is something which is not only overlooked, but simply not cared about by senior management. People ask why I do the job and I honestly can't answer” (Constable, 0-2 years' service)

“I feel the time taken for a PSD / PONI investigation is absolutely disgraceful. There is no justifiable reason for the time that is currently taking for matters to be investigated. Both need to be held to a higher standard. Further to that - the threshold for an officer to be repositioned / suspended while being investigated is extremely disappointing. An officer at the moment is not afforded the same rights as any other member of the public - It very much feels that an officer is guilty until proven innocent” (Constable, 3-5 years' service)

“Misconduct cases and PONI investigations need to be more streamlined, and outcomes delivered in a more timely manner. The impact of being investigated cannot be underestimated. The organisation needs to support officers and staff” (Chief Inspector, 16-20 years' service)

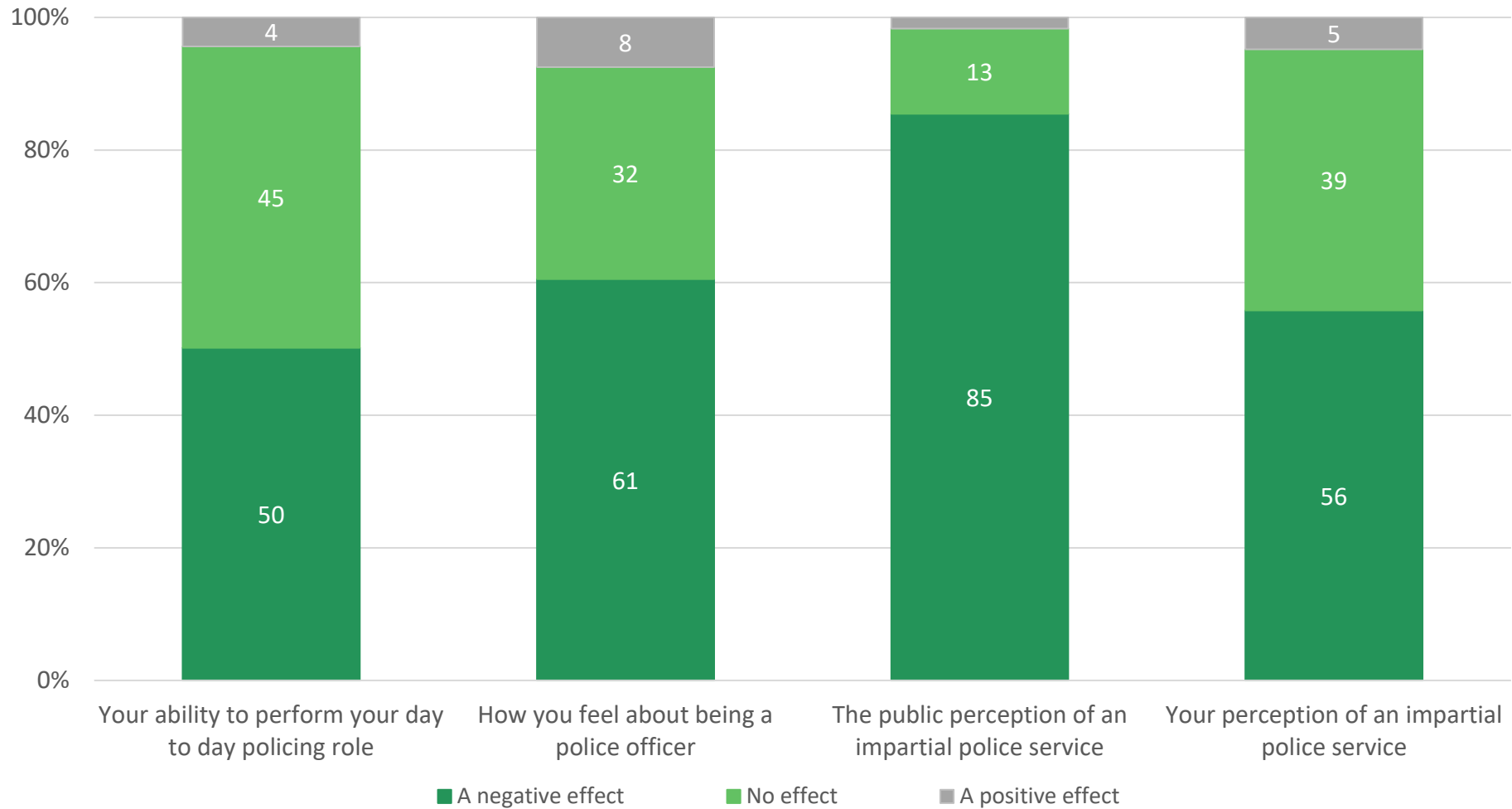
“Ombudsman investigation - I had absolutely no support from supervisors in relation to this, which dragged on for a year putting me under immense stress in an already stressful role” (Constable, 16-20 years' service)

“I really feel that the issues in relation to PONI, length of time for Investigations and the position of repositioning/suspensions needs looked at urgently, far too many Officers are being repositioned and suspended for several years. This is having a massive impact on the morale of all Officers involved... massive impact on career progression and officer/staff health and wellbeing” (Sergeant, 16-20 years' service)

7. The Policing Environment

- 7.1. During the last eighteen months there have been a number of high-profile international, national and local events which have required police attendance, and which have attracted a significant level of media scrutiny. These events have included the policing response to Covid-19 and associated protests, the international and national Black Lives Matter protests and protests associated with the outworkings of Brexit. High profile local incidents included the Bobby Storey funeral in west Belfast as well as events relating to the Sean Graham Bookmakers commemoration on the Ormeau Road in Belfast. Events such as these attract a significant level of scrutiny and public commentary and this inevitably has consequences for the perception of policing, both externally and internally. The distribution of this survey offered a timely opportunity to examine how these events have been perceived by serving police officers and what impact this may have had on *their* feelings about, and perceptions of, policing.
- 7.2. Respondents were asked to identify what affect, if at all, these high-profile events had on four statements including your ability to perform your day-to-day policing role; the public perception of an impartial police service; how you feel about being a police officer and your perception of an impartial police service.
- 7.3. **Half of all the survey respondents reported that the high-profile international, national and local events have had a negative effect on their ability to perform their day-to-day policing role.** This includes 15% who reported a very negative effect and 36% who reported a negative effect. 45% of respondents stated that these events had no effect on their ability to perform their policing role. 4% reported a positive effect.
- 7.4. **More than three in every five respondents (61%) stated that the events in question had a negative or very negative effect on how they feel about being a police officer.** 32% reported the events had no effect on how they feel about being a police officer, whilst 8% reported a positive or very positive effect.

Figure 32: To what extent, if at all, do you feel that high-profile international, national and local events have affected... (All respondents) %



- 7.5. Respondents were also asked to consider how they feel the perception of the PSNI as an impartial police service has been impacted by the various high-profile events. **A significant majority of respondents, 85%, reported that the public perception of the PSNI as an impartial police service has been negatively or very negatively affected**, this includes 47% who reported a very negative effect and 39% who reported a negative effect. 13% of respondents stated that the public perception of an impartial police service had not been affected at all, whilst 2% reported a positive effect.
- 7.6. **A majority of respondents (56%) also reported that their own perception of the PSNI as an impartial police service had been negatively affected by the events in question.** Although a reduced majority relative to the proportion of respondents who stated that the public perception had been negatively affected, this remains a significant result with almost 6 out of 10 respondents stating that the impartiality of their own employer had been negatively impacted. This includes 25% of respondents who reported a very negative effect and 31% who reported a negative effect. 39% of respondents reported that the events had no impact on their own perception of an impartial police service, whilst 5% reported a positive effect.
- 7.7. The negative impact of these international, national and local events resulted in a significant number of qualitative contributions from respondents outlining their views on the issues raised and the impact this has on policing and on wider society.

“[These events have] ... led to a loss of faith from the law abiding public who expect us to uphold the law, as such it is very hard to now have any pride in being a police officer” (Constable, 26-30 years’ service)

“I understand the role of working with the public however I personally feel that policing has become too political, and this is having a negative effect on how the public view us” (Constable, 6-10 years’ service)

“As a service we seem to try and appease every member of the public, but our job is to apply the law and police all circumstances professionally, courteously but robustly if required” (Constable, 21-25 years’ service)

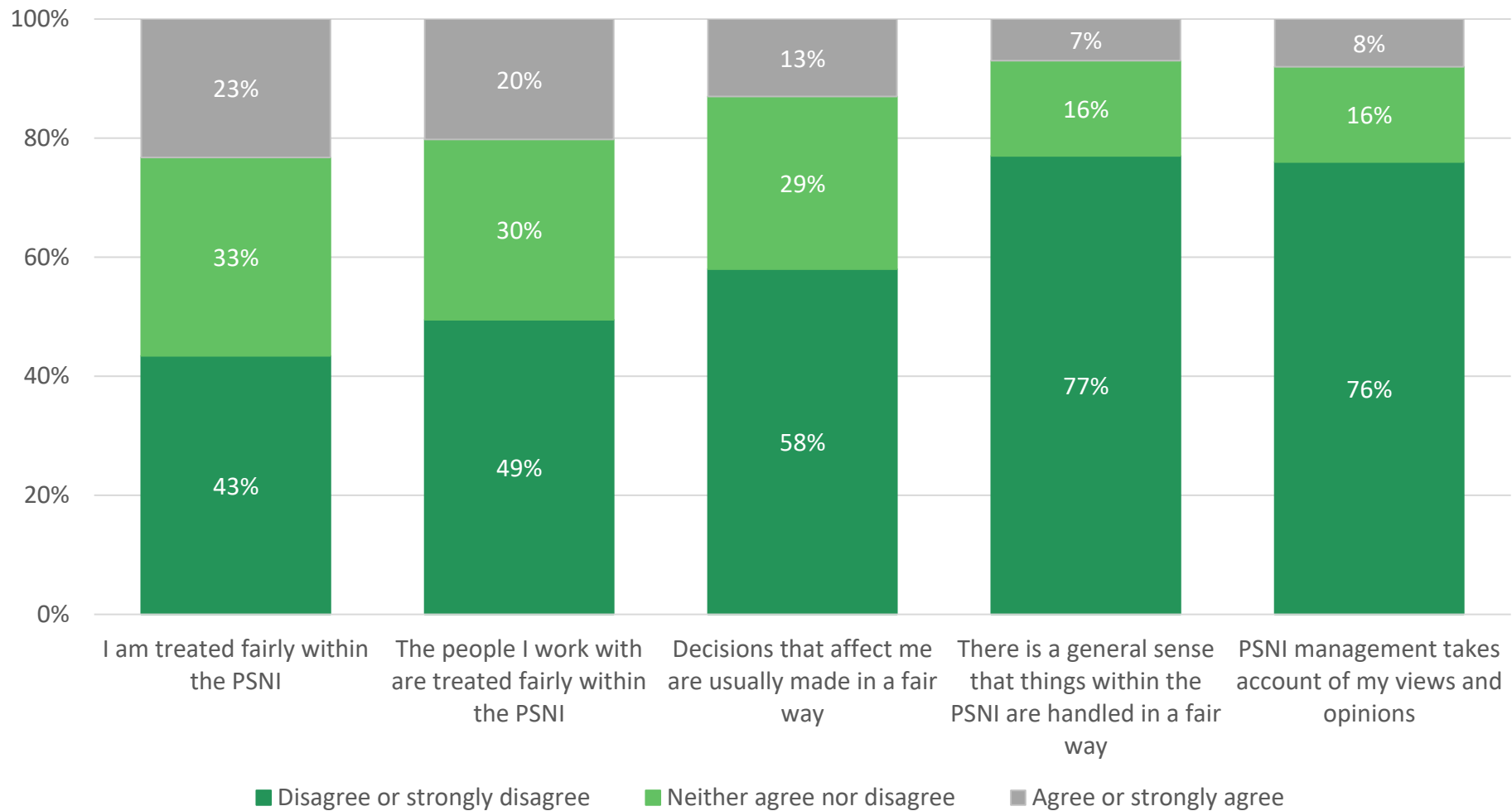
“More should be done in media platforms to portray a positive police image and correct damaging misinformation” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

“The on-going negative press attributed to the Service needs to be addressed by the SMT with someone at the top table fighting back against the continuing criticism that the PSNI receives” (Constable, 11-15 years’ service)

8. Procedural Justice

- 8.1. Procedural justice refers to the process by which decisions are made and workplace policies are established. At the core of this concept is fairness and the perception that decision making is carried out in a fair and equitable way. This is an important concept in the workplace where fair treatment, or the perception of fair treatment, has been linked to improved job satisfaction and organisational commitment^{xi}.
- 8.2. As reported in the 2018 PFNI Workforce Survey, five items were included in the 2021 Workforce Survey to measure the perception of procedural justice within the PSNI. Four of the five items are adapted versions of questions developed by Tyler and Blader (2003), and were included in the 2015 PFNI Workforce Survey, the remaining item was a new addition to the 2018 PFNI Workforce Survey.
- 8.3. As was the case in the both 2015 and 2018, **respondents to the 2021 Workforce Survey were more likely to disagree than agree with each of the procedural justice statements**. 43% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they are treated fairly within the PSNI, with under a quarter of respondents (23%) agreeing with this. At 49% a greater proportion of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the people they work with are treated fairly within the PSNI, compared to their perception of the fairness of how they are treated. 20% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the people they work with are treated fairly. A majority of respondents (58%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that decisions that affect them are usually made in a fair way, 13% of respondents agreed with this statement.
- 8.4. Relative to the proportion of respondents who disagreed with the first three procedural justice statements, the level of disagreement with the final two statements relating to ‘things being handled in a fair way’ and ‘management taking account of views and opinions’ recorded a much higher level of disagreement, with more than three quarters of all respondents disagreeing with both. **77% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that there is a general sense that things within the PSNI are handled in a fair way, whilst 76% disagreed or strongly disagreed that the PSNI takes account of their views and opinions**. This includes 35% and 45% respectively who *strongly* disagreed with these statements. 16% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with each statement.

Figure 33: Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements...? (All respondents) %



- 8.5. The proportion of respondents who disagree or strongly disagree that they are treated fairly within the PSNI has increased from 37% in 2015. However, at 47% in 2018, there has been a 4 percentage point reduction to 43% in 2021. Similarly, the proportion of respondents who agree or strongly agree that they are treated fairly reduced from 20% in 2015, to 20% in 2018, before increasing to 23% in 2018.
- 8.6. The proportion of respondents who disagree or strongly disagree that the people they work with are treated fairly within the PSNI has remained stable at 48% in 2015, 46% in 2018 and 49% in 2021. The proportion who reported that they agree with this statement has also remained similar at 21%, 23% and 20% respectively.
- 8.7. There has, however, been a general upwards trend in the percentage of survey respondents who disagree or strongly disagree that decisions which affect them are usually made in a fair way, increasing from 53% in 2015, to 56% in 2018 and 58% in 2021. There has been a 3 percentage point reduction in the level of agreement with this statement from 16% in both 2015 and 2018, to 13% in 2021.
- 8.8. The largest percentage change over time in the level of (dis)agreement with the procedural justice statements includes a 10 percentage point increase in the proportion of respondents who disagree or strongly disagree that there is a general sense that things in the PSNI are handled in a fair way. This increased from 67% in both 2015 and 2018 to 77% in 2021.
- 8.9. Finally, a 8 percentage point increase was also observed in the percentage of respondents who reported disagreement that the PSNI management takes account of their views and opinions, increasing from 68% in 2018 to 76% in 2021. This statement was not included in the 2015 Workforce Survey.

“Management continually express that they are engaging with federated ranks and listen to what is said. My experience is the opposite...Ongoing changes within District level has produced a fractured and disjointed workforce resistant to change. No persons involved in this change have been consulted with on a personal level, where engagement would have produced respect and acceptance” (Constable, 6-10 years’ service)

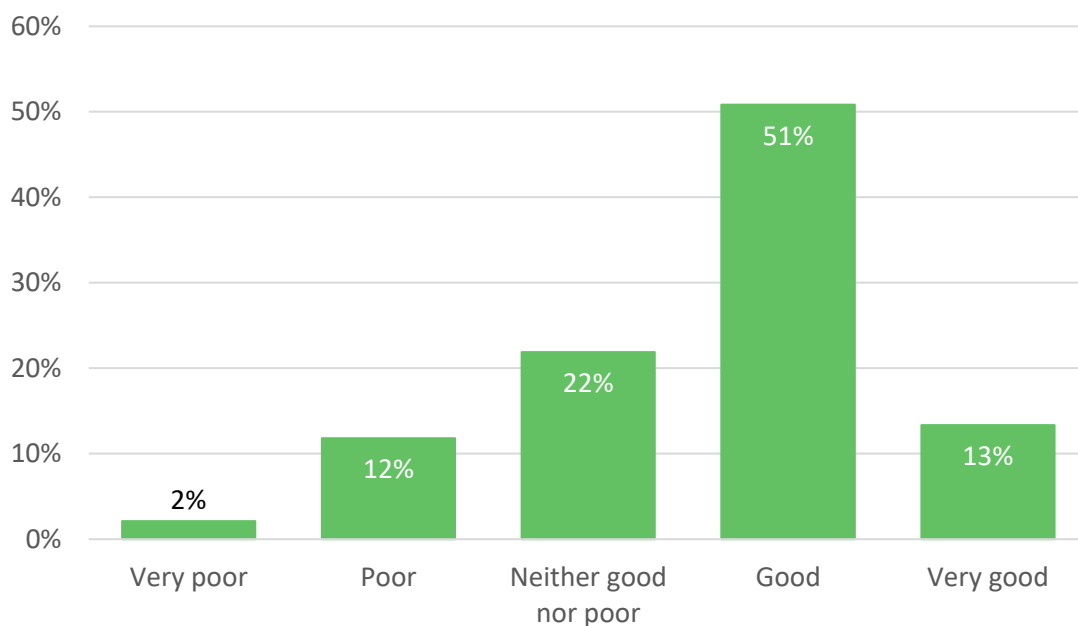
“Senior management do not involve or consider anyone in their decision making, whilst this is a rank and file organisation, it does seem that decisions are made without any consideration of the impact it will have on officers” (Constable, 11-15 years’ service)

“Whilst I enjoy my day-to-day role in the Police, I get extremely frustrated by organisational and management issues which often make me feel there is no support for low ranking officers...It continually feels that no matter what you do, it is wrong and my perception of this is often compounded by Senior management condemning rather than defending officers’ actions”
(Constable, 26-30 years’ service)

9. Health, Sickness and Wellbeing

- 9.1. The issue of health, sickness and wellbeing within policing has become increasingly important since the first PFNI Workforce Survey in 2015. Indeed, in the 2015 survey there was only a brief mention of the issue, with respondents asked to consider what impact their health and wellbeing had on their intention to leave the service. However, health and wellbeing emerged as a key focus of the 2018 Workforce Survey, providing a robust evidential benchmark upon which much of the data collated in the 2021 Workforce Survey can be compared. Such is the significance of this topic to discussions on modern policing, several new questions have also included in the 2021 Workforce Survey.
- 9.2. In order to fully investigate issues of health, sickness and wellbeing within the PSNI, survey respondents were first asked to self-report their overall physical health, providing a baseline understanding of health within the police service.

Figure 34: Please rate your overall physical health? (All respondents) %



- 9.3. **64% of respondents self-reported their physical health as very good (13%) or good (51%),** with a further 22% reporting their physical health as neither good nor poor. 14% of respondents noted that their physical health was poor or very poor.
- 9.4. In addition to self-reported physical health, respondents were also asked to state the total number of sickness absence days they had taken in the previous 12 months, as well as the total number of these which were attributable to mental ill-health. Please note that the preceding 12 months prior to the distribution of this survey (i.e. from

November 2020 to November 2021) incorporates a number of changing Covid-19 restrictions, including lockdown and working from home guidance. It is possible that these restrictions may have impacted upon sickness absence levels across the public and private sectors.

- 9.5. 62% of respondents reported zero sickness absence days, with **38% reporting one or more days of sickness absence in the preceding 12-month period**. Of the respondents who had at least one sickness absence, the minimum number of days taken was 1 and the maximum at more than 200. **The average number of sickness absence days was 11.14**; this is comparable with the average number of sickness absence days recorded for all PSNI officers for the 2019/20 financial year, at 12.65^{xii}.
- 9.6. **11% of all survey respondents reported sickness absence associated with mental ill-health**. 36% of the respondents who stated that they had taken sickness absence due to mental ill-health reported between 1 and 10 absence days, 11% reported between 11 and 20 days, 21% reported between 21 and 50 days, with a further 21% reporting between 51 and 100 days. 11% of those who recorded sickness absence due to their mental health reported more than 101 days. **The average number of sickness days associated with mental ill-health in the 12 months preceding the survey was 12.83**.

Mental Wellbeing

- 9.7. The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) was included within this survey in order to provide a measure of mental wellbeing across the sample group whilst also enabling between group comparisons. This scale was also included in the 2018 Workforce Survey providing an overtime comparison as well as in the PFEW 2020 Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey providing a comparison with police officers serving in England and Wales.
- 9.8. The SWEMWBS is a shortened version of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) which was developed as a survey tool which can be used to monitor mental wellbeing at the national and local level. This scale is not a screening tool but rather measures, in a more generalised manner, mental wellbeing within the general population^{xiii}. The full WEMWBS includes 14 items which measure subjective wellbeing and psychological functioning. The shortened scale includes 7 of these items used specifically to measure the 'feeling and functioning aspects of positive mental wellbeing'^{xiv}. Respondents were asked to rate their experience of each of the seven positively worded statements over the previous two weeks.
- 9.9. The scale is scored by summing the response to each item. This is then transformed using a conversion table. Each respondent is assigned a final score which ranges

between a minimum of 7 and a maximum is 35, with a higher score indicative of ‘better’ mental wellbeing.

9.10. As in the 2018 Workforce Survey report, a list-wise deletion technique was utilised in the analysis of this data, meaning only those cases which were fully completed were included in the analysis. The final number of cases included in this analysis is 2,337. **The final transformed SWEMWBS score for the total sample population was 19.74** (with a margin of error of +/-0.16, at the 95% confidence interval. **The final transformed SWEMWBS in 2018 was 19.48 indicating an increase of 0.26 in the mental wellbeing score of PSNI survey respondents.**

9.11. The results provided in response to the 7 items from the SWEMWBS are provided below. The highest rated statement was ‘I’ve been able to make up my own mind about things’ with an average score of 3.5 out of 5, whilst the lowest rated stated was ‘I’ve been feeling relaxed’ at 2.6 out of 5.

Table 3: Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale - please select the response that best describes your experience of each over the last two weeks? (Listwise deletion)

	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time	Mean score
I’ve been feeling optimistic about the future	11%	29%	37%	20%	3%	2.7
I’ve been feeling useful	6%	20%	45%	27%	3%	3.0
I’ve been feeling relaxed	12%	38%	36%	13%	1%	2.6
I’ve been dealing with problems well	4%	13%	47%	32%	4%	3.2
I’ve been thinking clearly	4%	13%	41%	37%	6%	3.3
I’ve been feeling close to other people	8%	24%	39%	25%	4%	2.9
I’ve been able to make my own mind up about things	3%	9%	34%	43%	12%	3.5

9.12. The final transformed SWEMWBS score for police officers in NI was lower than that recorded by police officers in the PFEW 2020 Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey in England and Wales, at 19.74 and 21 respectively. This suggests that police officers in NI have slightly lower level of mental wellbeing relative to their colleagues in England and Wales.

9.13. In addition to the use of SWEMWBS, respondents were asked to report how stressful they find their job and their life outside work, in order to understand an additional element of wellbeing. Almost half (49%) reported that they find their job very or extremely stressful, including 18% who selected extremely stressful. A further 39% of

respondents reported that their job is moderately stressful, with 12% reporting it mildly stressful or not at all stressful.

- 9.14. 15% of respondents stated that their life outside work is very or extremely stressful, with a further 30% reporting it as moderately stressful. More than half (55%) of respondents stated that their life outside work is either mildly stressful or not at all stressful.

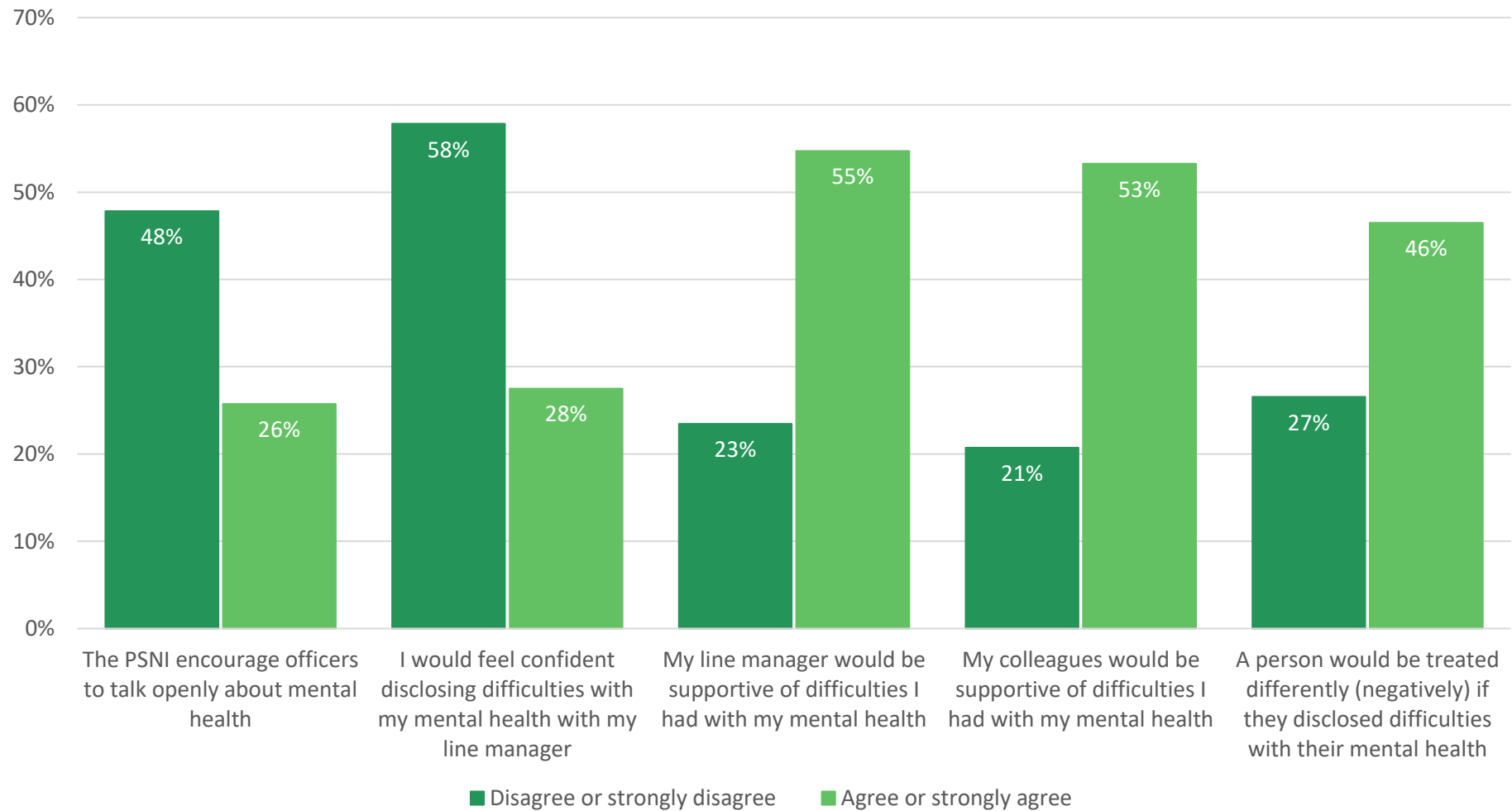
Mental wellbeing support and the PSNI

- 9.15. Respondents were asked to rate their level of (dis)agreement with five statements relating to their perception of how mental ill-health/wellbeing is discussed and treated within the PSNI. **Almost half of all survey respondents (48%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the PSNI encourage officers to talk openly about mental health and wellbeing**, 26% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. In addition to this, **58% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they would feel confident disclosing any difficulties with their mental health with their line manager**. 28% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

- 9.16. Despite the high level of disagreement with these two statements, a majority of respondents (55%) agreed or strongly agreed that their line manager would be supportive of difficulties they may experience with their mental health and wellbeing. 23% disagreed or strongly disagreed that their line manager would be supportive in this situation. Similarly, 53% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their colleagues would be supportive should they experience any difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing, with 21% disagreeing with this statement.

- 9.17. However, irrespective of the perception that line management and colleagues would be supportive, **47% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a person would be treated differently (in a negative way) if they disclosed difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing**. 27% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this. This may help with an understanding of why a majority of respondents would not feel confident disclosing issues with their mental health, despite expressing the likelihood of a supportive workplace environment.

Figure 35: Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements...? (All respondents) %



- 9.18. There were notable differences in the proportion of respondents to the PFEW 2020 Demand, Capacity and Welfare survey who agreed with each of these five statements, relative to the results from NI. **There was a 29 percentage point difference in the proportion of respondents in England and Wales who agreed or strongly that their police force encourages officers to openly talk about mental health and wellbeing, at 55% compared to 26% in NI.** The percentage of officers in England and Wales who agreed or strongly agreed that they would feel confident in disclosing difficulties about their mental health with line management was also greater, at 43% compared to 28% of respondents in NI.
- 9.19. At 63%, officers in England and Wales were more likely than officers in NI to agree that their line management would be supportive if they did disclose difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing. 55% of respondents in NI reported this. There was also a greater percentage of officers in England and Wales who agreed or strongly agreed that their colleagues would be supportive, at 64% relative to 53% of respondents in NI. This greater level of agreement with these statements in England and Wales, resulted in **fewer respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that a person would be treated differently (in a negative way) if they did disclose difficulties with their mental health, at 32% in England and Wales compared to 46% in NI.**
- 9.20. Much of the qualitative data provided by the survey respondents supports the quantitative results previously outlined, with respondents reporting their personal experiences of health, sickness and wellbeing within the PSNI. This was particularly evident in relation to mental ill-health and workplace support.

“The organisation looks after officers’ welfare in a tick box fashion, all front and no substance. Lots of posters and soundbites however actual support is lacking” (Sergeant, 16-20 years’ service)

“As I supervisor I have had first-hand experience of trying to get mental health support for my staff and it is not a good experience. OHW are at saturation point and are unable to cope with demand and even when my department is willing to fund mental health care, it is impossible to obtain with barrier after barrier being put up... This causes my staff to become demoralised, as it makes them think that we don't care” (Sergeant, 11-15 years’ service)

“My mental health remains significantly impacted by the stress of the job; I have not asked for help from the PSNI as the organisation only pays lip service to mental health support. I also believe that I would be unfairly treated within my department if they knew the extent of my difficulties with my mental health. I have been displaying signs and symptoms of PTSD in

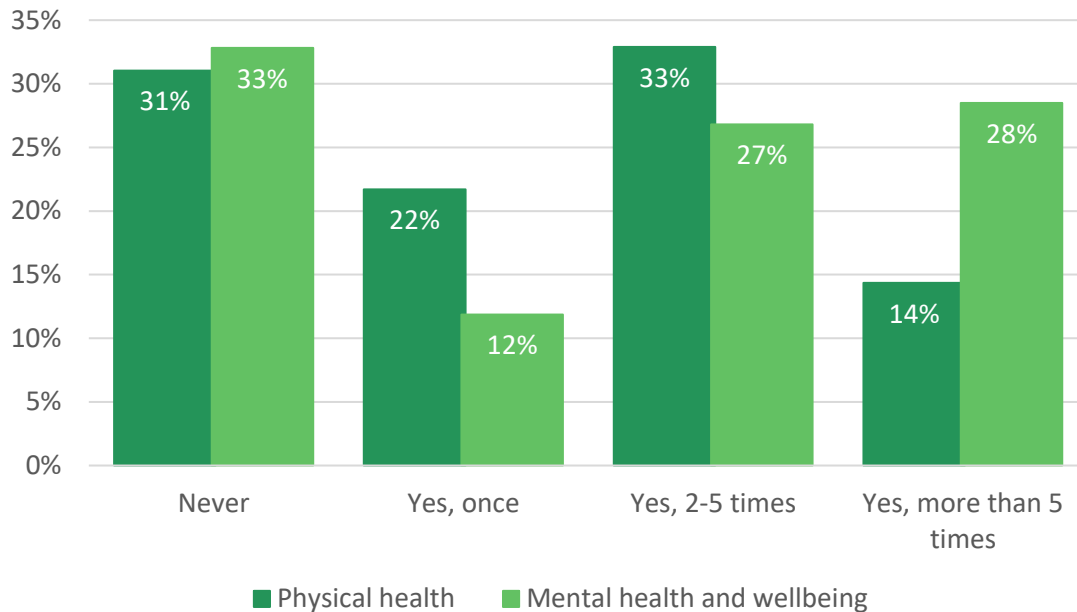
excess of 20 years. I cannot turn to the service for help as I have seen first-hand how badly colleagues have been failed when they have asked for help. I regularly struggle to cope” (Constable, 26-30 years’ service)

“Support from PSNI as an organisation re. mental health of officers is incredibly poor. I unfortunately had to take an extended period of time off due to mental health and my struggles to cope day to day. I waited several weeks on some sort of contact from OHW before having to approach an outside agency for support. Despite my line managers best efforts this contact wasn't made until shortly before my return to work 4months later. I have now been added to a waiting list by OHW to speak with the clinical psychologist as I am still struggling but I've been told this will take approx. 4/5months before I can get any sort of support. It's not good enough. There are numerous emails sent out indicating that mental health support is readily available. It's not” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

Presenteeism

- 9.21. Presenteeism refers to the specific problem in which employees attend work, despite suffering from ill-health (physical or mental). This is a process which ultimately reduces an individual’s productivity and can be more costly than absenteeism, due to excess losses in terms of reduced output^{xv}. Research has also identified links between presenteeism, health decline and burnout^{xvi}, with a subsequent impact on absenteeism^{xvii}. Understanding levels of presenteeism within the PSNI is therefore of great importance and is a key element in the exploration of issues associated with wellbeing and welfare in the workplace. The items used in this survey to measure presenteeism are an adapted version of those items included in a study by Aaronsson, Gustafsson and Dallner^{xviii}.
- 9.22. To contextualise the following results, it is important to reiterate that the previous 12 months respondents were asked to consider included various and changing Covid-19 restrictions including lockdown measures and working from home guidance. It is likely this will have had an impact upon the rate and impact of presenteeism within both the public and private sectors.
- 9.23. The proportion of survey respondents who reported presenteeism associated with their physical health was similar to the proportion who reported some degree of presenteeism associated with their mental health and wellbeing, at 69% and 67% respectively.

Figure 36: Presenteeism - In the last 12 months, have you gone to work despite feeling that you really should have taken sick leave due to...? (All respondents) %



9.24. However, the frequency with which respondents report presenteeism associated with mental ill-health is greater than for presenteeism associated with their physical health. For example, 29% of respondents reported more than 5 episodes of presenteeism associated with their mental health over the previous 12 months, compared to 14% of respondents who reported more than 5 episodes associated with their physical health.

9.25. When analysed in respect of the evidence gathered on presenteeism in the 2018 Workforce Survey, it appears that the proportion of respondents reporting presenteeism associated with their physical health has declined, from 83% of respondents in 2018 to 69% in 2021. This includes a 4 percentage point reduction in the proportion reporting more than 5 episodes of presenteeism, from 18% in 2018 to 14% in 2021. It is possible that Covid-19 restrictions and the ability for *some* officers to work from home, have eased the burden relating to presenteeism, either via the reduction in physical ill-health requiring sickness absence, or via the potential for home working to enable those physically unwell to maintain a high degree of productivity from home.

9.26. However, the proportion of respondents who reported presenteeism associated with mental ill-health has remained broadly similar, at 69% in 2018 and 67% in 2021. The frequency of this type of presenteeism has also remained the same, with 27% of respondents in 2018 reporting more than 5 episodes of presenteeism associated with mental ill-health and 28% in 2021.

- 9.27. The proportion of respondents who reported at least one episode of presenteeism associated with their mental health was slightly higher in NI, at 69%, than that recorded in the PFEW 2020 Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey at 66%. This trend was also evident for presenteeism associated with physical health, at 66% in England and Wales and 67% in NI.
- 9.28. A number of respondents identified their own personal experience of remaining at work, despite suffering from poor health, and the impact this subsequently had on their professional life.

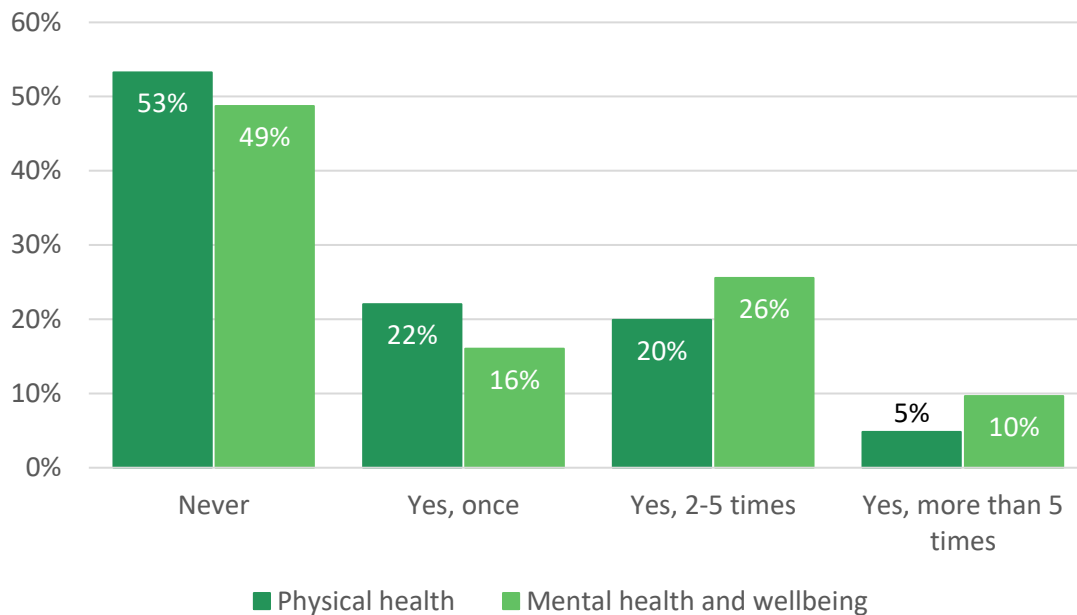
“I was suffering with sleepless nights, nightmares and not being able to control my emotions, I regret now that I came forwards and admitted this, I opened up my Pandora's box, the result of which meant me being removed from my unit, no longer deemed fit to work in front line duties and been shunned by my former colleagues, my line managers did the bare essentials that they had to re. contact but I was basically left completely alone. OHW are overwhelmed by mental health issues, and I fell through the cracks for a few months not being seen or spoken to by anyone” (Constable, 30+ years' service)

“The PSNI give lip service to their employees wellbeing. I have been suffering from PTSD due to multiple incidents at work and have been told that someone will speak to me in 3 to 4 months' time to arrange an OHW appointment” (Constable, 16-20 years' service)

Leavism

- 9.29. The term 'leavism' which was coined in 2013 refers to the practice by which employees use annual leave / flexi time / rest days to take time off from their work when they are unwell or; employees taking work home which they have been unable to finish in their working day or; the practice of working when on annual leave in order to catch up^{xix}. The concept and the items used to measure it provide an additional measure of sickness in the workplace which extend beyond absence and presenteeism. This broadens current understandings of the impact of sickness on the workplace and conversely can further explain the impact of workplace stress and demand on sickness levels.

Figure 37: Leavism - In the last 12 months, have you used annual leave or rest days to take time off due to...? (All respondents) %



9.30. In a similar trend to that evidenced with presenteeism, the proportion of respondents who reported at least one episode of leavism associated with either physical health or mental ill-health is similar at 47% and 51% respectively. Again, issues associated with mental ill-health resulted in a greater frequency of leavism amongst respondents, relative to physical health. 26% of respondents reported between 2 and 5 episodes of leavism associated with their mental health, and 10% more than 5 episodes, compared to 20% who reported between 2 and 5 episodes associated with their physical health and 5% more than 5 episodes.

9.31. The proportion of respondents who have reported at least one episode of leavism associated with their mental health has increased from 48% in 2018 to 51% in 2021, whilst the proportion reporting leavism associated with their physical health has declined from 59% in 2018 to 47% in 2021. This trend was also evident for presenteeism.

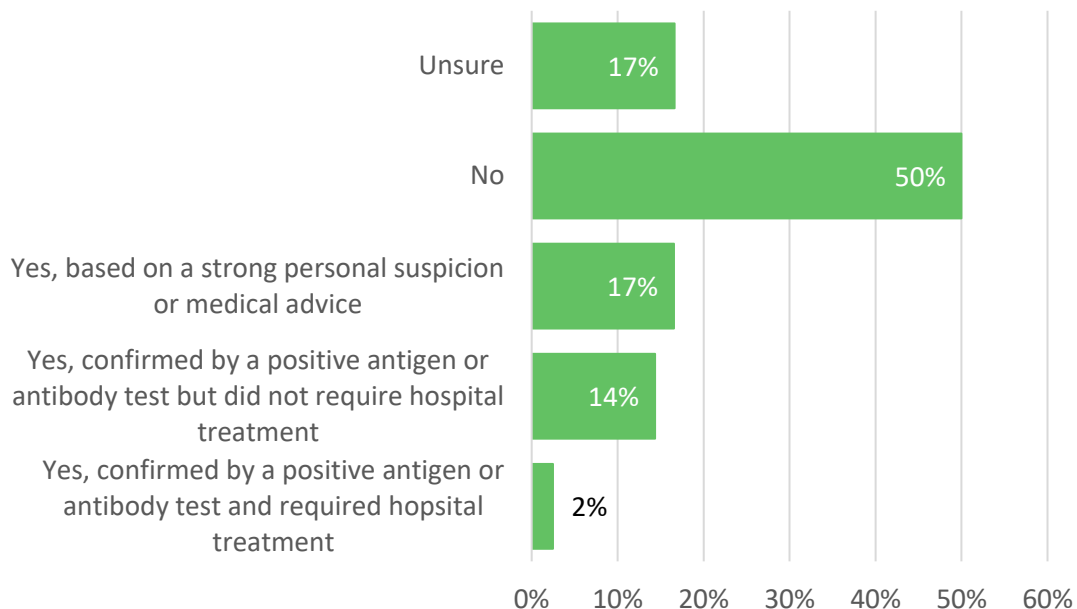
9.32. No comparator data is available for the analysis of leavism between police officers in England and Wales with those in NI.

10. Policing and Covid-19

10.1. Twenty months on from the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in the UK, and the impact of the virus remains a key part of the context within which respondents completed the PFNI 2021 Workforce Survey. The Covid-19 pandemic has affected every aspect of life, including within the workplace where it has added to issues of health, sickness and wellbeing. Respondents were asked a range of questions aimed at understanding the impact of the virus on their personal health and family/work circumstances, as well as gauging perception relating to a number of key areas of interest regarding the management of the pandemic within the PSNI.

10.2. Respondents were asked to identify if they had (or think that they have had) Covid-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. Half of all survey respondents (50%) stated no that they did not have, or did not think they have had, Covid-19. 17% of respondents reported that they were unsure. The remaining third (**33%**) stated **yes that they had, or think they have had, Covid-19** at some point since the pandemic began. This includes **3% who reported that they have had a positive antigen or antibody test and that they required hospital treatment**, alongside a further 14% who had a positive Covid-19 test result but did not require hospital treatment. 17% of respondents reported ‘yes’ based on a strong personal suspicion or medical advice.

Figure 38: Do you think that you have, or have had, Covid-19 since the beginning of the pandemic? (All respondents) %



10.3. The third of respondents who stated that they had, or think they have had, Covid-19 were then asked to identify where they think they contracted it from. 48% of

respondents reported that they think they contracted Covid-19 through work-related activities, with 25% reporting through non-work-related activities (i.e. through family or contact with friends). The remaining 28% were unsure.

- 10.4. Survey respondents used the open-ended text question as an opportunity to outline their personal experiences of having Covid-19 and working for the PSNI, for many respondents the physical impact of the virus was compounded by a lack of support from the service.

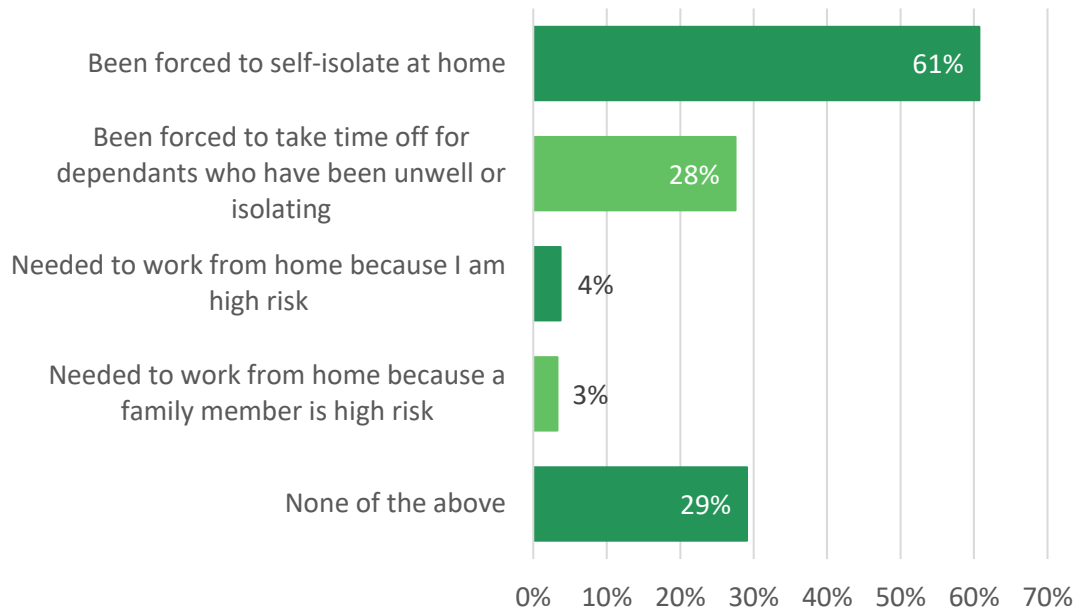
“I also contracted covid while on duty and I have received no help or assistance. 14 months on I still have physical issues caused by the virus. I have not missed a single day as I continue to try and do my bit at an extremely difficult time for everyone” (Constable, 11-15 years’ service)

“As a result of contracting Covid 19 I have subsequently developed long Covid symptoms which on certain days affects me with being very tired” (Constable, 3-5 years’ service)

“Having contracted COVID 19 in July 2021, I was absent from work for a period of 45 x days. I believe that I am still suffering the effects of 'long covid' with physical fatigue playing a huge factor in my day-to-day life both at work and at home” (Constable, 21-25 years’ service)

- 10.5. Covid-19 also resulted in a number of restrictions on our lives which had implications for how and where we could mix with others. Respondents were asked to identify if any of the following restrictions applied to them as a result of Covid-19. Respondents could select more than one option. A majority of respondents (61%) reported that they had been forced to self-isolate at home at some point during the pandemic. This is typically as a result of having Covid-19 or being identified as a close contact to someone who tested positive for Covid-19.

Figure 39: As a result of Covid-19 have you had to do any of the following...? (All respondents) %



10.6. More than a quarter of respondents (28%) also identified that they had been forced to take time off from their work to care for dependents who had been unwell or isolating as a result of Covid-19. 4% of respondents reported that they had to work from home because they are considered as a 'high risk' person with a further 3% working from home as a family member is considered as a 'high risk' person. 29% of respondents reported that none of the options applied to them during the first twenty months of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Perception of the management of Covid-19 within the PSNI

10.7. **Half of all survey respondents (50%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the PSNI managed the service well during the Covid-19 pandemic.** This includes 26% of respondents who strongly disagreed. 27% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement, whilst 24% agreed or strongly agreed. A key element of the management of Covid-19 related issues involved the provision of appropriate items of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and despite half of respondents reporting that the service was not well managed well, **47% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had access to all of the equipment they personally needed to protect them from Covid-19 whilst at work.** A third of respondents (33%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had access to the PPE they required, with 20% who neither agreed nor disagreed.

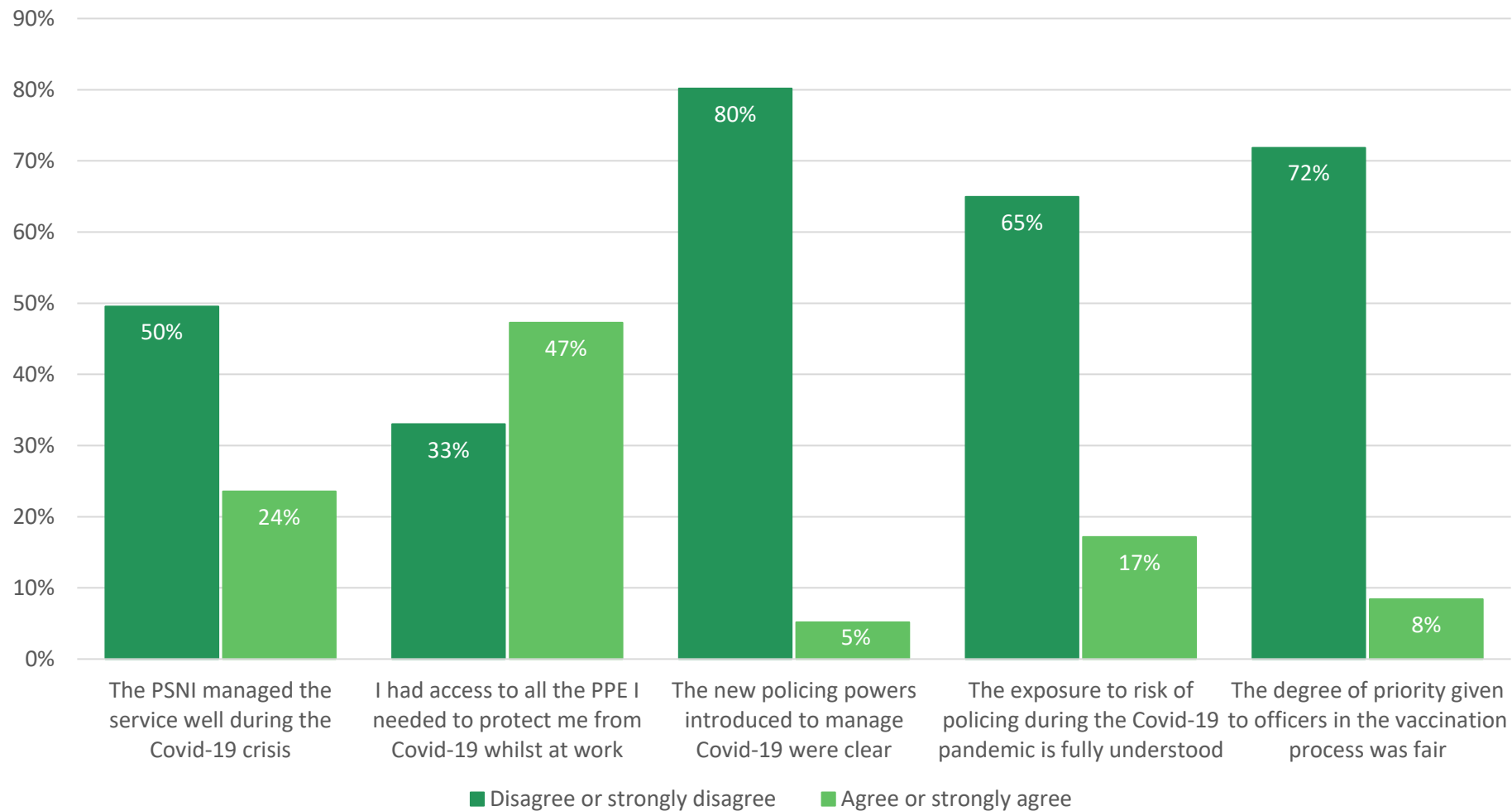
- 10.8. **A significant majority of respondents (80%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the new policing powers which were introduced to manage Covid-19 were clear. This includes 51% of respondents who strongly disagreed.** This may go some way to explaining the high proportion of respondents who disagreed that the service has managed the pandemic well. Just 5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the policing powers used to manage Covid-19 were clear.
- 10.9. **65% of survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the exposure to risk of policing during the Covid-19 pandemic has been fully understood,** suggesting that a majority of officers believe the level of risk they faced personally, as a result of their public service, is not entirely recognised. 18% of respondents neither agreed nor disagree with this statement, whilst 17% agreed or strongly agreed that the exposure to risk *is* fully understood. In addition to the high level of disagreement regarding the exposure to risk of policing during the pandemic, **a majority of survey respondents (72%) also disagreed or strongly disagreed that the degree of priority given to police officers during the vaccination programme was fair.** This includes 48% of respondents who strongly disagreed. 20% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that the vaccination programme was fair to police officers, whilst 8% agreed or strongly agreed.
- 10.10. No comparator data with officers in England and Wales have been used in this analysis due to the time difference into the pandemic.
- 10.11. A number of respondents appeared sympathetic to the unprecedented nature of the Covid-19 pandemic and as a result were positive about the response from the PSNI to the crisis.

“I think the way the pandemic was handled by management was exemplary at times and they often don't get the credit for how well they equipped officers at the start” (Constable, 11-15 years' service)

“Re. Covid - the PSNI did the best job it could in difficult circumstances. The PSNI was undermined by a lack of decisive action by politicians which made covid regulations practically unenforceable” (Constable, 16-20 years' service)

“I feel as frontline officer we were provided with appropriate equipment at the earliest opportunity, including force 8 masks, FRSM's and gloves in an endless supply along with sanitiser stations installed everywhere. I feel good practices were put in place in regard to the bubbling within teams, this was well managed and implemented” (Constable, 6-10 years' service)

Figure 40: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements...? (All respondents) %



10.12. However, many respondents had less favourable comments to make regarding the handling of the crisis by the PSNI and in particular relating to the lack of priority access to vaccination.

“In March 2020, the pandemic hit and our DST were shifted to Covid duties - basically responding to any calls for service where there was a Covid concern. We were told this would last a few weeks. It’s been 18 months...My job satisfaction is basically at zero and shows no signs of changing anytime soon” (Constable, 11-15 years’ service)

“My partner is high risk; I spoke to my inspector at the time who said I was the problem and if I didn’t feel like I could risk going to work and coming home that I would have to not go home... I had to work constantly in fear of bringing covid home. I spent times in isolation from my family confined in one room of the house” (Constable, 3-5 years’ service)

“Having been a frontline worker going in and out of homes during Covid I found it disgraceful that police officers were not given access to early Covid vaccinations. Having to deal with persons spitting in your face knowing that you had to wait until you were in the age-appropriate group to be vaccinated was about as morally degrading as anything I have dealt with during my existence” (Constable, 6-10 years’ service)

“No early vaccine for police even though as an LPT officer we were expected to stay on the front line and be out in the midst of it. I feel let down and completely unappreciated due to Covid 19” (Sergeant, 16-20 years’ service)

“As a frontline service, we should have been vaccinated earlier in the pandemic. As a response officer, the public we deal with did not socially distance and one my colleagues who was extremely careful in the job contracted through Covid in work and infected half our section... an early vaccination... would have prevented this and all the serious Covid sickness within PSNI” (Constable, 11-15 years’ service)

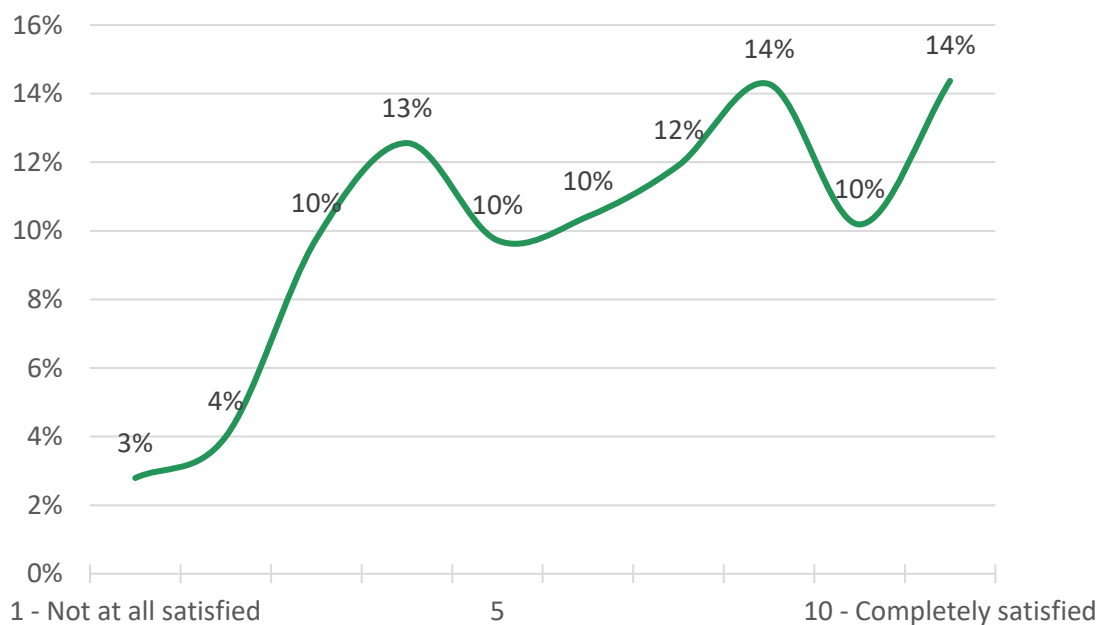
“I do not think the mental health impact of those policing frontline during the covid pandemic has truly come to light and this will be seen for years to come” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

11. Morale and Organisational Commitment

11.1. Morale is an important concept within the workplace, with evidence suggesting that low levels of morale can have a detrimental impact on job motivation, performance, employee wellbeing, productivity and staff turnover^{xx}. Respondents were asked a range of questions aimed at understanding the level of morale within and across the PSNI in 2021, as well as assisting with an exploration of the key factors which are negatively impacting morale. Furthermore, respondents had the opportunity to express their organisational commitment to the PSNI, including their intention to stay or leave the service and the factors impacting this intention.

11.2. Respondents were asked to identify, on a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied they currently are with their job. 3% of respondents reported that they are not at all satisfied with their job, with a further 4% selecting option 2. A further 32% selected options 3 to 5, indicating that overall, almost one in four respondents (39%) reported being more dissatisfied than satisfied with their job. Conversely, 61% of respondents selected options on the more satisfied end of the scale, including 10% at number 6, 12% at number 7, 14% at number 8 and 10% at number 9. 14% of respondents reported being completely satisfied with their job.

Figure 41: Overall, how satisfied are you with your job nowadays? (All respondents) %



11.3. Despite a majority of respondents identifying some degree of satisfaction with their job, 60% continued to report their personal morale as low or very low, compared to 13% who reported it as high or very high personal morale. The proportion of respondents who reported low or very low team and service wide morale is greater, at 66% and 89%

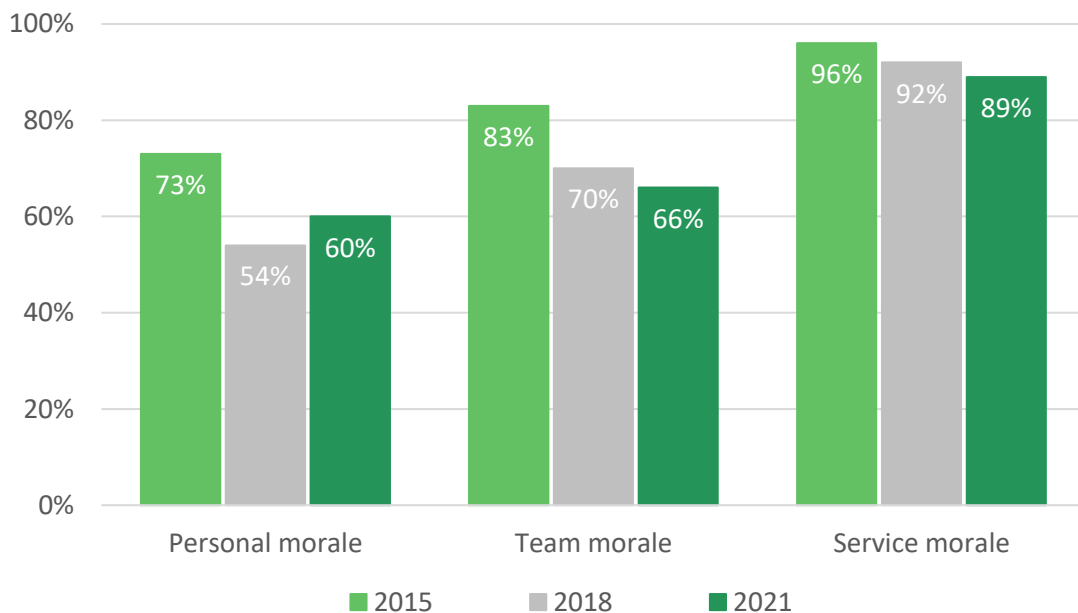
respectively. 9% of survey respondents reported high or very high team morale and just 1% high or very high service wide morale.

Table 4: Please rate the level of morale for each of the following...? (All respondents) %

	Low or very low	Neither high nor low	High or very high
Personal morale	60%	27%	13%
Team morale	66%	25%	9%
Service morale	89%	10%	1%

11.4. As shown below, the proportion of survey respondents who have reported low team morale and low service morale has declined in each Workforce Survey since 2015. Low team morale was reported by 83% of respondents in 2015, reducing to 70% in 2018 and 66% in 2021. Similarly, low service morale was reported by 96% of survey respondents in 2015, reducing to 92% in 2018 and 89% in 2021.

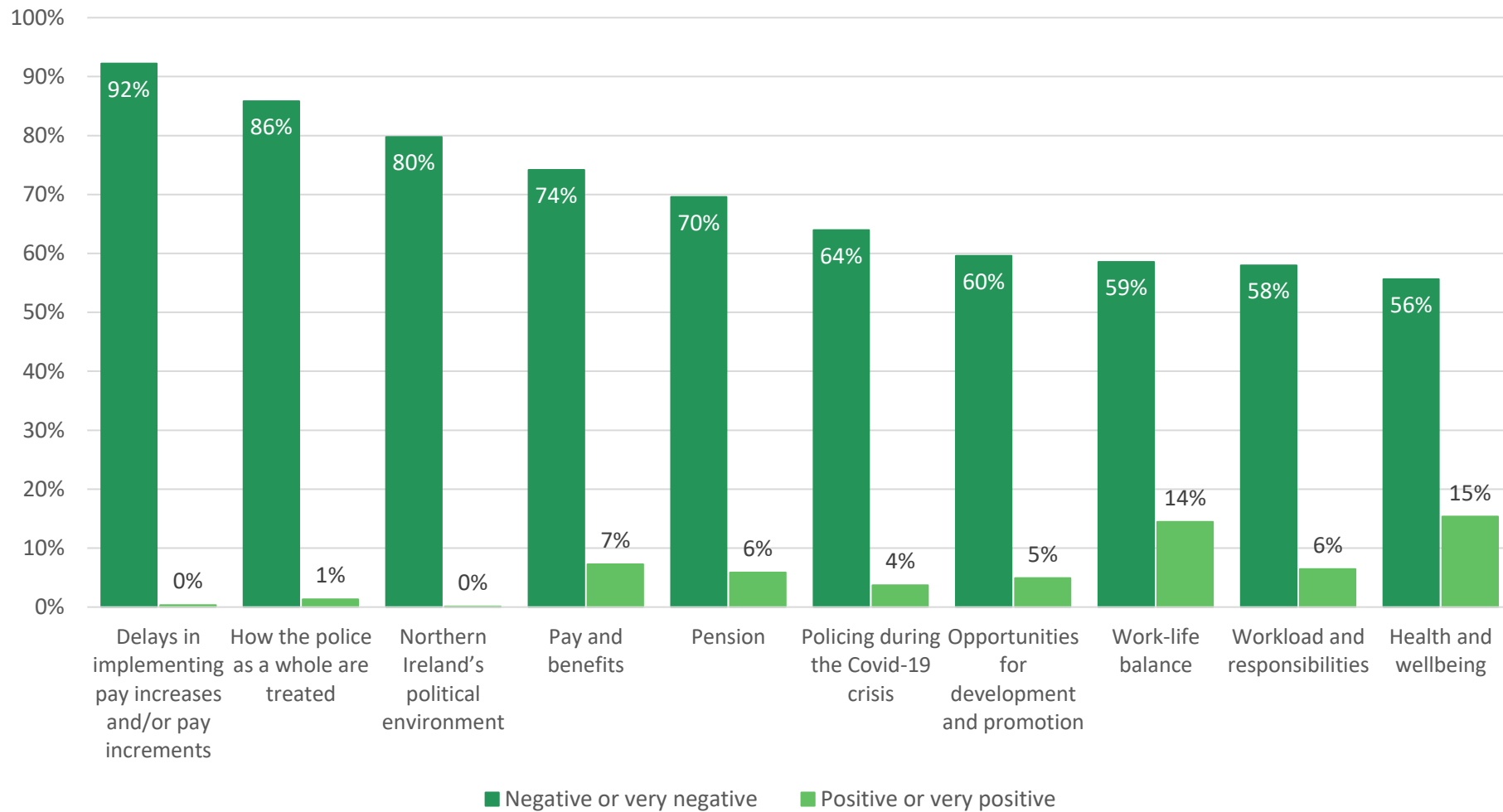
Figure 42: Percentage of survey respondents reporting low personal, team and service morale 2015, 2018 and 2021 (All respondents) %



11.5. The proportion of survey respondents who have reported low or very low levels of personal morale reduced from a series high of 73% in 2015 to 54% in 2018. However, in 2021 the percentage of respondents who reported low or very low personal morale increased to 60%, countering the trend of continued reduction in low team and service wide morale.

- 11.6. Respondents to the 2020 PFEW Pay and Morale Survey were also asked to rate their level of personal, team and service morale. Survey respondents in England and Wales were *more* likely than their NI counterparts to report low levels of team morale, at 75% and 66% respectively. However, **they were less likely to report low service wide morale than respondents in NI, at 85% and 89% respectively, and less likely to report low personal morale, with 48% of respondents in England and Wales stating that their personal levels of morale were low, compared to 60% of respondents in NI.**
- 11.7. As in the two previous PFNI Workforce Surveys, respondents were asked to identify, from a list of ten factors, how each has affected their personal morale. Given the increase in the level of low personal morale in 2021, these results are particularly insightful.
- 11.8. In 2021 a majority of respondents identified that each of the ten factors have had a negative or very negative affect on their personal morale. **The factor which was most commonly selected as having a negative effect on personal morale was the delay in implementing pay increases and/or pay increments, with 92% of respondents reporting that this has had a negative effect on their morale.** The second most commonly selected factor was how the police are treated, at 86%, whilst the impact of NI's political environment was selected third, at 80%.
- 11.9. Issues of remuneration were selected fourth and fifth, with 74% of respondents identifying that their pay and benefits negatively impacted their personal morale and 70% stating that their pension was a negative contributor. 64% of respondents reported that policing during the Covid-19 pandemic had a negative effect on their morale, followed by 60% who reported that opportunities for development and promotion were negative factors.
- 11.10. The three least selected responses (albeit, still selected by a majority of respondents) were the impact of work-life balance, at 59%, the impact of workload and responsibilities, at 58% and the impact on health and wellbeing at 56%. Interestingly, the health and wellbeing and the work life balance aspect of policing were the most commonly selected options when considering a positive impact on morale, at 15% and 14% respectively.

Figure 43: At the present time, what affect do the following factors have on your personal morale? (All respondents) %



11.11. Whilst a broad comparison of the key factors influencing personal morale since 2015 is possible, please note that some of the factors included each year have changed to reflect topical issues at the time. **In 2015 the top three most commonly reported factors which negatively impacted personal morale included changes to pensions (i.e. pension age increase at 83% and the introduction of the CARE pension scheme at 78%) as well as changes to rest day payments, at 82%. However, by 2018 the most selected item for negatively affecting personal morale was ‘how the police are treated as a whole’, as selected by 84% of respondents.** By 2021 this factor was the second most selected option but had increased to 86% of respondents. Pay and benefits was the second most selected option in 2018, at 85%, however by 2021 this had moved to fourth and reduced to 74% of respondents. The delay in implementing the pay award was the third most selected factor in 2018, at 88% of respondents, however the persistent nature of this issue has pushed this to the most commonly selected factor for negatively impacting personal morale in 2021, as selected by 92% of respondents.

11.12. The most commonly selected factor reported as negatively impacting personal morale in England and Wales in 2020 was ‘how the police as a whole are treated’, as selected by 90% of respondents. Although this was the second most commonly selected factor in NI, the delayed payment of pay increases is not an issue in England and Wales, whilst the percentage of respondents who selected police treatment was similar in NI, at 86%. Pay and benefits was the second most commonly selected factor in England and Wales, as reported by 73% of respondents, compared to fourth place and 74% of respondents in NI. Similarly, issues associated with the pension were selected by 69% of respondents in England and Wales and 70% in NI, indicating that pensions have had similar negative impact on personal morale across policing.

11.13. Respondents provided a range of qualitative responses relating to the issue of morale within the PSNI and the various factors which are directly contributing to low morale. These ranged from issues associated with Covid-19, issues of pay and the delayed implementation of incremental payments and heavy workloads. However, a key feature of the qualitative data related to the impact of decision making and engagement from the Senior Management Team (SMT) on morale.

“Morale within PSNI has plummeted through the floor... We are financially worse off to the tune of thousands annually and now with increases in NI pending and no likelihood of any pay rises it will fast become an undesirable job due to poor pay... We cannot earn more unless we go for promotion and that process itself is flawed and unfair” (Constable, 11-15 years’ service)

“Morale in the service is very low and the 'every person for themselves' attitude that seems to prevail is very dispiriting. There does not seem to be genuine support or even listening forums for the individuals' concerns. As an organisation our small team leadership is abysmal & at times the seemingly relentless pressure to achieve more with less can feel intolerable...Too much blame culture and not enough 'How can we be better' culture” (Constable, 16-20 years' service)

“Moral within the organisation is particularly low, recent issues with regards to pay-scale progression and the mixed messaging and what is viewed as a lack of understanding of the pressures faced by frontline officers on the ground and a general detachment from frontline policing from all management levels is at the heart of this” (Constable, 6-10 years' service)

“The overall moral within the PSNI is at its lowest from I joined. The job has changed for the worse during my short time in the job. Good officers have left, the experience and common sense left with them and not been replaced. The people making the decisions are out of touch with the police on the ground” (Constable, 11-15 years' service)

“I feel overall morale is low and officers do not feel supported by SMT” (Sergeant, 30+ years' service)

“I love my job and the people around me do to...I have seen morale dip substantially. If we didn't love what we do so much I would image more people would leave. We all want to be Police officers and we obviously understand our jobs are stressful, high intensity jobs, we know and accept that but there is little to no trust in the organisation over a lot of the aspects raised, pay, protecting/supporting officers, no mental health discrimination, no physical health help” (Constable, 6-10 years' service)

“Other emergency services have been praised and paid for their covid contribution and we have been left out to dry. My attitude for work has dropped since I started and now, I'm mostly here to get by and make sure I can pay my bills. Incentive to go above and beyond in my role is not given by any part of the job and not by senior management either” (Constable, 0-2 years' service)

11.14. However, one key issue which was referenced by a significant number of officers as a contributing factor to low morale was the delay in implementing contractual, incremental pay awards.

“I am extremely unhappy about the delay in the annual increase in my salary level i.e., my salary did not increase as expected when I reached the top of my pay band in September. It is inexcusable! I have a contract with the PSNI to work to the best of my ability and in return I expect my salary to be paid as set out in my terms and conditions” (Constable, 6-10 years’ service)

“The non-payment of pay increments has had a considerable impact on my morale, and those of my colleagues who have also been impacted by it. To date I have had no correspondence from the PSNI about it at all. The only correspondence I have had in relation to it has been from PFNI. If the PSNI want to maintain morale, then the absolute minimum should be to pay Officers what they are entitled to. To have not inform staff of the situation gives a perception that they have no value to the organisation at all” (Constable, 6-10 years’ service)

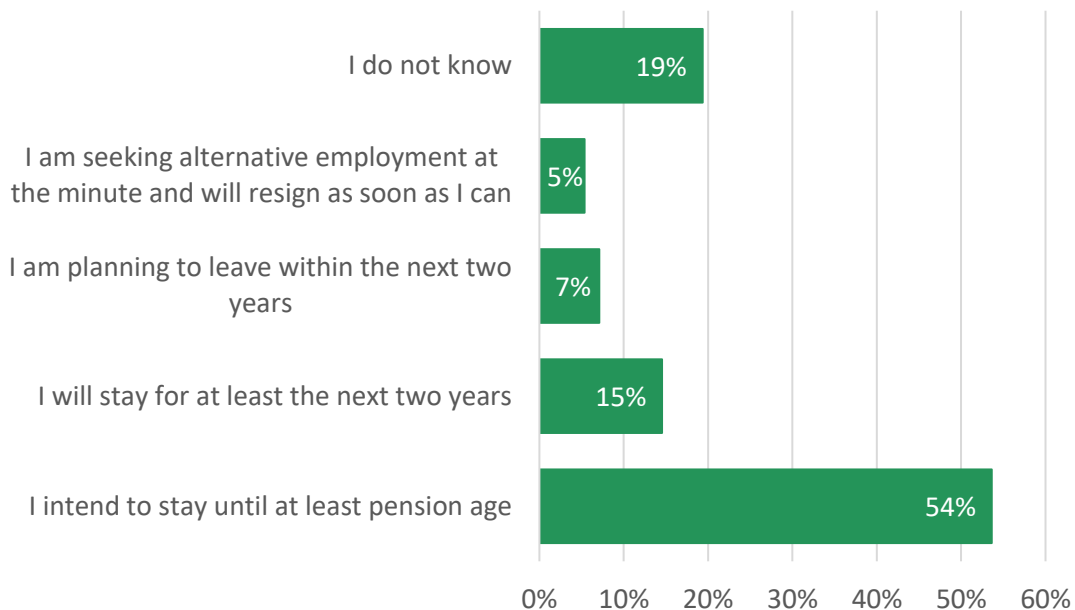
“The delay in implementing pay increases shows officers that no one cares” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

“Lack of communication regarding the pay increment freeze with many officers only discovering this on their payslip is an absolute disgrace...Morale is low already and this has only worsened things. Correspondence to officers would have cost nothing but at least given the appearance of caring/being aware and top of the issue” (Constable, 6-10 years’ service)

Organisational commitment – intention to stay

11.15. More than half of all survey respondents (69%) reported that they are intending to remain with the PSNI, with 15% reporting their intention to remain for at least the next two years and 54% stating they intend to stay until pension age. 13% of respondents reported their intention to leave the service including 5% who reported that they are currently seeking alternative employment and will resign as soon as they can and 7% who reported that they are planning to leave within the next two years. The remaining 19% of respondents were unsure regarding their intention to stay with the PSNI.

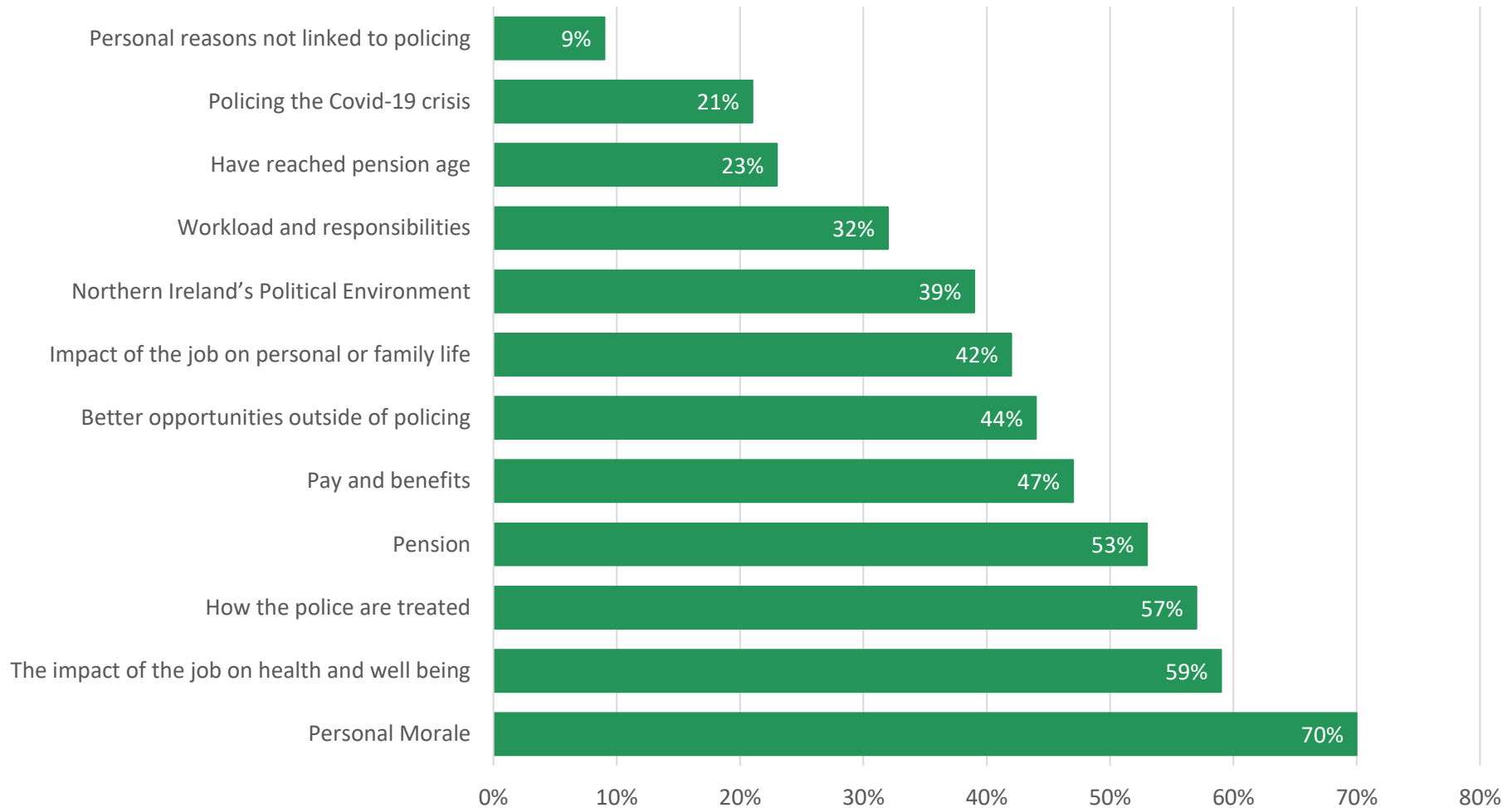
Figure 44: What are your intentions with regards staying in the police service? (All respondents) %



11.16. All the survey respondents who reported that they intended to leave the PSNI, either immediately or within the following two years, were asked to identify, from a list of twelve factors, what extent each had on their intention to leave. With an increase in proportion of respondents reporting low levels of personal morale, up from 54% in 2018 to 60% in 2021, it is perhaps unsurprising that **the factor most likely to have a major effect on the intention to leave the PSNI was their personal morale, as selected by 70% of respondents.** Despite the impact of policing on health and wellbeing being the least commonly selected factor in negatively influencing personal morale (at 56%), it was the second most commonly selected factor in having a major effect on the intention to leave the service, as reported by 59% of respondents. The third most commonly reported factor in having a major effect on intention to leave the service was how the police are treated, reported by 57% of respondents.

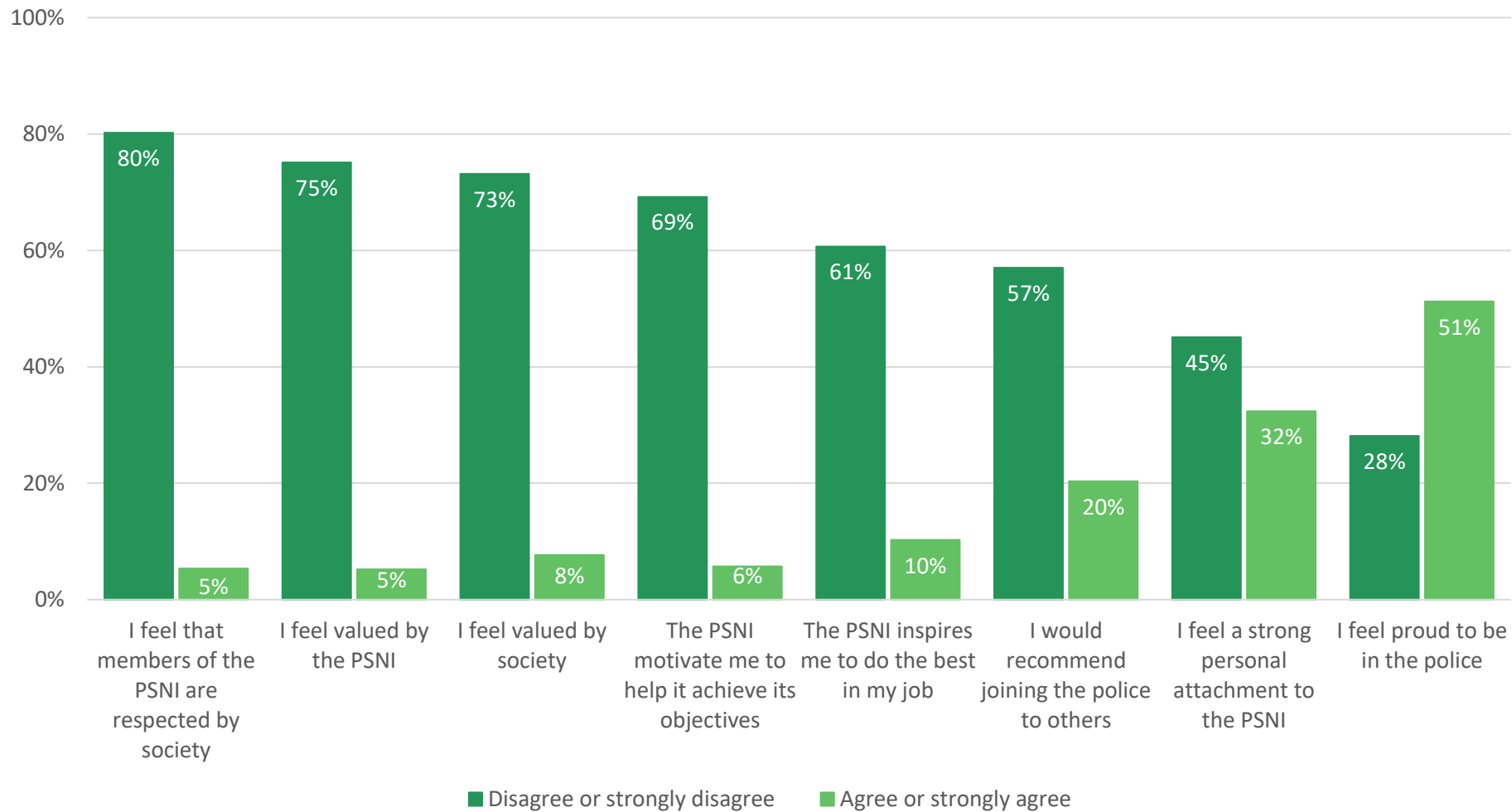
11.17. 53% of respondents who stated that they intend to leave the PSNI, reported that their pension had a major effect on this decision, with 47% reporting their pay and benefits. 44% of respondents cited better opportunities outside of policing as a major contributor to their intention to leave, followed by 42% who reported the impact of the job on personal and family lives and 39% who stated the impact of NI’s political environment. The three least commonly selected factors were 23% who stated they have reached their pension age, 21% who reported the effect of policing the Covid-19 pandemic and 9% who cited personal reasons not linked to policing.

Figure 45: Percentage of respondents who reported each of the following factors as having a major effect on their intention to leave the PSNI (All respondents) %



- 11.18. **The level of organisational commitment to the PSNI has remained stable since 2015**, with a total of 70% of respondents in both 2015 and 2018 reporting their intention to stay until pension age or for at least the following two years. This has declined by just 1 percentage point, to 69% in 2021. The proportion of respondents reporting their intention to leave either immediately or within the following two years was 13% in 2015, 11% in 2018 and 12% in 2021.
- 11.19. Low levels of personal morale were also cited most commonly as having a major effect on intention to leave the PSNI in 2015 and 2018, at 79% and 65% respectively. This increased to 70% in 2021. The impact of policing on health and wellbeing was the second most commonly selected contributor in 2015, at 67%, followed by how the police are treated at 66% and the impact on personal and family life, at 55%. In 2018, the second most commonly selected contributor to a major effect on intention to leave was the impact of the job on personal and family life, at 64%, the impact on health and wellbeing, at 62% and how the police are treated, at 54%. By 2021, the role of policing on personal and family lives and the impact this has on the intention to leave the service had reduced to seventh place, with 42% of respondents. However, the impact of the job on health and wellbeing remains a significant contributing factor, in second place as selected by 59% of respondents. How the police are treated has also remained a significant contributing factor in 2021, as selected by 57% of respondents.
- 11.20. **The proportion of respondents to the PFEW 2020 Pay and Morale Survey who reported their intention to stay, either to pension age or at least the following two years, was lower at 63% compared to 69% in NI.** Conversely, the proportion of respondents in England and Wales who reported their intention to leave, either immediately or within the following two years, was higher at 16% in England and Wales, relative to 12% in NI.
- 11.21. Respondents in both England and Wales and NI reported that the key factor in their intention to leave the police was their personal morale, at 72% of respondents in England and Wales and 70% of respondents in NI. The way police are treated was the second most commonly selected factor in England and Wales, at 70%, and the third most commonly selected factor in NI, at 57%. Conversely, the impact of the job on health and wellbeing was the third most commonly selected factor in England and Wales, at 65%, and the second most commonly selected factor in NI, at 59%.
- 11.22. To further elaborate upon issues of morale, organisational commitment and engagement, respondents were asked to rate their level of (dis)agreement with eight positively worded personal engagement statements.

Figure 46: Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements...? (All respondents) %



- 11.23. Eight in ten respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that police officers in NI are respected by society, alongside 73% who disagreed that they feel valued by the society in which they serve. In addition, three quarters of respondents (75%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they feel valued by the PSNI, with 69% disagreeing that the PSNI motivates them to help it achieve its objectives and a further 61% disagreeing that the PSNI inspires them to do the best in their job. It is therefore unsurprising that a majority of respondents (57%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they would recommend joining the police to others.
- 11.24. Despite these high levels of disagreement, almost a third of respondents (32%) agreed or strongly agreed that they feel a strong personal attachment to the PSNI and 51% agreed or strongly agreed that they feel proud to be in the police.
- 11.25. Respondents to the PFNI Workforce Survey were last asked these questions in 2015 and in general **there has been an increase in the proportion of respondents who disagree or strongly disagree with each of these statements.** In 2015 69% of respondents disagreed that they are respected by society, this increased to 80% in 2021. In 2015 55% of respondents disagreed that the PSNI inspires them to do the best in this job, this increased to 61% in 2021. Furthermore, there has been a 6 percentage point increase in the proportion of respondents who disagreed that they have a strong personal attachment to the PSNI, up from 39% in 2015 to 45% in 2018. The proportion of respondents who disagreed that the PSNI motivate them to help it achieve its objectives remained stable, at 70% in 2015 and 69% in 2021, alongside a small reduction of 4percentage points in the proportion of respondents who reported feeling proud to be in the police, down from 55% in 5015 to 51% in 2021.
- 11.26. Nevertheless, and despite the increase in the level of disagreement with these statements, **the proportion of respondents who stated that they would recommend joining the police to others increased from 15% in 2015, to 20% in 2021,** alongside a reduction in those who disagreed with this from 65% to 57%.
- 11.27. **When compared against the results provided by respondents to the PFEW 2020 Pay and Morale Survey, there again emerges a greater level of disagreement with these statements.** There was a 6 percentage point difference in the percentage of respondents who disagreed that they are respected by society, at 74% of respondents in England and Wales and 80% in NI. This differential was larger for the statements relating to motivation and inspiration, at 28 percentage points and 31 percentage points respectively. Whilst 41% of respondents in England and Wales disagreed or strongly disagreed that the police service motivates them to help it achieve its objectives, this increased to 69% of respondents in NI. Furthermore, 30% of respondents in England

and Wales disagreed that the service inspires them to do their best in their job, this increased to 61% of respondents in NI.

11.28. The proportion of respondents who disagreed that they feel a strong personal attachment to their police service was also higher in NI, at 45% relative to 29% in England and Wales. The same trend emerged for those who disagreed that they feel proud to be in the police, at 28% in NI and 19% in England and Wales. Despite these significant differences, the proportion of respondents who disagreed that they would recommend joining the police to others was similar in NI and England and Wales, at 57% and 59% respectively.

11.29. The qualitative data provided an insight into the views of officers regarding their organisational commitment, which for some involved a strong desire to leave the service, whilst for others their reasons for remaining in the PSNI varied.

“I am required to remain in this job because I am stuck and have no viable or feasible way out” (Constable, 11-15 years’ service)

“As I approach eligibility to retire, the opportunities afforded to me within the service have dwindled and I am left feeling undervalued and marginalised. This appears to be because the organisation just assumes that you will leave and want to leave asap. Sadly the feeling of being overlooked for developmental opportunities only serves to reduce morale and encourages me further to retire asap, which is not what I want to do” (Constable, 26-30 years’ service)

“I was proud to join the Service, but I will be glad to leave when I find a suitable alternative. I would not recommend the Service to anyone & would never have joined if I was aware of how officers are treated” (Constable, 16-20 years’ service)

“I come from a proud policing family and if it wasn't for the strong attachment I feel to the organisation, I would absolutely seek alternative employment” (Inspector, 16-20 years’ service)

“Due to the public perception of the police, the fact that basic contractual pay progressions are not implemented and pay increases are below the rate of inflation which is effectively a pay cut; and the poor pension and longer period of work prior to retirement I will be seeking alternative career options. I have no intention of working until I am 60 or over in this career and would not recommend it as a career to others...The public service aspect that attracted me to become a police officer initially is not worth the

negative financial or effect on personal health that come with the job”
(Constable, 11-15 years’ service)

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