

POLICE FEDERATION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



POLICE REMUNERATION REVIEW BODY SUBMISSION

MARCH 2024

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the evidence presented, and the prevailing economic, political and policing environment, the PFNI set out the following recommendations to the PRRB for the 2024/25 review of police pay, terms and conditions. PFNI acknowledge a confidential briefing with DOJ officials took place on 9th October 2023. This was of limited value as it didn't include specific detail on the PRRB recommendations or address whether any of PFNI's recommendations were considered. Therefore, we are resubmitting some of the undernoted recommendations.

Recommendation 1

To date the 2023/24, pay award has still not been ratified or paid. If it is the recommended 7% then pay parity with core pay spines with England and Wales colleagues will be maintained.

The anticipated 2023/24 pay increase was necessary to cover inflationary pressures of the previous year, but it was not sufficient to cover the inflationary reduction in real pay that took place in previous years.

PFNI seeks immediate action to compensate for the current pay degradation and a clearly defined timeline to restore police pay. This should also include above inflation pay increases for the next number of years.

This should be in the form of an equal percentage rise across all ranks, reflecting pay parity with England and Wales colleagues, with similar application to the Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance (NITA), Dog Handler's Allowance, and CRTP.

Recommendation 2

The introduction of Unsociable Hours Allowance and other associated allowances awarded to colleagues in England and Wales should CRTP be phased out.

Recommendation 3

An increase to On-Call Allowance from £20 to £25 as a minimum, reflecting NPCC position, and the payment to be reckonable for pensionable purposes to reflect the impact performing this duty and the adverse impact this continues to have on the work life balance of police officers.

Recommendation 4

An increase in annual leave entitlements for federated ranks as follows:

- Increase the minimum annual leave entitlement from 22 to 25 days.
- Reduce the time taken to reach the top of scale from 20 years to 5 years, so that 30 days (maximum entitlement) would be reached after 5 years.
- Introduce a period of 'Long Service Leave' (LSL) for officers who have served for 10 or more years (6 weeks on reaching ten years' service).

Recommendation 5

The increase in Maternity / Adoption pay for police officers from 18 weeks full pay to 26 weeks full pay in line with police officers in England and Wales.

Recommendation 6

The re-introduction of either overtime payments or a non-pensionable supplement for Inspecting Ranks, which takes into consideration the additional hours many are required to work in performing their duties.

Introduction of a determination to facilitate chief inspectors and inspectors to carry over, for a further 12-month period, any rest days in lieu not taken due to exceptional circumstances, exigencies of duty or work demands.

Recommendation 7

A Determination is added to the PSNI Regulations stating that pay increments are payable annually. This would align the PSNI Determinations with Annex F of the England and Wales Police Regulations 2003.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is the tenth annual written report submitted by the Police Federation for Northern Ireland (PFNI) to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB). It has been prepared as evidence for the 2024/25 review of the pay, terms and conditions of police officers serving within the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The contents of this submission have been made with reference to the remit letter published by the Justice Minister, Naomi Long dated 25th February 2024 (See Appendix I) and the remit letter published by the Home Secretary, James Cleverly MP, dated 20th December 2023. (See Appendix D).

It must be clearly understood this submission has been prepared and submitted without benefit of sight of the 2023/24 PRRB report.

- 1.2 The previous nine reports produced by the PFNI provide, in great detail, information on what we believe are the key issues within policing in Northern Ireland (NI) at the time. This report should be considered as supplementary to these details and does not seek to replicate the information previously provided nor the commentary, but rather provides an updated position on these key issues.
- 1.3 Over the last ten years the PFNI have been explicit in our concerns relating to policing in NI and the problems and delays with the pay review process. The PFNI believe that policing is now beyond the crisis point we have been warning about for some years and that appropriate and tangible steps are urgently necessary to address the very real and valid concerns of serving officers and staff associations.
- 1.4 As at the end of January 2023, the projected overspend against budget for the full year had grown to some £61m. This reflects the initial projected deficit of £38m for the year, as set out in the Resource Plan, inflated by some emerging pressures including a higher than expected pay award, unfunded legacy compensation settlements and rising depreciation costs.

The Service continues to respond to the critical incident of a material data leak last August and this has incurred costs of £3.4m to date, including initial uptake of the Universal Offer (this offer enables officers and staff to be reimbursed up to £500 for measures taken to improve their sense of security).

- 1.5 PSNI halted recruitment of student officers in October 2022, and this has had a significant impact on Police officer numbers as officers continue to exit the organisation. The exodus has a huge cost burden for the organization and officers. The reduction in officer numbers has an impact on the morale, motivation and pressure on those officers who remain in service. In an internal message to the Service on 14th February 2024 the Chief Constable outlined his determination not to fall below the predicted number of 6,358 officers by the end of March 2024. He outlined his plan to halt the decline and recommence recruitment of student officers in April 2024.¹
- 1.6 Assaults on Police continue to rise, year on year, with officers being spat on, kicked, head-butted, punched and bitten. This is the stark nature of some of the attacks on police officers in Northern Ireland, with the number of assaults on officers reaching a five-year high in February 2023. Official crime statistics recorded a total of 3,272 assaults for the period 2022/23 - assault with injury on a Constable was 971 incidents, an increase of 7.6%. Assault without injury on a Constable was 2,301 incidents.²

¹ Internal email from Chief Constable 14/2/24 unpublished.

² Police Recorded Crime Statistics | PSNI

1.7 On the 8th of August 2023, the personal information (surnames, initials, ranks/grades, locations, and departments) of 9,483 police officers and staff working at the Police Service of Northern Ireland were published on a public website following a Freedom of Information request. This is considered to have been the most significant data breach that has ever occurred in the history of UK policing, not only because of the nature and volume of compromised data, but because of the political history and context that sets the backdrop of contemporary policing in Northern Ireland and therefore the actual, or perceived, threats towards officers, staff, and communities.³

1.8 The outworking's of the data breach remain undetermined but the on-going detrimental impact on officers and their families cannot be underestimated. PFNI engaged directly with the Information Commissioners Office and shared the personal testimony of officers outlining the impacts felt by officers and their families as a result of the breach. A universal offer was made to staff on 22nd December 2023 in the form of a payment of up to £500 for the purchase of equipment/items to assist with the purchase of items to enhance personal security following funds being made available from HM Treasury.

PFNI described the breach as 'monumental' and stated that it had left PSNI officers and staff feeling 'particularly vulnerable'. PFNI are assisting members in a legal case to ensure officers receive appropriate compensation in relation to the data breach and the adverse impact the breach has had on the officers and their families.

1.9 In February 2021 the annual wreath-laying ceremony to mark the anniversary of the Sean Graham bookmakers attack in 1992 took place amid restrictions on public gatherings due to Covid regulations. During this event one person was arrested by Police on suspicion of Disorderly Behaviour and later released. Following this incident, two officers faced disciplinary processes, one officer was suspended and another repositioned.

PFNI instigated a Judicial Review of the disciplinary action taken against the two Constables involved in the incident. On 29th August 2023 Mr Justice Scoffield ruled the two officers were unlawfully disciplined because of the threat (whether real or perceived) that republican support for policing would be withdrawn. "To reach a decision on that basis was in my view unlawful."⁴

PFNI stated the High Court Judgement called into question the decision-making of the Senior Executive Team right up to and including the Deputy Chief Constable and the Chief Constable.

The officers were sacrificed on the altar of political expediency in a disgraceful attempt to pander to political pressure. The rank and file expect the PSNI Senior management to have their backs when they go about their duties - this judgement reaffirms the perception and belief that this is sadly not the case.⁵

Following Justice Scoffield's ruling, Chief Constable Simon Byrne resigned from PSNI on 4th September 2023. On Wednesday 6th September 2023 PFNI's Central Committee held an extraordinary meeting and unanimously passed a vote of no confidence in PSNI Deputy Chief Constable Mark Hamilton and a majority vote in relation to two other senior staff, Chief Operating Officer Pamela McCreedy and Assistant Chief Officer Clare Duffield. DCC Hamilton remains absent from work in PSNI.⁶

³ Protecting from Within: a review of the PSNI data breach 8th August 2023

⁴ PSNI officers disciplined 'to allay threat to Sinn Féin policing support' - BBC News

⁵ Federation wins JR into Ormeau Rd 'injustice' and ra... (policefed-ni.org.uk)

⁶ Federation votes 'no confidence' in Deputy Chief Co... (policefed-ni.org.uk)

1.10 In April and May 2023 PSNI conducted a workplace cultural audit carried out by an independent external consultancy firm. The key findings of the survey evidenced there were several underlying assumptions that many employees held, that drive patterns of behaviour in the organisation.

Assumptions:

- We must deliver above all else.
- We should be fearful.
- Our strength comes from being cohesive.

Work is ongoing to establish the finer detail of the key findings, identify priorities and next steps to enable a process of continual improvement based on the audit findings.⁷

1.11 The House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee published a report on 24th January 2024 titled: The effect of paramilitary activity and organised crime on society in Northern Ireland. They made the following comments within that report:

- The Government must ensure that policing and security agencies in Northern Ireland are appropriately resourced to deal with terrorism and paramilitary activity, as it pledged to do so as part of its commitments under New Decade, New Approach agreement. Police numbers are falling and funding is inadequate, and this impacts on efforts to investigate and prevent paramilitary activity. We call on the Government to ensure that NI receives funding in 2024, and on a recurrent basis thereafter, which enables the PSNI to increase its roll to at least 7,500 officers.
- We are concerned at the budgetary shortfall that the PSNI is facing, not least in the context of recent security incidents evidencing starkly the ongoing threat from terrorist and paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland. The financial liabilities that the Service may now incur as a result of the significant data breach in August 2023 will only serve to make this situation worse. Fewer resources for the PSNI will inevitably lead to a reduction in its ability to tackle paramilitary activity. A slowing of investigations, reduction of intelligence gathering capabilities and smaller neighbour policing presence means a less secure Northern Ireland. One of the Executive's priorities under the New Decade, New Approach agreement was to increase police numbers to 7,500. This is the same figure recommended by the Patten Report and is, at best, a minimum requirement for contemporary policing given that Northern Ireland's population has risen by almost 300,000. As part of its commitments under New Decade, New Approach, the Government pledged to ensure that the PSNI and others are appropriately resourced to deal with terrorism and paramilitary activity. Yet police numbers are falling and funding is inadequate. We recommend that the Government ensure that NI receives funding in 2024, and on a recurrent basis thereafter, which enables the PSNI to provide fair pay awards to officers and staff and increase, recommence officer recruitment and increase headcount to at least 7,500 officers.⁸

⁷ Point Article. PSNI. Not published.

⁸ The effect of paramilitary activity and organised crime on society in Northern Ireland (parliament.uk)

2. THE POLICING ENVIRONMENT

2.1 As a core public service, it is not unexpected that policing is impacted by the wider political environment. However, national and local political events and decision making have, in recent years, caused much consternation within policing and have had direct and ongoing consequences for the pay, terms and conditions of serving police officers in the UK and NI. This section of our submission provides updated commentary on two key aspects of policing which are deeply impacted by political decision making, namely the pay review process and associated remit letters and the setting of the PSNI budget.

Pay Review Process

2.2 It is exasperating that ten years since the inception of a supposed evidence based, independent pay review process, the PFNI feel compelled to open each submission with comments on the process, rather than immediately addressing the evidence requirements for the coming review round. However, such is the level of disquiet about the workings of the police remuneration review process we are again forced to highlight our concerns regarding how this process is currently operating, both nationally and at local level.

2.3 This pay review process is the only process by which police officers' pay terms and conditions are 'independently' considered and as such it forms a core component of the overall policing environment. The way the pay review process has played out since 2014 has had the very real effect of damaging morale and motivation within policing, as well as confidence in the very system officers rely upon to fairly and independently assess their pay, terms and conditions.

2.4 The failings of the pay review process between 2014 and 2023 have been outlined in our previous submissions, and as the aim here is to update rather than repeat the concerns from previous years, this commentary will focus on the impact of the most recent pay review round. However, this should not lessen the cumulative effect of a system which over ten consecutive years appears to the remit group, to lack independence and impartiality.

2.5 Unfortunately, in our view, the PRRB process is proving totally ineffective. Government sets their remit and the parameters around what they can recommend. Government can also choose not to implement what is recommended.

In the Remit Letter 2024/25 from the Home Secretary to the Police Remuneration Review Body published in December 2023, it states that *"It is vital that the Pay Review Bodies consider the historic nature of the 2023/24 awards and the Government's affordability position that will be set out further in written evidence."*⁹

This would appear to be prematurely directing the PRRB to make a pay award recommendation based on affordability, rather than make an independent, evidence-based, decision about what they consider fair pay.

Year on year the PRRB have sought to have our government implement our pay award in a timelier manner and PRRB are clear that they view the delays as unacceptable. Despite this yearly rebuke, the delays regrettably continue to occur, much to our members dismay and increasing anger and frustration. There appears to be no resolution to this and absolutely no repercussions for the Department of Justice (DOJ)/Department of Finance (DOF). This does irreparable damage to our members confidence and erodes trust in what should be a fair and transparent pay review process.

⁹ PRRB remit letter from the Home Secretary: 2024 to 2025 (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

2.6 On behalf of our members, PFNI want to put on record our increasing dismay, anger and disillusionment with the current police pay process. With the on-going cost of living pressures, in the aftermath of what is considered to have been the most significant data breach that has ever occurred in the history of UK policing, and some seven months after our colleagues in England and Wales received their 2023 award, our officers are still awaiting specific details and confirmation of what their pay award will be and when they will receive it. PFNI find it extremely challenging, if not impossible, to explain to our membership the DOJ rationale for withholding the report from a key stakeholder. To be clear, the recommendations contained in the report are final and remain unchanged but despite this the report is withheld.

2.7 On 14th October 2022 PFNI wrote to PRRB directly requesting the release the report as follows *'I would therefore formally request that the PRRB themselves positively intervene and provide a copy of their report to all stakeholders to enable us to determine what was recommended in 2022/2023 so we are in an informed position to prepare for the 2023/2024 pay round.'*

PRRB responded on 9th November 2022 as follows *'We are not in a position to share the PRRB Northern Ireland 2022 Report which was submitted to the Northern Ireland Justice Minister. Its publication is a matter for the Department of Justice for Northern Ireland.'*

In correspondence received from the Justice Minister on 21st February 2024 Minister Long states *'I understand that while the PRRB has requested that their report remains in confidence until publication,'*

Given the above, PFNI would be grateful for clarity on who can publish the PRRB report, when they can publish it and why stakeholders cannot be provided with the full report in confidence in advance of final publication given the report contents would not be subject to change once submitted to DOJ.

2.8 PFNI, as the largest staff association in the PSNI, are at a significant disadvantage as we commence this process. The PRRB report was provided to the Department of Justice on 20th June 2023 and PFNI, as a key stakeholder, made several requests for the full report to be shared with us in confidence to fully inform our position. Regrettably, our requests were denied, although our officials did receive a confidential briefing on Monday 9th October 2023 on the PRRB recommendations only. This year's position is exacerbated by PFNI being asked to commence a process when we are completely unsighted to the detailed PRRB report from the previous process.

2.9 We re-state the following every year and whilst the significance of the point never dwindles, it appears as though the importance of the point is not fully recognised or continues to fall on deaf ears. Police officers, unlike other public sector workers, are unable to join a union or take industrial action, and therefore our officers see a greater need than other public sector groups to ensure that deliberations on issues directly affecting their pay and conditions are balanced and fair, so they feel valued by Government. Our Government Departments must listen and not ignore the needs of those in the police service simply because they do not have the right to take industrial action. Police officers deserve a pay award that acknowledges the ongoing cost-of-living pressures, the unique responsibilities placed on them by society and the restrictions imposed on their private lives and profession (such as industrial rights). This is fundamental to the operation of this pay review process and must be upheld at every challenge.

2.10 The PFNI can see the merit in a pay review process which enables all key policing stakeholders the opportunity to engage equally and directly with the process through the provision of robust evidence. However, the persistent shortcomings of this system have eroded trust in this process to such a point that the PFNI have, for the second year, taken the decision to submit a significantly

reduced written submission and join our England and Wales colleagues in requesting a new approach to police officer pay that is meaningful and eradicates bureaucracy. Alternatively, PFNI would much rather discuss pay and conditions directly with PSNI and Government and have the option to explore mediation and/or binding arbitration.

- 2.11 At a local level, the pay review process in NI continues to suffer from a range of additional issues. During the cost-of-living crisis, some seven months after our colleagues in England and Wales received their 2022 award, our officers are still waiting on specific confirmation of their pay award with no clarity on the implementation date. This was exacerbated by our Government Departments also withholding, by not authorising, police officer incremental pay progression for the third year in a row.
- 2.12 In relation to pay parity PFNI agree with the PRRB definition - *'we have defined pay parity in this report as meaning the same pay scales and allowances across the police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, recognising the need for variation in allowances to reflect exceptional local conditions. This means that the NITA, which is unique to Northern Ireland, is the one allowance excluded from the parity principle'*.

2.13 The following information is provided as a summary of some of the issues which have arisen following recommendations made by the PRRB relating to issues of pay for police officers in NI over the last number of years:¹⁰

Year	PRRB Recommendation	NI Outcome	Delay
2019/20	A consolidated increase of 2.5% to all police officers pay points for all ranks – from September 2019	Delayed until February 2020	6 months
	An increase of 2.5% in the current level of the NITA – from September 2019	Delayed until February 2020	6 months
	Dog Handlers Allowance should increase by 2.5% - from September 2019	Delayed until February 2020	6 months
2020/21	Removal of the lowest point on the Sergeants’ pay scale – from September 2020	Delayed until January 2022	17 months
	A consolidated increase of 2.5% to all police officers pay points for all ranks – from September 2020	Delayed until December 2020	4 months
	An increase of 2.5% in the current level of NITA – from September 2020	Delayed until December 2020	4 months
	Dog Handlers Allowance should increase by 2.5% - from September 2020	Delayed until December 2020	4 months
2021/22	Pay point 0 of the Constable pay scale is uplifted by £250 – from September 2021	Delayed until March 2022	7 months
	A 1% increase in the NITA for all police officers – from September 2021	Delayed until March 2022	7 months
2022/23	A consolidated increase of £1,900 to all police officers pay points for all ranks.	Delayed until February 2023	6 months
	A 5% increase has also been applied to the NI Transitional Allowance.	Delayed until February 2023	6 months
	A 5% increase to Dog Handler’s Allowance	Delayed until February 2023	6 months
2023/24	An anticipated consolidated increase of 7% to all police officers pay points for all ranks – from September 2023	Potentially delayed until April 2024	Minimum 7 months
	An anticipated consolidated 7% increase in the NITA for all police officers – from September 2023	Potentially delayed until April 2024	Minimum 7 Months

¹⁰ Details from confidential briefing with DOJ on 09/10/23

Contractual, incremental payments - from September 2021	Delayed until March 2022	7 months
Contractual, incremental payments - from September 2022	Delayed until February 2023	6 months
Contractual, incremental payments - from September 2023	Delayed until November 2023	2 months

- 2.14 When presented in summary, the scale and frequency of the issue becomes clear, whilst also highlighting that the problem has been progressively deteriorating each year. If these issues were occurring in relation to the pay of police officers in England and Wales there would rightly be uproar, however it appears that police officers in NI are alternatively expected to show patience.
- 2.15 This situation worsened during the 2023/24 review round as in addition to the recurring delays in implementing PRRB recommendations, for the third-year additional delays have emerged in the provision of contractual, incremental payments to officers who attain to the next point on their respective pay scale. This problem has been occurring since September 2021 and impacted an increasing number of officers each month. Data provided by the PSNI identifies that 307 officers were affected by this delay.¹¹
- 2.16 In the face of ongoing challenges in our efforts to avoid delays with incremental pay, PFNI were left with no option but to initiate Judicial Review proceedings. The resolution of the issue in November 2023, whilst welcome, was in our view entirely avoidable. Unfortunately, the DOJ/DOF have failed to provide any assurance that the issue will not reoccur in 2024. As a result, our Judicial Review proceedings have been adjourned in the hope of a suitable solution being identified to avoid a repetition.
- 2.17 The PRRB position on these delays has been clear. In the eighth PRRB report on Northern Ireland PRRB state *“We were disappointed and concerned by delays during 2021/22 in the implementation of our recommendations and in paying annual increments to police officers in Northern Ireland.”* In addition, PRRB state *“We expect prompt payment in 2022/23 of the pay award and annual increments for police officers. We seek an update next year on whether timely payment has been achieved.”* PFNI believe that our government do not believe our officers have a contractual entitlement to incremental pay progression. Unlike our colleagues in England and Wales, there is nothing specific in our Regulations and associated Determinations that specifies that increments are paid annually. In view of the clear pay parity position, PFNI sought the support of PRRB in having a Determination added to the PSNI Regulations that pay increments are payable annually. This would align the PSNI Determinations with Annex F of the England and Wales Police Regulations 2003. We are unsighted to any further commentary from PRRB in relation to delays in their ninth report as the report has not been shared with PFNI.
- 2.18 According to PSNI figures, in the years 2014 – 2023, some 205 probationers walked away from their police careers during their probationary period. In 2022 alone, the figure was 49 leavers – the highest ever yearly total in recent years. In 2023 the figure was reduced to 44 leavers; however, this is still a

¹¹ PSNI Financial Services Branch internal communication, 6/2/24, not published

worrying trend. There is little doubt that making ends meet was a significant factor. Anecdotally, they left for other employment where the financial rewards are greater, and the daily pressures are considerably less. The exodus has a huge cost burden for the organisation and officers. The increase in these numbers has an impact on the morale, motivation and pressure on those officers who remain in service.

This is exacerbated by the fact that in the period 2014 – 2023, some 129 student officers left the organisation, with 16 student officers leaving in 2022 and a further 16 leaving in 2023, despite decreasing course numbers in recent years.

PSNI Leavers by Year - Probation Constables and Student Officers			
Year	Probationer Constable	Student Officer	Grand Total
2014	7	5	12
2015	3	14	17
2016	5	13	18
2017	15	8	23
2018	10	16	26
2019	13	17	30
2020	19	13	32
2021	40	11	51
2022	49	16	65
2023	44	16	60
Grand Total	205	129	334

Prepared by Workforce Planning, HR, People & Organisational Development, PSNI

Source: internal workforce planning communication to PFNI dated 05/02/24, unpublished.

- 2.19 PFNI wish to put on record our dismay, anger and disillusionment with the current pay process. Regrettably many of our members have stopped expecting any tangible recognition from our Government Departments for their unique role and responsibilities, the very real threat to their personal safety and the draconian restrictions placed on their private and professional lives. Our officers also look right across the public sector and see their counterparts in the health and education sectors taking industrial action and achieving better pay awards. It leads them to perceive and feel that police officers are not properly valued for the unique role they commit to for society and are being treated with disdain.
- 2.20 This is an issue, primarily, about fairness. There has been a substantial degradation of police pay for more than a decade, which insults and devalues the unique and difficult work of police officers. While the 2023/24 pay increase remains outstanding, if pay parity is maintained, it will be welcomed and while necessary, it didn't match the inflationary pressures of the previous year. Police officers real pay has fallen significantly across all ranks since September 2010. Research demonstrates that, on average, federated ranks real pay declined by 20.2 per cent between September 2010 and December 2023.¹²

¹² PFEW economic data. Internal staff association document not published.

The Remit

- 2.21 The PFNI view the annual remit letter as the starting point of each annual review round. We note in In the Remit Letter 2024/25 from the Home Secretary to the Police Remuneration Review Body published in December 2023, it states that *“It is vital that the Pay Review Bodies consider the historic nature of the 2023/24 awards and the Government’s affordability position that will be set out further in written evidence.”*

This would appear to be prematurely directing the PRRB to make a pay award recommendation based on affordability, rather than make an independent, evidence-based, decision about what they consider fair pay.¹³

- 2.22 This year’s remit letter was written by the Justice Minister, Naomi Long on the 25th February 2024. This followed pre-consultation with relevant policing stakeholders, outlining the key points to be addressed within the upcoming review round. It is our position that this letter sets the parameters within which the review body are to operate each year; notwithstanding the wider PRRB Terms of Reference. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 Section 132 (64B) is clear that *“The Police Remuneration Review Body may include in a report under this section any recommendations it considers appropriate arising out of matters referred to it under this section (whether or not it is required to do so by a direction under subsection (5)).”*¹⁴
- 2.23 The PFNI have previously submitted six of the seven recommendations in this submission for consideration by PRRB under The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 Section 132 (64B). On 3rd January 2024 PFNI submitted the seven matters in this submission to the DOJ to be considered for inclusion in the remit letter. On 15th February 2024 PFNI received correspondence from The Justice Minister, Naomi Long setting out her rationale for not including our recommendations in this year’s remit letter. (See Appendix G)
- 2.24 In the ninth report on NI the PRRB state *“we are disappointed and concerned by delays during 2021/22 in the implementation of our recommendations and in paying annual increments to police officers in Northern Ireland”*.
- 2.25 PRRB further state *“The delay in the payment of salary increments in 2021/22 for police officers should not be repeated. It is poor practice, affects officers in practical ways, and damages their morale. We call for the relevant parties to work together to put effective measures in place that will avoid this happening again”*.
- 2.26 PRRB lastly state *“We expect prompt payment in 2022/23 of the pay award and annual increments for police officers. We seek an update next year on whether timely payment has been achieved”*. PFNI are unsighted to further commentary on the delays in the ninth PRRB report.
- 2.27 Unfortunately, delays with the main pay award and incremental pay were again experienced by officers amid a cost-of-living crisis. Incremental pay was delayed to November 2023 and payment of the main pay award has been delayed by 7 months until at least March 2024.

Despite DOJ being given a financial package from the Northern Ireland Executive via the Finance Minister in mid-February 2024 there has been no tangible progress on the police officer award. PSNI

¹³ PRRB remit letter from the Home Secretary: 2024 to 2025 (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

¹⁴ Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)

have still not been sent any approved remit to enable them to finalise the business case for final ratification by DOF.

This compares in contrast to the rest of the public sector bodies where their respective Ministers have already set out and made pay offers. The police officer pay award is not a negotiation process so we are at a loss why there is continued delay in progressing this matter when sufficient funds have been allocated to ensure the award can be ratified.

Aside from the written response from the Justice Minister PFNI have regrettably heard nothing at all from the DOJ and there is a real danger if this matter is not progressed urgently that it could be the end of April 2024 before officers see any award in their pay packets.

- 2.28 The 2024/25 NI remit letter was published on the 25th February 2024, nine weeks after the publication of the remit letter for England and Wales. Following the annual call for input into the NI remit letter, the Justice Minister has requested the following:

‘In line with the principle of broad alignment of PSNI officer pay with those in England and Wales, I ask you to formally commence the 2024/25 pay round and I refer to the PRRB the following matters:

- *How to apply the pay award for 2024/25 for police officers in the PSNI.*
- *Consideration of the regular elements of the Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance (NITA) and the Dog Handlers Allowance’.*

While the Northern Ireland Public Sector Pay Policy has not been set for 2024/25, I would ask that the PRRB give careful consideration to the affordability position in Northern Ireland which will be set out in both written and oral evidence.¹⁵

- 2.29 As in previous rounds, the PFNI remain resolute in our opposition to the continued requirement for pay increases to be borne from within existing budgets. We have referred to this issue in each of the last four pay review rounds, pointing to the deep-rooted unfairness and unsustainability of this position which we firmly believe acts as an immediate (and deliberate) impediment to the provision of fair and warranted pay for dedicated and hardworking police officers.

PSNI Budget

- 2.30 The Chief Constable has clearly and consistently set out the consequences of the inadequate funding of policing here in Northern Ireland.
- 2.31 The fundamental issue is that PSNI is chronically underfunded, and dangerously so. The outstanding additional funding will cover the outstanding pay awards for officers and staff but does not extend into next year and the years beyond. The Chief Constable states that officers and staff deserve the award. He considers it non-negotiable and has written to the Justice Minister to confirm his intention to have it introduced.
- 2.32 A recent report based on Office of National Statistics data, highlights that since 2010 spending on public order and safety in Northern Ireland had risen by 8%, demonstrating the real financial difficulties facing the Justice sector. However, over the same period the PSNI budget has fallen by 3%. This seems to point to policing losing out significantly within the Justice family.

¹⁵ Justice Minister remit letter 2024/25 dated 25 February 2024. Appendix

- 2.33 In the same period, the health budget has increased from £3.5bn to £6.6bn (89%) and Education from £2.7bn to £3.4bn (23%). PSNI remain a huge supporter of Health and other public services, a marginal redirection of funding in favour of policing would go a long way to placing policing on a more sustainable footing, enabling PSNI to support communities and other public services.

The Chief Constables ambition is to secure an improved budget settlement. For too long, officer and staff numbers have been allowed to decline, along with the supporting infrastructure.

PFNI would suggest the 2023/24 year-end figures for Health and Education quoted above will be well in excess of these figures.

- 2.34 As at the end of January 2023, the projected overspend against budget for the full year had grown to some £61m. This reflects the initial projected deficit of £38m for the year, as set out in the PSNI Resource Plan, inflated by some emerging pressures including a higher than expected pay award, unfunded legacy compensation settlements and rising depreciation costs.
- 2.35 The Service continues to respond to the critical incident of a material data leak last August and this has incurred costs of £3.4m to date, including initial uptake of the Universal Offer (this offer enables officers and staff to be reimbursed up to £500 for measures taken to improve their sense of security).

PSNI RESOURCES

- 2.36 One of the recommendations in the review of policing in Northern Ireland by the Independent Commission on Policing report published in September 1999 (commonly referred to as the Patten report), is that: ‘Provided the peace process does not collapse and the security situation does not deteriorate significantly from the situation pertaining at present, the approximate size of the police service over the next ten years should be 7,500 full time officers.’
- 2.37 This was Patten’s ten-year vision for the Police Service of Northern Ireland and was reflected in the New Decade, New Approach (NDNA) document, where the British and Irish governments set out a number of priorities for the Executive, including increasing police numbers to 7,500.
- 2.38 Delivery of additional officers is largely dependent on the availability of Executive funding. The financial package accompanying the NDNA document fell short of the amount required to deliver all priorities. A Strategic Outline Case for increasing police officer numbers to 7,500 has been approved by both the Department of Justice and the Department of Finance.
- 2.39 The Chief Constable has already signalled his intention to stop the reduction in police officer numbers by restarting student officer recruitment again in April. The benefits of this will not be realised until October 2024. The final attestation ceremony to be held until then took place during February and was attended by the First Minister, Deputy First Minister and the Justice Minister.
- 2.40 PSNI have commissioned consultants ‘Leapwise’, a firm experienced in supporting strategic planning and budget decisions across UK policing, to provide an assessment of the PSNI officer and staff requirement. It is significant that their independent analysis, which takes into consideration the specific demands of policing in Northern Ireland, suggests that had PSNI officer numbers kept pace with those of England, Wales and Scotland since 2010, PSNI would be expected to have levels of up to 8,500 police officers. These are the numbers needed to deliver the policing services PSNI are statutorily required to deliver, not the 7,500 Patton suggested, and certainly not the 6,400 of today.

2.41 It is estimated that working to the current capacity of the Police College, it may take until February 2039 to reach the level of 8,500 officers.¹⁶

¹⁶ Chief Constables Accountability Report to Northern Ireland Policing Board. 7 March 2024

3. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Cost of Living crisis – latest insights.

3.1 The cost of living has risen in the UK and across the world since 2022.

Food and energy prices rose markedly, particularly gas prices, partly in response to the conflict in Ukraine. Global recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic put further pressure on prices.

In the UK, prices of consumer goods and services rose by 9.6% in the year to October 2022 – the fastest rate in four decades. Since then, the annual inflation rate, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupier's housing costs (CPIH), has slowed.

In the year to January 2024 the annual CPIH inflation rate was 4.2%, unchanged from the previous two months.

Police officers are not immune from the financial pressures of energy, food, transport rates and mortgage/rent payments.

Housing: House prices fall while private rents continue to see record rise

Average UK house prices are estimated to have fallen 1.4% in the year to December 2023 (provisional estimate). This is up from a decrease of 2.3% in the 12 months to November 2023 (revised estimate).

Private rental prices continued to grow at a record high rate in the UK, rising by 6.2% (provisional estimate) in the year to January 2024 unchanged for the second consecutive month. This remains the highest annual percentage change since this UK data series began in January 2016.

Food: Inflation falls to lowest level since April 2022

Prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages rose by 7.0% in the year to January 2024 according to the latest Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers housing costs (CPIH).

This was the tenth consecutive month of falls in food and non-alcoholic beverage inflation, down from 8.0% in December and a recent high of 19.2% in March 2023, which was the highest annual rate seen for over 45 years.

Energy: Around 4 in 10 energy bill payers struggling to afford payments

Around 4 in 10 adults (41%) who pay energy bills said it was very or somewhat difficult to afford them.

This was according to those asked between 17 and 28 January 2024 as part of the ONS latest public opinions and social trends bulletin.

This proportion was at a high of 49% in the period covering 17 to 29 May 2023, but appears to have slowly decreased since then.

The survey also revealed that 44% of adults in Great Britain are using less fuel, such as gas or electricity, in their homes because of the rising cost of living.

Spending: Largest monthly fall in retail sales since 2021 COVID-19 lockdowns

Retail sales volume in Great Britain fell by 3.2% in December 2023, the biggest drop since January 2021, when coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown restrictions were still in place across the country.

Annual sales volumes dropped by 2.8% in 2023 reaching the lowest levels since 2018.

Around 6 in 10 adults (62%) in Great Britain said they were spending less on non-essentials because of increases in the cost of living.

Overall, around half (49%) of adults said their cost of living had risen compared with a month ago, although this was down from 67% during a similar period a year earlier (11 to 22 January 2023). According to more detailed analysis 3 in 10 adults (29%) said they would not be able to afford an unexpected expense of £850 or more. This rose to 40% among disabled adults, 53% among renters, and 66% among disabled adults who were renting.

Pay growth in real terms (adjusted for inflation) in Great Britain continued to rise in October to December 2023. Annual growth was 1.4% for total pay (including bonuses) and 1.8% for regular pay (excluding bonuses), respectively.

By contrast, regular pay growth (not adjusted for inflation and excluding bonuses) remained strong at 6.2% in October to December 2023, but was lower than in recent periods. Among trading businesses, more than 1 in 6 (18%) expect to increase the price of goods or services they sell in January 2024.

Businesses cited energy prices as the main reason for the price increase, at 25%, up 3 percentage points for factors listed for December 2023.¹⁷

Consumer Price Inflation UK. Main Points.

3.2 The Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) rose by 4.2% in the 12 months to January 2024, the same rate as in December 2023.

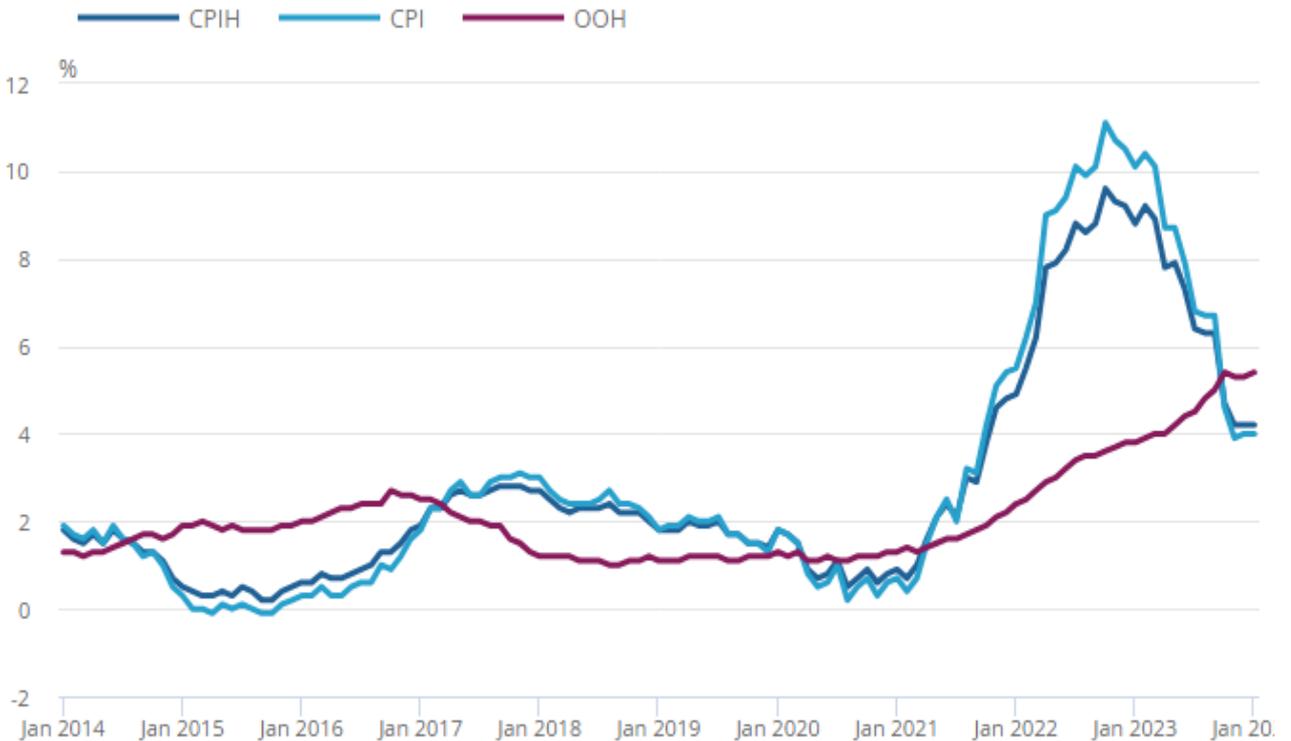
- On a monthly basis, CPIH fell by 0.4% in January 2024, the same rate as in January 2023.
- The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rose by 4.0% in the 12 months to January 2024, the same rate as in December 2023.
- On a monthly basis, CPI fell by 0.6% in January 2024, the same rate as in January 2023.
- The largest upward contribution to the monthly change in both CPIH and CPI annual rates came from housing and household services (principally higher gas and electricity charges), while the largest downward contribution came from furniture and household goods, and food and non-alcoholic beverages.
- Core CPIH (excluding energy, food, alcohol and tobacco) rose by 5.1% in the 12 months to January 2024, down from 5.2% in December 2023; the CPIH goods annual rate slowed from 1.9% to 1.8%, while the CPIH services annual rate rose from 6.0% to 6.1%.
- Core CPI (excluding energy, food, alcohol and tobacco) rose by 5.1% in the 12 months to January 2024, the same rate as in December 2023; the CPI goods annual rate slowed from 1.9% to 1.8%, while the CPI services annual rate increased from 6.4% to 6.5%.

¹⁷ [Cost of living latest insights - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

Consumer Price Inflation Rates.

Table 1: CPIH, OOH component and CPI index values, and annual and monthly rates, Figure 1: Annual CPI and CPIH inflation rate remained the same

CPIH, OOH component and CPI annual inflation rates for the last 10 years, UK, January 2014 to January 2024



Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics

	Nov	130.0	4.2	-0.1	131.7	3.9	-0.2	121.1	5.3
	Dec	130.5	4.2	0.4	132.2	4.0	0.4	121.6	5.3
2024	Jan	130.0	4.2	-0.4	131.5	4.0	-0.6	122.1	5.4

Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics

Source for Table: Consumer price inflation, UK - Office for National Statistics

- 3.3 The Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) rose by 4.2% in the 12 months to January 2024, the same rate as in December 2023, and down from a recent peak of 9.6% in October 2022.
- 3.4 Estimates suggest that the October 2022 inflation rate was the highest in over 40 years (the CPIH National Statistic series begins in January 2006). The annual rate in December 2023 was the joint lowest since October 2021.
- 3.5 The unchanged annual rate between December 2023 and January 2024 was a result of prices falling by 0.4% on the month, the same rate as it was between December and January a year earlier.
- 3.6 The owner occupiers' housing costs (OOH) component of CPIH rose by 5.4% in the 12 months to January 2024, up from 5.3% in December 2023. OOH costs rose by 0.4% on the month, the same rate as it was between December and January a year earlier.
- 3.7 The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rose by 4.0% in the 12 months to January 2024, the same rate as in December 2023, and down from a recent peak of 11.1% in October 2022. Our indicative modelled consumer price inflation estimates suggest that the October 2022 peak was the highest rate in over 40 years (the CPI National Statistic series begins in January 1997).
- 3.8 The unchanged annual rate between December 2023 and January 2024 was a result of prices falling by 0.6% on the month, the same rate as it was between December and January a year earlier.
- 3.9 The main drivers of the annual inflation rate for CPIH and CPI are the same in most cases where they are common to both measures. However, the OOH component accounts for roughly 16% of the CPIH and is the main driver for differences between the CPIH and CPI inflation rates. This makes CPIH our most comprehensive measure of inflation.

Notable movements in prices

- 3.10 The identical Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) annual inflation rates in December 2023 and January 2024 reflected offsetting price movements in the "basket of goods and services".
- 3.11 There were downward contributions from five divisions (most notably furniture and household goods, and food and non-alcoholic beverages). There were also upward contributions from three divisions (most notably housing and household services, and transport).

Table 2: : CPIH annual and monthly inflation rates by division
January 2023, December 2023, and January 2024

	CPIH 12-month rate (%)		CPIH 1-month rate (%)	
	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Jan 2023	Jan 2024
CPIH All items	4.2	4.2	-0.4	-0.4
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	8.0	7.0	0.6	-0.4
Alcohol and tobacco	12.8	12.2	2.7	2.2
Clothing and footwear	6.4	5.5	-3.1	-3.9
Housing and household services	1.9	2.5	0.4	0.9
of which owner occupiers' housing costs	5.3	5.4	0.4	0.4
Furniture and household goods	2.5	0.5	-1.1	-3.1
Health	7.5	7.0	1.8	1.3
Transport	-1.3	-0.5	-3.6	-2.8
Communication	8.6	8.2	0.5	0.2
Recreation and culture	6.0	6.0	-0.1	-0.1
Education	4.5	4.5	0.0	0.0
Restaurants and hotels	7.1	7.1	-0.9	-0.9
Miscellaneous goods and services	3.9	4.2	0.5	0.9
All goods	1.9	1.8	-0.3	-0.4
All services	6.0	6.1	-0.5	-0.4
CPIH exc food, energy, alcohol and tobacco (core CPIH)	5.2	5.1	-0.6	-0.6

Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics

Table: Consumer price inflation, UK - Office for National Statistics

Furniture and household goods

- 3.12 Prices in the furniture and household goods division rose by 0.5% in the year to January 2024, compared with a rise of 2.5% in the year to December 2023. Prices fell by 3.1% between December 2023 and January 2024, compared with a fall of 1.1% between the same two months a year ago.

Food and non-alcoholic beverages

- 3.13 The annual rate of food and non-alcoholic beverages has fallen from 8.0% in December 2023 to 7.0% in January 2024, which is the lowest annual rate since April 2022. The fall to 7.0% means the annual rate has eased for the 10th consecutive month, from a recent high of 19.2% in March 2023, which was the highest annual rate seen for over 45 years.

Housing and household services

- 3.14 The annual inflation rate for housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels was 2.5% in January 2024, up from 1.9% in December 2023. The main upward contribution came from gas, which rose by 6.8% on the month compared to a monthly rise of 0.3% last year. This led to the annual rate of gas falling by 26.5% in January 2024 compared with a fall of 31.0% in December 2023.

There was also a strong upward contribution from electricity, which rose by 4.0% on the month, compared with a monthly rise of 1.2% last year. This led to the annual rate of electricity falling by 13.0% in January 2023, compared with a fall of 15.4% in December 2023.

The rise in each category is largely because of the increase in the Office of gas and electricity markets (Ofgem) price cap.¹⁸

The price of electricity, gas, and other fuels in January 2024 is 18% lower than at its peak in January 2023. However, the price in January 2024 is 89% higher than it was in January 2021.

Transport

- 3.15 Prices in the transport division fell by 0.5% in the year to January 2024, compared with a fall of 1.3% in December 2023. Transport prices fell by 2.8% on the month to January 2024, compared with a monthly fall of 3.6% a year ago.

The reduction in the pace of decline in the annual rate was mainly the result of second-hand cars, with motor fuels also providing a strong upward contribution. However, these were partly offset by a strong downward contribution from air fares.

Prices of second-hand cars rose by 1.5% between December 2023 and January 2024, compared with a fall of 1.2% between the same two months last year. This was the first monthly rise in second-hand car prices since May 2023. The fall in the annual rate of 5.9% in January 2024 is a reduction in the pace of decline from the 8.4% fall in the year to December 2023.

The average price of petrol fell by 2.9 pence per litre between December 2023 and January 2024, to stand at 139.9 pence per litre, down from 149.4 pence per litre in January 2023. Diesel prices fell by 3.1 pence per litre this year, to stand at 148.3 pence per litre, down from 172.1 pence per litre in January 2023.

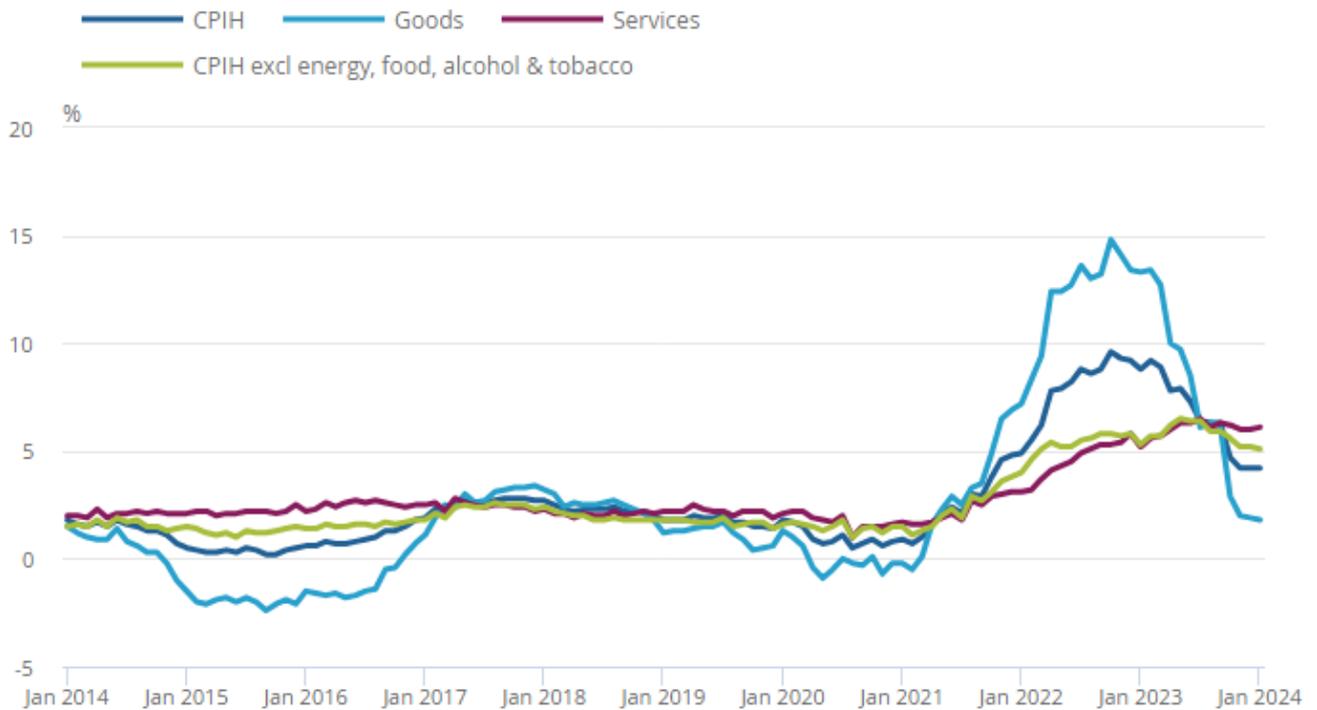
These movements resulted in overall motor fuel prices falling by 9.2% in the year to January 2024, compared with a fall of 10.8% in the year to December 2023.

¹⁸ <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/new-energy-price-cap-level-january-march-2024-starts-today> in January 2024.

Latest movements in CPIH inflation.

Figure 4: CPIH services rises, while CPIH core and CPI goods fall

CPIH goods, services and core annual inflation rates for the last 10 years, UK, January 2014 to January 2024



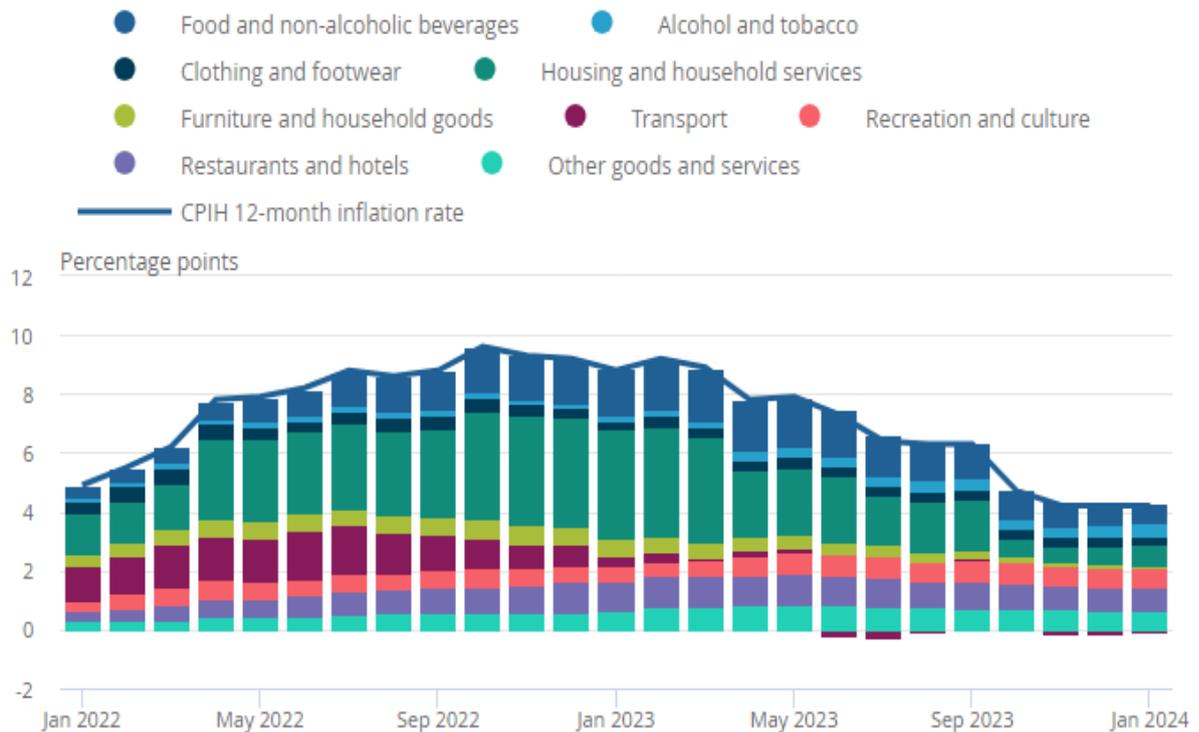
Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics

- 3.16 Figure 4 shows the annual inflation rates for the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) all goods and all services series, together with CPIH excluding energy, food, alcohol and tobacco (often referred to as core CPIH). The CPIH inflation rate is added for comparison.
- 3.17 The core CPIH annual inflation rate was 5.1% in January 2024, down from 5.2% in December 2023. This is the lowest rate since March 2022, when it was also 5.1%. It is down from a recent high of 6.5% in May 2023, which was the highest rate since November 1991, when it was also 6.5% in the constructed historical series.
- 3.18 The CPIH all goods index rose by 1.8% in the 12 months to January 2024, down from 1.9% in December, and the lowest rate since April 2021. The slowing in the rate has been caused principally by a downward contribution to the change from processed food and non-alcoholic beverages.
- 3.19 The CPIH all services index rose by 6.1% in the 12 months to January 2024, up from 6.0% in December 2023. The largest upward contribution to the change came from housing services, which consists of actual rents, owner occupiers' housing costs, services for maintenance and repair of

dwellings, sewerage collection, house contents insurance, repair of household appliances, council tax, and domestic and household services.¹⁹

Figure 6: Restaurants and hotels, and housing and household services make the largest contributions to the annual CPIH rate

Contributions to the annual CPIH inflation rate, UK, January 2022 to January 2024



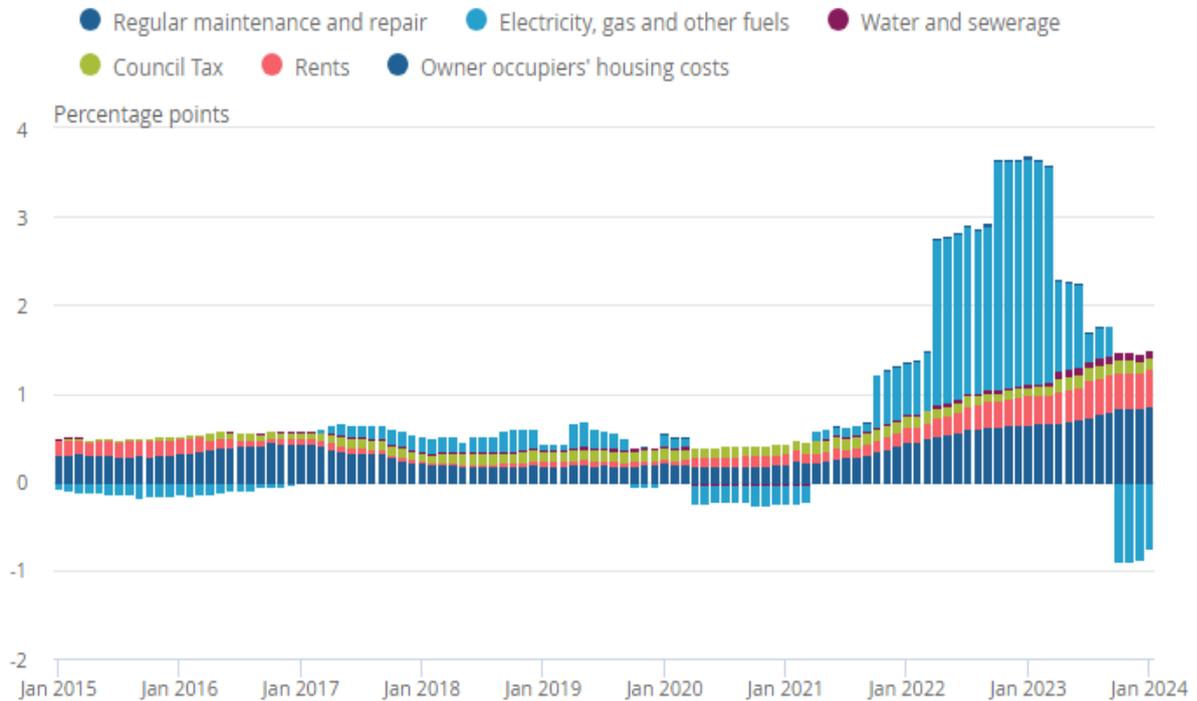
Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics

- 3.20 Figure 6 shows how the distinct categories of goods and services have contributed to the overall annual CPIH inflation rate over the last two years.
- 3.21 The largest upward contributions to the annual CPIH inflation rate in January 2024 came from restaurants and hotels, and housing and household services. At 0.79 percentage points, the contribution from restaurants and hotels was the largest of all categories for the second month in a row. The contribution from housing and household services rose slightly, from 0.58 percentage points in December 2023 to 0.75 percentage points in January 2024.
- 3.22 Transport provided the only negative contribution (0.06 percentage points) to the annual CPIH inflation rate, while the contribution from furniture and household goods was the lowest since February 2021, where it was also 0.04 percentage points.

¹⁹ Consumer price inflation, UK - Office for National Statistics

Figure 7: Contribution from owner occupiers' housing costs highest since at least January 2006

Contributions of housing components to the annual CPIH inflation rate, UK, January 2015 to January 2024



Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics

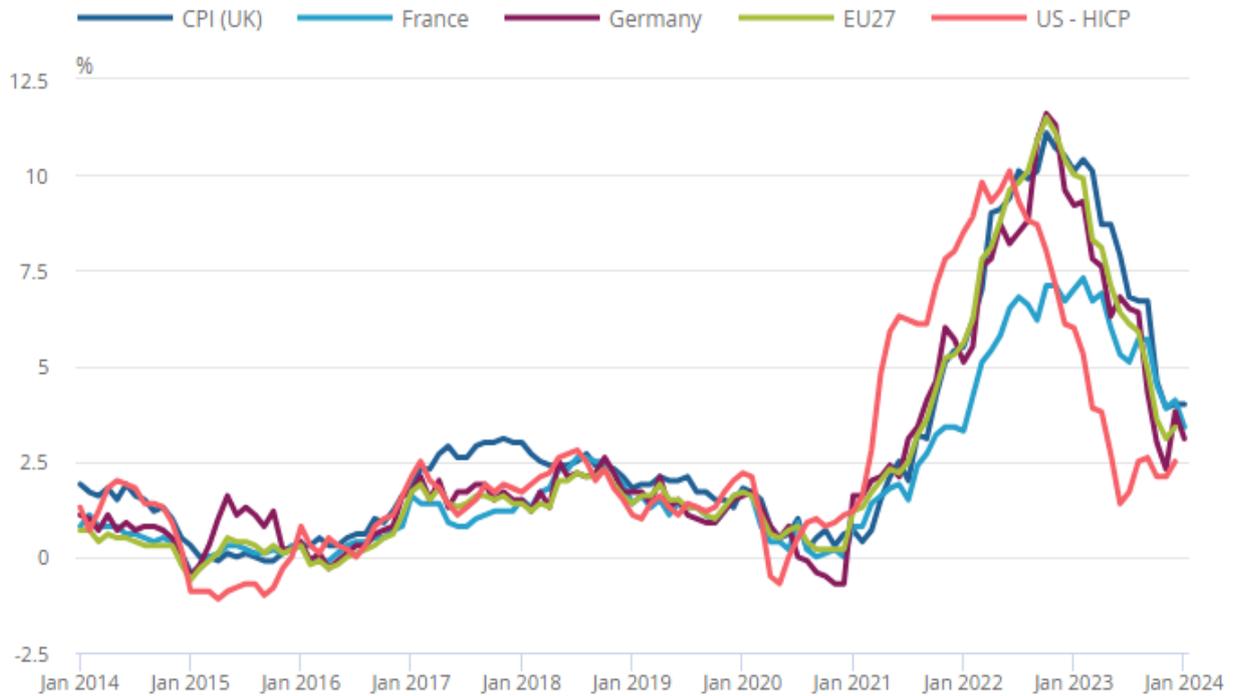
- 3.23 Figure 7 shows the contribution of owner occupiers' housing (OOH) costs and Council Tax to the annual CPIH inflation rate in the context of wider housing-related costs. The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) differs from the CPIH in that it does not include these two components.
- 3.24 OOH's contribution of 0.86 percentage points was the highest since at least January 2006, while the contribution from electricity, gas, and other fuels was negative for the fourth month in a row. The contribution from housing and household services overall was 0.75 percentage points in January 2024, up from 0.58 percentage points in December 2023.

Latest movements in CPI inflation

- 3.25 While the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) is our lead and most comprehensive measure of consumer price inflation, the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) is based on a harmonised methodology developed by Eurostat and allows for international comparisons to be drawn.
- 3.26 Figure 8 shows CPI inflation against the EU and Group of Seven (G7) countries that produce a comparable measure.

Figure 8: UK inflation is above that of France and Germany

CPI compared with selected G7 and EU annual inflation rates, January 2014 to January 2024



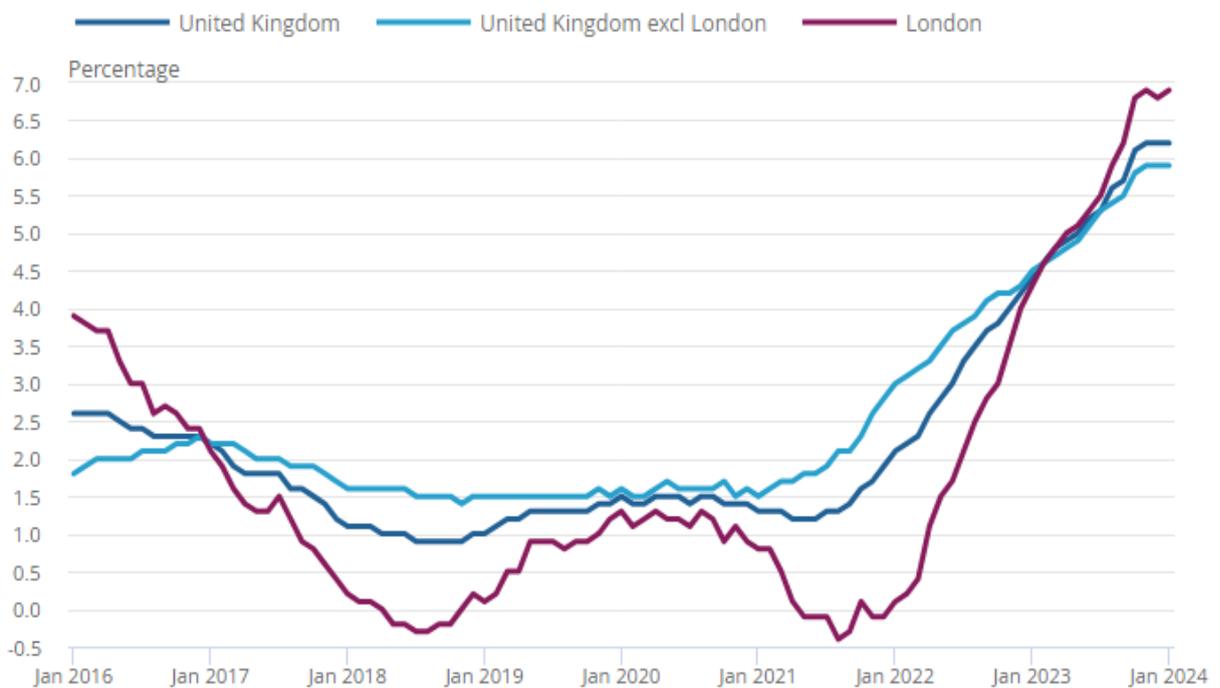
Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics, Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) from Eurostat, and US HICP from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics

UK private rental prices.

3.27 Private rental prices paid by tenants in the UK increased by 6.2% in the 12 months to January 2024 (Provisional estimate). The annual rate has remained unchanged since November 2023, and represents the joint-highest annual percentage change since this UK data series began in January 2016.²⁰

Figure 1: UK annual private rental prices rose by 6.2% in the 12 months to January 2024

Private rental price percentage change over 12 months, UK and London, January 2016 to January 2024



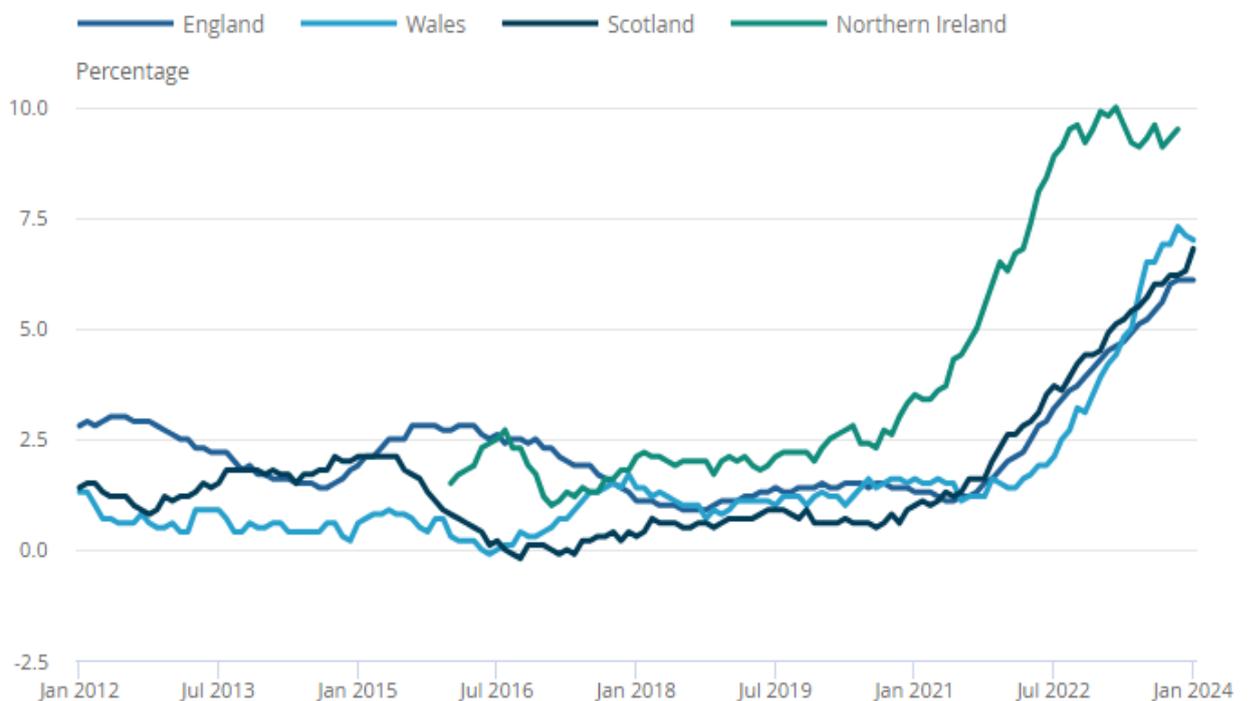
Source: Index of Private Housing Rental Prices from the Office for National Statistics

²⁰ Index of Private Housing Rental Prices, UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

- 3.28 The annual inflation rate of private rental prices in the UK began to increase in the second half of 2021 (Figure 1). Annual growth was seen across all regions except London, where prices decreased. The annual percentage change in rents increased across all regions in 2022, including in London, and this generally continued during 2023.
- 3.29 In the 12 months to January 2024, rental prices for the UK (excluding London) increased by 5.9% (provisional estimate) the same annual percentage change as the previous two months. Private rental prices in London account for almost a third of UK rental expenditure.
- 3.30 Northern Ireland: Private rental prices in Northern Ireland increased by 9.5% in the 12 months to November 2023, up from 9.3% in the 12 months to October 2023. The annual rate for Northern Ireland remains higher than for other UK countries. Northern Ireland data lag two months behind the rest of the UK and updated Northern Ireland data will be used to update our UK estimates when they become available.

Figure 2: Annual rental price inflation was higher in Wales than in England and Scotland

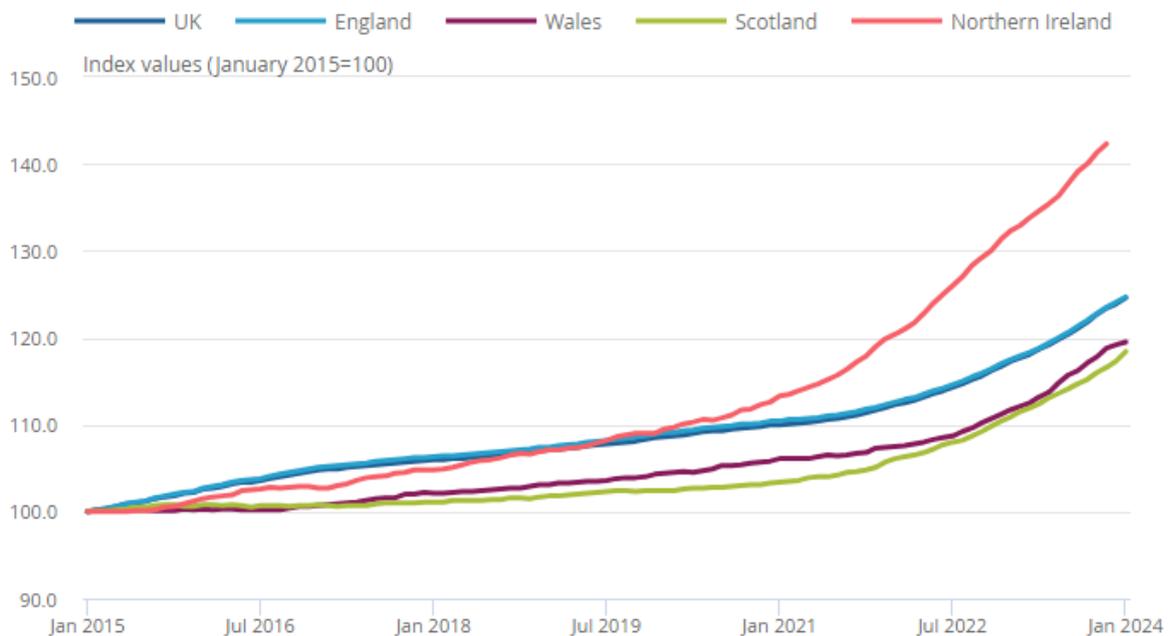
Private rental price percentage change over 12 months for countries of the UK, January 2012 to January 2024



Source: Index of Private Housing Rental Prices from the Office for National Statistics

Figure 3: Rental prices have increased more in England and Northern Ireland than in Wales and Scotland since 2015

Private rental price indices for countries of the UK, January 2015 to January 2024



Source: Index of Private Housing Rental Prices from the Office for National Statistics

Northern Ireland housing market.

3.31 The average house in Northern Ireland now costs around £10,000 more than it did one year ago, a new report suggests.

The latest house price index from Halifax indicates house prices in the north increased by 5.3% in the 12 months to January 2024, the fastest annual rate of any region in its UK-wide report.²¹

House prices climbed almost 3% in Northern Ireland in fourth quarter.

3.32 Despite ongoing economic challenges across 2023, including higher interest rates and the cost-of-living pressures, the Northern Ireland housing market continues to show price resilience and stability in the fourth quarter of 2023, according to the latest research from Ulster University.

Findings from the latest Northern Ireland Quarterly House Price Index emphasise that prices remained stable and continued to edge higher throughout 2023 due to an underlying resilience in the market. This trend continued in Q4 of 2023 as the average house price in Northern Ireland increased by 0.4% reaching £207,010. Annually, prices increased by 2.9% compared to Q4 of 2022.

²¹ Halifax: Northern Ireland house prices rose by 5.3% in the year to January, the fastest of any UK region (msn.com)

Research shows signs of slowing market activity with transactions at their lowest level over the year, decreasing 26% on the previous quarter. While the seasonal effects of Christmas and New Year traditionally see a slowing of market activity, a slight dip in buyer confidence remained in the last quarter of 2023 as the uncertainty of interest rates acted as a key factor for mortgage holders and prospective buyers alike.

Encouragingly, the recent decision to keep the interest rate stable at 5.25% is seemingly paving the way for more attractive mortgage deals. The latest data reveals minor declines in the cost of fixed, variable, and tracker rate mortgages during the final quarter of the year, indicating this trend could continue softening rates throughout 2024. Lenders are motivated to build their loan books and attract customers, meaning that new borrowers or those re-mortgaging during 2024 may benefit from appealing deals and rates available.²²

Interest Rates. Bank Of England.

3.33 Bank rate maintained at 5.25% - February 2024

The Bank of England’s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) sets monetary policy to meet the 2% inflation target, and in a way that helps to sustain growth and employment. At its meeting ending on 31 January 2024, the MPC voted by a majority of 6–3 to maintain Bank Rate at 5.25%.

Since the MPC’s previous meeting, global GDP growth has remained subdued, although activity continues to be stronger in the United States. Inflationary pressures are abating across the euro area and United States. Wholesale energy prices have fallen significantly. Material risks remain from developments in the Middle East and from disruption to shipping through the Red Sea.

Following recent weakness, GDP growth is expected to pick up gradually during the forecast period, in large part reflecting a waning drag on the rate of growth from past increases in Bank Rate. Business surveys are consistent with an improving outlook for activity in the near term.

The labour market has continued to ease but remains tight by historical standards. In the February Report projections, the continuing relative weakness of demand, despite subdued supply growth by historical standards, leads a margin of economic slack to emerge during the first half of the forecast period. Unemployment is expected to rise somewhat further.

Twelve-month CPI inflation fell to 4.0% in December 2023, below expectations in the November Report. This downside news has been broad-based, reflecting lower fuel, core goods and services price inflation. Although still elevated, wage growth has eased across several measures and is projected to decline further in coming quarters.²³

Bank of England opens door to rate cuts but calls for ‘more evidence’ of falling inflation.

3.34 Decision to keep rates at 5.25% comes despite progress in curbing price rises. The Bank of England opened the door to interest rate cuts but said it first required “more evidence” that inflation would continue falling, as it held borrowing costs at 5.25 per cent.

After a meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee on Thursday, the BoE signalled it was ready to consider lowering rates for the first time since inflation surged following the coronavirus pandemic. With headline inflation now 4 per cent compared with its 2022 peak of more than 11 per cent, the bank has ditched its previous warnings that “further tightening” of monetary policy might be needed. Instead, the BoE said it would “keep under review” how long rates should be held at current levels.

²² Northern Ireland Housing Market Continues to Show Resilience (ulster.ac.uk)

²³ Bank rate maintained at 5.25% - February 2024 | Bank of England

The meeting marked a pivot more than two years after the central bank embarked on an aggressive rate-raising campaign that took borrowing costs to their highest level in 15 years. BoE governor Andrew Bailey said the bank had seen “good news on inflation over the past few months”. But he cautioned: “We need to see more evidence that inflation is set to fall all the way to the 2 per cent target, and stay there, before we can lower interest rates.” Bailey said that with service price inflation still high and the negative contribution of falling energy prices set to fade in coming months, the BoE could not yet declare that “the job is done”.²⁴

Regional Rates

- 3.35 Rates are set at a regional level each year by Stormont and a rate is then also decided at a district level by each council in Northern Ireland.

The Executive has agreed to adjust the regional rate for 2024/25 in line with inflation. Subject to Assembly approval, the regional rate element of the bill would add 46p per week to the bill for a domestic property with an average capital value of £123,000 and £10.73 per week for a typical non-domestic property with a £50,000 rateable value. Rate bills will be sent to households in April 2024.

In addition, all Northern Ireland's 11 councils have agreed rates increases for 2022-23.

The highest percentage increase was by Mid Ulster District Council at 3.9%.

The lowest percentage increase was agreed by the Antrim and Newtownabbey council area, which announced a 1.9% rise.

Councils have cited the effect of the coronavirus pandemic as well as rising energy costs as factors behind the decision to increase rates.

This increase will bring additional pressure to officers as they continue to face increased monthly outgoings.

²⁴ Bank of England opens door to rate cuts but calls for ‘more evidence’ of falling inflation (ft.com)

Police Pay

- 3.36 To fully contextualise the evidence regarding police pay, it is important to remember that police officers in Northern Ireland are currently dealing with the ramifications of the seventh consecutive delay in the implementation of recommendations made as part of the pay review process, as well as delays in the implementation of contractual, incremental payments. Evidence has already been presented regarding the impact of these delays on morale within the PSNI and the real-life implications of such appalling disregard for the personal finances of serving police officers, at a time when people are rightly worried about the cost of living. This continues to be a major concern for the PFNI and a very real source of anger and disillusionment amongst our members.
- 3.37 Debates and discussions regarding police pay have become increasingly fractious over the last number of years. It is no secret, and indeed the PFNI see no benefit in providing additional 'evidence' to highlight what is readily acknowledged and accepted, that the value of police pay has been continuously eroded since 2011, as a result of three pay freezes, five 1% pay caps and previous 'pay restraint'. Regardless of the favoured measure of inflation used, there is simply no disputing the fact that police pay has been substantially cut, in real terms, over the last ten years.
- 3.38 There has been a substantial degradation of police pay over for more than a decade, which insults and devalues the unique and difficult work of police officers. While the 2023/24 pay increase was welcomed and necessary, it merely covered the inflationary pressures of the previous year. Police officers real pay has fallen significantly across all ranks since September 2010. Research demonstrates that, on average, federated ranks real pay declined by 20.2 per cent between September 2010 and December 2023.²⁵
- 3.39 Moreover, an independent report on the state of police pays by the Social Market Foundation (SMF) highlighted a substantial decline in real-terms police pay in the UK since 2000, making the police an outlier compared to similar roles and public sector workers. This long-term degradation of pay, undoubtedly influenced by restrictions on police officers' right to strike, is having a profound effect on the ability of the police service to attract and retain the best people.²⁶
- 3.40 The recent NPCC submission - long-term strategy needed to recoup workforce pay losses - reflects the current position with police officer pay. The National Police Chiefs' Council has submitted its evidence to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) for police officer pay for 2024/25. Recommendations include calling for an above inflation pay increase across all ranks, increasing the starting salary for constables, in a longer-term strategy to address the real term pay decreases faced by officers over the past decade. Evidence submitted to the pay bodies recognises the higher-than-expected pay award of 7 per cent received last year, however this is on the back of a long-term decline in police pay, which means officers have still received a real term pay cut on average of over 16 per cent since 2010.

Policing remains an incredibly challenging and stressful occupation, with each police officer facing between 400 and 600 traumatic events during their career, compared with between three and four for most people during their lifetime. The pay premium which was designed to compensate officers for the unique nature of their work physically and psychologically has been eroded due to long-term below inflation pay rises.²⁷

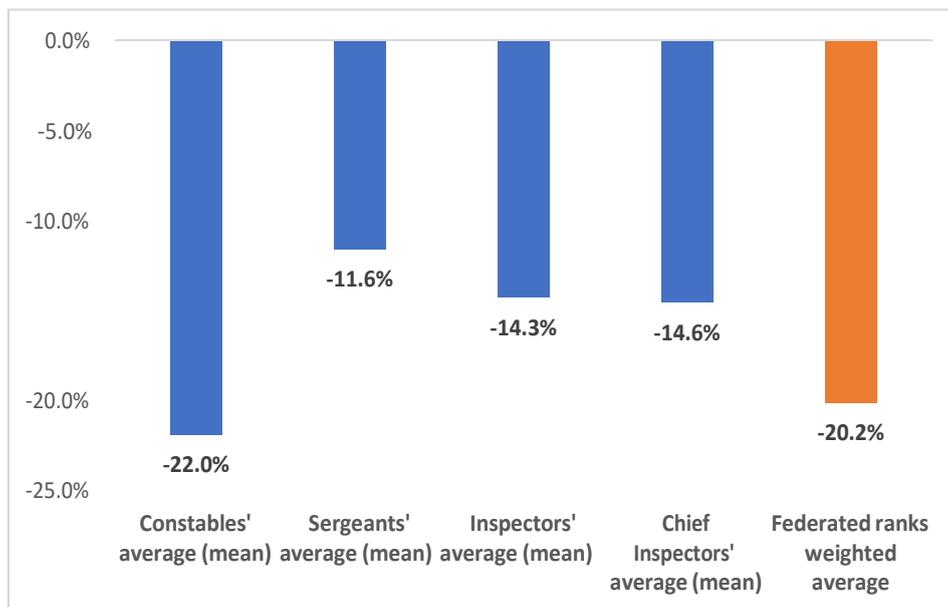
²⁵ PFEW Economic Data. Internal Staff Association document not published.

²⁶ Social Market Foundation, Shreya Nanda, 9th March 2023 Caught out: Trends in police pay in the UK - Social Market Foundation. (smf.co.uk)

²⁷ [Long-term strategy needed to recoup workforce pay losses \(npcc.police.uk\)](https://www.npcc.police.uk)

3.41 Real pay estimates demonstrate that policing is facing various challenges including the continuous decline of real pay. Following a period of austerity and nominal pay freezes, the high rate of inflation has carved a large cut out of the real pay of officers. Police officers’ real pay has fallen significantly across all ranks since September 2010. When using the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers’ housing costs (CPIH) inflation to estimate real pay, Constables’ average (mean) pay has decreased by 22 per cent between September 2010 and December 2023. Sergeants’ average (mean) pay decreased by 11.6 per cent, Inspectors’ average (mean) pays by 14.3 per cent, and Chief Inspectors’ average (mean) pay by 14.6 per cent. As a weighted average, federated ranks’ real pay declined by 20.2 per cent between September 2010 and December 2023.²⁸

Real-Terms drop in police officer’s pay due to the CPIH inflation since September 2010 (as of December 2023)



3.42 While the anticipated seven per cent pay uplift for 2023/24 was a welcome step, when the increase was implemented in September 2023, the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers’ housing costs (CPIH) inflation rate was still standing at 6.3 per cent relative to 2022 slowly coming down from a peak of 9.6 per cent in October 2022.

To date the 2023/24 pay award has still not been ratified or paid. If it is the recommended 7% then pay parity with core pay spines with England and Wales colleagues will be maintained.

The anticipated 2023/24 pay increase was necessary to cover inflationary pressures of the previous year, but it was not sufficient to cover the inflationary reduction in real pay that took place in previous years.

PFNI seeks immediate action to compensate for the current pay degradation and a clearly defined timeline to restore police pay. This should also include above inflation pay increases for the next number of years.

This should be in the form of an equal percentage rise across all ranks, reflecting pay parity with England and Wales colleagues, with similar application to the Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance (NITA), Dog Handler’s Allowance, and CRTP

²⁸PFEW economic data. Internal staff association document not published.

Police Allowances

- 3.43 Following a recommendation by the PRRB, an ‘independent’ review of PSNI allowances was carried out by an external consultancy between October and December 2021. This review considered the following five allowances: the Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance (NITA), the Competency Related Threshold Payment (CRTP), On-Call allowance, Dog Handlers’ allowance and Motor Vehicle allowance.
- 3.44 The PFNI are of the view that PSNI officers’ pay, terms and conditions are already considered as part of an independent review process, through which the Police Remuneration Review Body review evidence submitted and make informed recommendations based on such. The inclusion of a secondary ‘review’ by a consultancy body is perplexing. We believe that it is the role of the PRRB to gather evidence, review that evidence and come to informed decisions based on the evidence presented.
- 3.45 Nevertheless, the PFNI reluctantly participated in this ‘review’ in October 2021. During our sole engagement with the reviewer the PFNI were asked to provide clarity around the practicalities and purpose of each of the five allowances, rather than any attempt to understand the integral importance of each allowance to the officers in receipt, as well as to the service. For example, there was little in the way of discussion about the emotional value attached to the NITA, nor the historical importance of this payment as a vital recognition of the extraordinary environment in which police officers continue to operate, relative to their counterparts across the UK. The PFNI believe that it is difficult for bodies/groups who are not closely involved in policing, to truly appreciate the impact of having to check under your car each morning for a bomb, or to hide your occupation from family and friends. This is made even more difficult when there is no consideration given to, nor evidence sought about, such complex and unnatural actions.
- 3.46 PFNI note the contents of the PRRB Remit for 2023/24 from The Permanent Secretary Richard Pengelly ‘I wish to advise that an independent Review of Allowances has now completed and is being progressed through final approvals. Evidence regarding the outcome of this review will be provided to the PRRB during both written and oral evidence’.

Northern Ireland Transition Allowance (NITA)

- 3.47 In the PRRB Northern Ireland Report 2023 – evidence and information requests document received on Monday 26th February the following is noted:
In the interests of the parity principle, we suggest that the Northern Ireland parties link up with the forthcoming NPCC review of allowances, which is to include the On-call Allowance.
PFNI have not been invited to take part in this review of allowances and we are unsighted to any work the NPCC have commenced in relation to allowances.

The PFNI anticipate that the PRRB have recommended an increase to the value of the Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance (NITA) in their ninth report on NI, but we await final ratification of the PRRB recommendations. This will provide a signal to our members of the continued importance of the payment and a recognition of the difficult and unique circumstances under which policing in NI continues to operate.

- 3.48 On 22nd March 2022, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis announced that the Northern Ireland-related Terrorism threat level in Northern Ireland was being lowered from ‘Severe’ to ‘Substantial’. ‘Substantial’ means that a terrorist attack is likely and might well occur without further warning. This was the first time that the threat level in Northern Ireland had changed in 12 years.

On Wednesday 6th March 2024 The terrorism threat level in Northern Ireland was reduced from severe to substantial. It means an attack is likely, as opposed to highly likely, with the decision to change the threat level taken by MI5.

NI Secretary Chris Heaton-Harris announced the decision and said it was a "comprehensive and rigorous process". He said it was based on the "very latest intelligence and analysis of factors which drive the threat". "The fact that the threat level is being lowered is testament to the tremendous efforts of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and MI5 to tackle Northern Ireland related terrorism."²⁹

Northern Irish Related Terrorism in Northern Ireland Threat Level

Date	Threat Level
28 March 2023	SEVERE
22 March 2022	SUBSTANTIAL
23 July 2019	SEVERE

²⁹ NI terrorism threat level reduced to substantial - BBC News

- 3.49 Recent events have demonstrated that violent dissident republicans still pose a deadly threat to PSNI officers as they provide a policing service to the community. This recent resurgence of Violent Dissident Republican activity adds an additional layer of worry and challenge to PSNI officers both on and off duty.

February 2023

On 18 February 2023 PSNI officers attended the scene of a security alert in the Corrody Road area of Derry after a 'suspect device' found was confirmed to be dangerous. Police and Ammunition Technical Officers attended the scene and declared the object a 'viable device' which was taken away for further examination. Derry City and Strabane Area Commander, Chief Superintendent Nigel Goddard said: "This explosive device was recklessly left in a public area, just metres away from houses and a sports area where several children were playing football. The device is believed to be linked to a report of an attempted hijacking in the nearby Hollymount Park estate at approximately 9.35pm on Friday night.

On 22 February 2023 an attempt was made to murder senior police officer Detective Chief Inspector John Caldwell who was shot at a sports complex in Omagh, County Tyrone. He was off duty and was putting footballs into the boot of his car after coaching young people when two gunmen approached him and shot him several times.

The New IRA later claimed responsibility in a typed statement which appeared in Londonderry on Sunday 26 February. In a worrying development, on Monday 6th March PSNI officers were made aware that in the last 24 hours, a media outlet has been contacted by a group calling themselves Arm na Poblachta and claiming that:

“We are now looking at the families of PSNI officers as legitimate targets, the PSNI have targeted republican sympathisers, and now republicans will target the families of PSNI officers.”

This has caused increased worry and anxiety to officers who are greatly concerned for the safety and security of their families. Assistant Chief Constable Robert Singleton has on record added that in his opinion the threat to PSNI officers is ‘real and immediate’.

March 2023

The terrorism threat level in Northern Ireland is increased from substantial to severe, meaning the risk of attack or attacks is now "highly likely" instead of "likely".

The move, based on an MI5 intelligence assessment, reverses a downgrade to the threat level in 2022, the first such downgrade in 12 years.

A severe threat level is one step below critical, the highest level of threat. It comes after the shooting of Det Ch Insp John Caldwell in February and a bomb attack on police officers in November 2022.

April 2023

Police described a petrol bomb attack on officers as "senseless and reckless".

The trouble followed an illegal republican parade in Londonderry and came on the eve of a visit by US President Joe Biden to Belfast.

DCI John Caldwell was also released from hospital in April and in a later interview said children witnessed "horrors that no child should ever have to".

August 2023

A list containing the details of 10,000 police officers and civilian staff is in the hands of dissident republicans, police confirmed in August 2023. The information was contained in a spreadsheet mistakenly released as part of a PSNI response to a freedom of information request.

Chief Constable Simon Byrne said the data breach was on an industrial scale and included the surnames, initials and ranks of colleagues. He said dissident republicans could use the information, part of which appeared in redacted form on a wall in west Belfast, to "intimidate or target officers and staff".³⁰

September 2023

Sixteen officers injured in Londonderry disorder after 'military grade' weapons found in the Creggan area of Londonderry.

Sixteen police officers have been injured during disorder which broke out in Londonderry after searches uncovered "military grade" weapons. Police said two handguns, two military hand grenades, 50 rounds of ammunition and over a kilogram of plastic explosives were found in the Creggan area on Thursday. Three people - two men and a woman - were arrested under the Terrorism Act. Police believe the

³⁰ Timeline of dissident republican activity - BBC News

weapons would have been used in attacks on police officers and said their primary line of enquiry centres on the New IRA.

Disorder broke out following the searches and police officers were attacked with petrol bombs and heavy masonry. Sixteen officers were hurt during the trouble - the Police Federation said four of them required hospital treatment. Injuries they sustained included burns, head injuries and potential fractures.

Assistant Chief Constable Bobby Singleton said: "Because of the material found police had to maintain a presence over an extended period for our security and public safety. These were extremely difficult conditions for our officers, many of whom were in full personal protective equipment and at this time we have 16 reported injuries to our officers from our Tactical Support Groups and our Local Policing Teams. Officers who, today, will not be able to serve the community. The injuries sustained include burns, head injuries and potential fractures."

ACC Singleton said officers had been granted authority to use baton rounds - but none were fired.³¹

February 2024

Two security alerts were sparked in the Co Derry town on Saturday 24th February, after dissident group Arm na Poblachta claimed to have targeted PSNI vehicles. Police confirmed a viable device was found at Curragh Road on Sunday and urged people to be vigilant over claims of a second device in the area.³²

Area Commander for Causeway Coast and Glens, Superintendent Mark Roberts said: "I would like to thank the community in Dungiven for their patience and understanding during the significant three-day policing operation. Officers recovered a viable pipe bomb type device last night, Sunday 25th February, at Curragh Road. The device was made safe and was removed for further forensic examination.

"A call was received using a recognised code word claiming that there had been an attack on our officers and two devices left at the junction of the Curragh Road with Garvagh Road and the Old Foreglen Road".³³

Four men arrested on suspicion of terrorism-related offences in connection with security alerts in Dungiven have been released by police. The men - two aged 55, one aged 35 and one aged 22 - were detained on Monday.

The Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics from 1 February 2023 to 31 January 2024 show the following incidents took place:

- There was one security related death, the same number as during the previous 12 months.
- There were 8 bombing incidents, compared to 5 during the previous 12 months and 31 shooting incidents, compared to 32.
- There were 30 casualties of paramilitary style assaults, compared to 26 during the previous 12 months. Just under half of these assaults (14) occurred in Belfast. All 30 casualties were aged 18 years or older.

³¹ Sixteen officers injured in Londonderry disorder after 'military grade' weapons found | UTV | ITV News

³² Four men released following arrest over Dungiven security alert – The Irish News

³³ The security alert in Dungiven has ended | PSNI

- There were 17 casualties of paramilitary style shootings, compared to 9 during the previous 12 months. All 17 casualties were aged 18 years or older.
- There were 105 security related arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000, compared to 108 during the previous 12 months.
- 21 persons were subsequently charged, compared to 14 during the previous 12 months.

3.50 As with our previous submissions, it is our position that the Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance (NITA), as a fundamental element of the reward package provided to police officers in NI and paid in recognition of the extraordinary circumstances in which police officers continue to serve here, should continue to be uplifted in line with the pay award.

Dog Handlers' Allowance

3.51 The value of the Dog Handlers' Allowance has historically been updated in line with the pay award, meaning that it has been subject to the same decade long period of restraint as pay, thus reducing its value overtime. It has been, and remains, our position that such is the importance of this payment that it should be protected from inflationary pressures to ensure its value is not eroded to such a point whereby the cost of keeping and caring for a police dog becomes financially burdensome. This is particularly important in the current economic climate, where the cost of living has increased substantially, as previously evidenced.

The only alternative solution to the payment of the Dog Handler's Allowance is for police dogs to be homed and cared for solely within police kennels. However, this has obvious negative cost implications as well as inevitably increasing the call out time for operations requiring a police dog.

It is therefore the recommendation of the PFNI that the historical link between the pay award and the Dog Handlers' Allowance is maintained, albeit with a provision for protection against the cost of living in circumstances where no pay award (or a pay award significantly below inflation) is recommended.

Competency Related Threshold Payment (CRTP)

3.52 In our ninth submission to the PRRB the PFNI clearly articulated our position on the Competency Related Threshold Payment (CRTP) which has been the subject of debate over the last number of pay review rounds. Our position on this payment remains in line with that provided in 2023/24, namely that whilst we oppose the removal of this important allowance, we reluctantly accept the position of the PRRB regarding the impact of retention on pay parity with England and Wales.

As such, and in keeping with the requirements of pay parity, the PFNI remain steadfast in our position that the removal of this allowance must therefore coincide with the *immediate* implementation of the appropriate replacement allowance, as available in England and Wales i.e., the Unsocial Hours Allowance. This will ensure the continuation of parity in pay and minimal detriment to the least number of officers within the PSNI.

This allowance would allow for payments to be made to officers, regardless of length of service, to compensate them for every full hour worked between the hours of 8pm and 6am. This allowance should be paid at an hourly rate of 10% of the member's hourly rate of pay. A fixed rate for a full-time officer working a standard shift system should also be implemented at the same rate as England and Wales.

The options for the removal of CRTP are as follows:

- A phased removal of CRTP over two years, whilst remaining open to new applicants during this time. This would involve the reduction in the value of the allowance over a two-year period by approximately 33% each year. The scheme would remain open to new applicants and would be removed in its entirety by 1st September 2026
- A phased removal of CRTP over two years, however closed to new applicants during this time. This would involve a reduction in the allowance over two years as outlined above. The scheme would be closed to new applicants from 1st September 2024 and removed in its entirety by 1st September 2026.
- Full removal of CRTP on 1st September 2025 with the appropriate replacement allowances implemented immediately from that date.

In the interests of fairness and ensuring the most equitable transition from the use of CRTP for our members, it is the PFNI's position that the replacement Unsocial Hours Allowance must be paid *immediately* to those officers to whom CRTP will not be open for application and phased in for those officers currently in receipt of CRTP, as that allowance is removed over a period. In reckoning any payment, the relevant date should be the date the PRRB recommendations are finally ratified in N Ireland.

The PFNI will not countenance any situation in which CRTP is removed from our members and the appropriate replacement allowance is not implemented.

Recommendation 1

To date the 2023/24, pay award has still not been ratified or paid. If it is the recommended 7% then pay parity with core pay spines with England and Wales colleagues will be maintained.

The anticipated 2023/24 pay increase was necessary to cover inflationary pressures of the previous year, but it was not sufficient to cover the inflationary reduction in real pay that took place in previous years.

PFNI seeks immediate action to compensate for the current pay degradation and a clearly defined timeline to restore police pay. This should also include above inflation pay increases for the next number of years.

This should be in the form of an equal percentage rise across all ranks, reflecting pay parity with England and Wales colleagues, with similar application to the Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance (NITA), Dog Handler's Allowance, and CRTP.

Recommendation 2

Introduction of Unsociable Hours Allowance and other associated allowances awarded to colleagues in England and Wales should CRTP be phased out.

Introduction of Unsociable Hours Allowance and other associated allowances awarded to colleagues in England and Wales should CRTP be phased out.

On Call

On call is a voluntary activity and the position with On-Call has moved on from our previous submission. There are no police regulations that require an officer to undertake on-call duties. On call is utilised by PSNI cover high risk areas of policing outside office hours. The current

allowance does not fully reflect the restrictions placed on officers who perform this duty – restricted freedoms with the ability to respond to various high-risk issues. This may necessitate ensuring alternative caring arrangements are in place etc.

PFNI note the outcome of the NPCC discussions on the 1st February 2024 that they would jointly support the following recommendation being submitted in their evidence this year to PRRB - Increase the On Call Allowance from £20 to £25 with effect from the 1st September 2024.

PFNI also reference the following from the PSA/SANI submission to PRRB *'The PSA/SANI requests that the PRRB recommends to the home secretary, that the 24-hour on call rate be increased to £60 (which after income tax at higher rate of 40% would amount to £36 net per 24hr period of on call), and in addition that the £60 payment becomes reckonable for pensionable purposes. This would rightly recognise and reward those officers who are committing to manage the highest risk in the service, in addition to their daily duties and responsibilities.'*

PFNI note that in 2022 Police Scotland negotiated an increase of 5% to the 24-hour rate and that the payment becomes reckonable for pensionable purposes.

Recommendation 3

An increase to On-Call Allowance from £20 to £25 as a minimum, reflecting NPCC position, and the payment to be reckonable for pensionable purposes to reflect the impact performing this duty and the adverse impact this continues to have on the work life balance of police officers.³⁴

Annual Leave

PFNI have identified significant issues with the current annual leave entitlements with regards to equality considerations and the potential for indirect discrimination. PFNI is concerned the scheme is likely to have a disproportionate impact on protected characteristics including age and sex; in particular with regards to the length of time taken to reach the maximum entitlement.

Recent changes to pensions have highlighted there is currently no increase in entitlement after 20 years' service. Many police officers will in future be required to work significantly past the 30 years' service mark. For example, an 18- year-old joining the PSNI would have to work for 42 years to attain a full unreduced pension (or a minimum of 37 years for an actuarially reduced pension).

Our recommendation addresses these issues and would help enhance the total reward package, making policing a more attractive option for new and existing recruits at a time when pay rises have been lacking or insufficient to cover inflation.

The Police Federation of England and Wales submitted a claim to the Police Consultative Forum meeting in April 2022 requesting similar improved annual leave entitlements for federated ranks. The Long Service Leave is still being discussed and therefore is submitted for consideration on that basis.

Recommendation 4

An increase in annual leave entitlements for federated ranks as follows:

- Increase the minimum annual leave entitlement from 22 to 25 days.
- Reduce the time taken to reach the top of scale from 20 years to 5 years, so that 30 days (maximum entitlement) would be reached after 5 years.
- Introduce a period of 'Long Service Leave' (LSL) for officers who have served for 10 or more years (6 weeks on reaching ten years' service).

Maternity/Adoption Pay

From 4 January 2021, police officers in England and Wales on maternity or adoption leave have been entitled to full pay for 26 weeks instead of 18. Police Federation England and Wales progressed these extra pay benefits through the Police Consultative Forum. However maternity and adoption pay for PSNI officers remains at 18 weeks. In recognition of pay and allowances parity, PFNI initially raised this as an issue in December 2020 however to date we have been unsuccessful in obtaining a similar increase for our officers.

To date, PFNI are unsighted to the PRRB report and therefore include this in our current submission.

The DOJ have confirmed this matter has been discussed at the Police Advisory Group (PAG) meetings. DOJ have received the outline business case for this from PSNI on 25 January 2024 and it is currently being reviewed. Given PFNI first raised this issue in December 2020 we have again included it in our submission.

³⁴ 2dyfyt3jdbtqm7bol0s1gccofud1 (police-superintendents-association.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com)

Recommendation 5

The increase in Maternity / Adoption pays for police officers from 18 weeks full pay to 26 weeks full pay in line with police officers in England and Wales.

Inspecting Ranks

Long working hours have always been a feature of police work, creating growing concerns about the impact of excessive and unpredictable hours of work on the health of individual Inspectors. The impacts include the strains this can impose on family life and work-life balance, and the adverse effects this has on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Police Service. Police Inspecting ranks regularly contact PFNI seeking clarity on excess hours worked. Anecdotal evidence would demonstrate that police inspecting ranks regularly work in excess of their salaried hours and well over the 48 hours limit specified in the Working Time Regulations.

Inspecting ranks who are 'on call' on a working day, if recalled to duty, do not receive any additional remuneration apart from the 'on call' allowance. A further measure of excessive hours is accrued hours ('time owed') which can be taken back as shorter days and/or re-rostered rest days. Currently in PSNI there are 95 Chief Inspectors with 603 days owing and 381 Inspectors with 2041 days owing.³⁵

With effect from 28 April 2020 Annex H, England & Wales Police Regulations 2003 were amended so that inspectors and chief inspectors can carry over, for a further 12-month period, any rest days in lieu not taken due to exceptional circumstances, exigencies of duty or work demands.

Currently PSNI Regulations, only allow inspectors to avail of days in lieu, for twelve months from the date they are earned. This puts our inspecting ranks at a detriment to their equivalent ranks, and we request that consideration be given to updating the PSNI regulations to provide parity with counterparts in England & Wales.

In the PRRB Northern Ireland Report 2023 – evidence and information requests document received on Monday 26th February the following is noted:

In the interests of the overall coherence of the police officer pay structure, we ask our Northern Ireland parties to provide detailed evidence on the differentials between the inspector, chief inspector and superintendent ranks in the next pay round.

PFNI would make the following representations in recognition of this gap. The Scottish Police Federation Police pay claim in 2021 reached the following agreement – A new pay point will be added to the top of the chief Inspectors pay scale creating a four point pay scale.

Currently a Chief Inspector in Police Scotland at the top of their scale will earn £71,553. The anticipated 7% pay award for PSNI officers means a Chief Inspector in PSNI at the top of their scale will earn £67,017.

PFNI would be supportive of this approach to reduce the gap between the top of the Chief Inspector rank and the bottom of the Superintendent rank.

Recommendation 6

The re-introduction of either overtime payments or a non-pensionable supplement for Inspecting Ranks, which takes into consideration the additional hours many are required to work in performing their duties.

Introduction of a determination to facilitate chief inspectors and inspectors to carry over, for a further 12-month period, any rest days in lieu not taken due to exceptional circumstances, exigencies of duty or work demands

Incremental pay

In our ninth submission to PRRB we highlighted the issues with delays in awarding incremental pay and our concern that the delays experienced in 2021 and 2022 would reoccur in September 2023 unless preventative steps were taken. We raised this as a concern with DOJ in a letter dated 18th May 2023 where we set out in detail our concerns and identified a potential solution.

We also initiated a judicial review as it appeared a negotiated resolution to this issue would not be possible in advance of 1st September 2024. Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of PFNI, delays did reoccur in 2023, with the matter being belatedly resolved in November 2023.

Our judicial review has been adjourned in the hope that a negotiated settlement is possible which will avoid future delays, demonstrate to Police officers that their retention and pay progression is a priority and to avoid costly legal action.

Recommendation 7

A Determination is added to the PSNI Regulations stating that pay increments are payable annually. This would align the PSNI Determinations with Annex F of the England and Wales Police Regulations 2003.

4 APPENDICIES

Appendix A - PFNI correspondence to DOJ re: incremental pay.

Appendix B - DOJ response re: incremental pay.

Appendix C - Correspondence from DOJ – remit considerations.

Appendix D - England and Wales Remit letter.

Appendix E - PFNI response re: remit letter considerations.

Appendix F - Correspondence from PFNI to Justice Minister.

Appendix J - Correspondence from Justice Minister re: remit letter considerations.

Appendix H - Correspondence from Justice Minister to PFNI re: Pay award and PRRB report.

Appendix I - NI Remit Letter.

Appendix J – NPCC Joint Statement

Appendix K – PFEW Economic Data.

Appendix A – PFNI correspondence to DOJ re: incremental pay



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18 May 2023

Our ref: DW-DM-05-23

Dear Deborah

The Police Federation in their latest submission to the Police Remuneration Review Body again raised the issue of the delays with incremental pay progression. We are concerned that the delay of the last 2 years will reoccur in September 2023 unless preventative steps are taken.

In doing so PFNI noted the comments of PRRB in their eighth report:

"We were disappointed and concerned by delays during 2021/22 in the implementation of our recommendations and in paying annual increments to police officers in Northern Ireland." In addition, PRRB state "We expect prompt payment in 2022/23 of the pay award and annual increments for police officers. We seek an update next year on whether timely payment has been achieved."

PFNI made the following comments in our submission to PRRB:

"PFNI believe that our Government, do not believe our officers have a contractual entitlement to incremental pay progression. Unlike our colleagues in England and Wales, there is nothing specific in our Regulations and associated Determinations that specifies that increments are paid annually. In view of the clear pay parity position, PFNI would seek the support of PRRB in having a Determination added to the PSNI Regulations that pay increments are payable annually. This would align the PSNI Determinations with Annex F of the England and Wales Police Regulations 2003. This can seemingly be progressed in the absence of a functioning devolved Government as the Department of Justice officials are currently adding a new Determination Annex in respect of the Mutual Aid matters recommended by PRRB in last years report."



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I have reviewed the Department of Finance publication in 2018 which appears to have been the cause of the delays. While it does set out the need for an approval process in respect of increases in pay awards, this does not appear to apply to movements between pay points. I note that paragraph 14 of the publication states that accounting officers have to approve the pay increase, but it also states that Department of Finance approval is not required where staff groups have "a clearly established legal requirement, such as a contractual entitlement e.g., to a nationally agreed pay award or NICS terms and conditions; or to pay progression within established pay scales."

In light of this, there does not appear to be a requirement to wait for the conclusion of the pay review process before increasing officers pay in line with their movement between pay points.

PFNI would formally request consideration is given to the following:

A determination is added to the PSNI Regulations, stating that pay increments are payable annually. This would align the PSNI Determinations with Annex F of the England and Wales Police Regulations 2003. It is our belief this can be progressed in the absence of a functioning devolved Government as the Department of Justice officials have recently published Determination Annex W in respect of payment of allowances for PSNI officers on mutual aid deployments.

Yours sincerely

Damian Walsh
Secretary
Police Federation for Northern Ireland

Cc Eileen Coulter

Amanda Montgomery

Mark Goodfellow

Appendix B -DOJ response re: incremental pay

Mark Goodfellow
Acting Director of
Safer Communities



B5.3 Castle Buildings
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mark.goodfellow@justice-ni.gov.uk
Tele: 028 90522915

Mr Damian Walsh
Secretary
Police Federation for Northern Ireland
77-79 Garnerville Road
BELFAST
BT4 2NX

Via email: office@policefedni.com

14 June 2023

Dear Damian

Thank you for your letter of 18 May with regard to incremental pay progression.

As part of the financial governance and administration of pay uplifts the PSNI and NI Policing Board (NIPB) are required to submit a pay remit business case to the Departmental Accounting Officer, which includes the award for incremental progression payments.

The Department of Finance (DoF) guidance on pay administration states that public bodies should normally only submit one pay remit per year per staff group for approval. It also recommends that a public body must not split its submission of pay remits with one pay remit for incremental progression and another for revalorisation. However, in instances where a public body has an established legal requirement, such as a contractual entitlement to an element of pay award on a specific date, and where this date falls prior to the settlement of any relevant pay negotiations, the guidance allows for a submission to be made requesting temporary approval of progression and/or revalorisation. The current PSNI Regulations 2005 does not have this provision.

The consideration of any public sector pay award is subject to the prior publication of a Budget and NI Public Sector Pay Policy (NIPSPP). The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (SoSNI) has set the Budget for Northern Ireland by way of a Written

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Ministerial Statement (WMS) in Parliament on Thursday 27 April 2023 and DoF published NIPSP guidance for 2023/24 on 31st May 2023, thus allowing formal negotiations on pay for the period to take place. On this basis, it should be possible this year to submit a timely pay remit to reflect what is affordable in terms of an overall pay award, avoiding the need to seek temporary approval for one element.

The PFNI commented in its evidence to the PRRB;

'there is nothing specific in our Regulations and associated Determinations that specifies that increments are paid annually.'

In your correspondence you have requested that consideration is given to the introduction of a Determination under the PSNI Regulations 2005 which would allow annual incremental payments to be made.

You refer to the recent introduction of Determination W in respect of mutual aid allowances. The change to mutual aid arrangements was a result of a recommendation by the PRRB that was accepted and approved by the Minister prior to her departure from office last October 22, and this facilitated the introduction of this Determination. The powers to issue Departmental Determinations are contained within Regulation 33 of the PSNI Regulations 2005. The Northern Ireland (Executive Formation) Act 2022, Section 3, states that the Department shall not be prevented from exercising departmental functions if the officer is satisfied that it is in the public interest to do so. This principle was applied to the decision to draft a determination for issue to consultation and subsequent implementation.

Department of Justice officials have previously liaised with DoF colleagues to investigate if PSNI officer legislation could be amended in order to better reflect an entitlement to automatic progression on a specific date. While officials will continue to explore this issue, it should be noted that if this entitlement was achieved, incremental progression payments would still be required to complete the DoF pay remit approvals process applicable at that time and would not be automatically paid.

Any legislative change would require the approval of the Executive, and officials would be required to work alongside DoF colleagues and legal advisers to consider whether this could be seen as compliant with established pay remit approval policy.

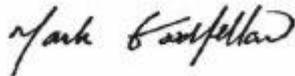
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In the absence of an Executive, the Department is not in a position to consider this legislative change at this time.

I can assure you that officials in both the DoJ and DoF continue to explore the scope to refine and expedite the pay approvals process and, as noted above, it is helpful that the Public Sector Pay Policy for this year has already been published, therefore negating the delays experienced last year.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely



MARK GOODFELLOW
ACTING DIRECTOR OF SAFER COMMUNITIES



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Appendix C- Correspondence from DOJ – remit considerations

From: Montgomery, Amanda <amanda.montgomery@justice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 3:35 PM
To: Simpson, Sinead <Sinead.simpson@nipolicingboard.org.uk>; Clare Duffield <clare.duffield@psni.police.uk>; Mark McEwan <mark.mcewan@psni.police.uk> <mark.mcewan@psni.police.uk>; D/C/Supt Anothony McNally <anthony.mcnally@psni.police.uk>; Chairman <Chairman@policefedni.com>
Cc: Hagen, Sam <Sam.Hagen@nipolicingboard.org.uk>; laura.nicholl@psni.police.uk; Annmarie Magee <annmarie.magee@psni.police.uk>; Gillian Kearney <gillian.kearney@psni.police.uk>; ZANDRA.WALKER@psni.police.uk; Vice Chairman <ViceChairman@policefedni.com>; Secretary <Secretary@policefedni.com>; Murphy, Therese <Therese.Murphy@justice-ni.gov.uk>; Coulter, Eileen <Eileen.Coulter@justice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Department of Justice Remit Letter - 2024/25

CAUTION: This email has been received from outside the PFNI Email Environment. Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address. Treat all attachments and links with caution.

Good afternoon

As you will be aware, the Department is not in a position at present to progress the PRRB recommendations for 2023/24 in the absence of a Minister. An incremental only pay remit business case has been approved and the PSNI was advised on 25 October 2023. Departmental officials have been informed by PSNI that incremental payments will commence to officers from November 2023 in line with their appropriate progression date for the 2023/24 pay year.

I am now writing to invite you to put forward matters you would wish to be considered for inclusion in the Department's annual remit letter to the PRRB, so that the 2024/25 review of PSNI pay and conditions for officers can be initiated. The Department asks that your inputs do not include any allowances that were included in the Department's Review of Allowances, which you would have been informed of during the consultation exercise.

The Department understands the PRRB secretariat contacted you recently with provisional timelines for submission of written evidence and the oral evidence sessions. They will contact you directly in due course with further details.

Inputs should be provided no later than close of business 15 December 2023 and emailed to me at the address below.

Kind regards

Amanda Montgomery

Appendix D –England and Wales Remit letter



Home Secretary

2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
www.gov.uk/home-office

Zoë Billingham
Chair
Police Remuneration Review Body
Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

20 December 2023

Dear Zoë

POLICE REMUNERATION REVIEW BODY REMIT 2024/25

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) for your work in the 2023/24 pay round and for your ninth report. The Government recognises the valuable role of the PRRB in reviewing police officer pay and the expert advice the Body provides.

I write to you now to formally commence the 2024/25 pay round, and I refer to the PRRB the following matters:

- how to apply the pay award for 2024/25 for all police officers in ranks up to and including chief superintendent.
- to provide commentary on the National Police Chiefs' Council's schedule for a review of allowances, including the proposed timescales and priority order, and taking into consideration views from policing stakeholders.

In 2023/24, the Pay Review Bodies recommended historically high pay awards for their respective workforces in light of the extraordinary macroeconomic context. Accepting these recommendations, whilst not increasing borrowing, required tough decisions. It is vital that the Pay Review Bodies consider the historic nature of the 2023/24 awards and the Government's affordability position that will be set out further in written evidence.

In reaching your recommendations, I would also ask you to have regard to the standing terms of reference set out at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/police-remuneration-review-body/about/terms-of-reference>

Thank you for your hard work in this important area. I look forward to receiving your report in May 2024.

Rt Hon James Cleverly MP

Appendix E -PFNI response re: remit letter considerations



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Ms Amanda Montgomery
Department of Justice
Block B Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SG

3rd January 2024

Ref: DW-AM-03-01-24

Via email only: amanda.montgomery@justice-ni.gov.uk

Dear Amanda

I am corresponding with you in respect of the matters the Police Federation for Northern Ireland wish to be considered for inclusion in the Department's annual remit letter to the PRRB to initiate the 2024/25 review of pay and conditions for officers in the PSNI.

It would be remiss of me not to point out that as the largest staff association in the PSNI we are at a significant disadvantage as we commence this process. The PRRB report was provided to the Department of Justice on 20th June 2023 and PFNI have made several requests for the report to be shared with us in confidence to fully inform our position. Regrettably, our requests were denied, although our officials did receive a confidential briefing on the PRRB recommendations on Monday 9th October 2023. Therefore, our suggestions for the remit letter are submitted on the clear understanding that we have not been furnished with a copy of the 2023/24 recommendations of PRRB. It is also noted that our remit letter submission from last year resulted in five of our six suggestions not being accepted for inclusion in the remit letter to PRRB. To date, we are still unsighted whether PRRB have made any commentary or recommendations following our written submissions to them on these matters.

Notwithstanding the issues highlighted above, the Police Federation for Northern Ireland would welcome consideration of the following to be included in this year's remit letter:-

1. An uplift to police officer's salaries (federated ranks), with similar application to Dog Handler's Allowance, Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance and Competency Related Threshold Allowance;
2. Introduction of Unsociable Hours Allowance and other associated allowances awarded to colleagues in England and Wales in the event CRTP is removed or phased out;
3. An increase to On-Call Allowance to reflect the impact performing this duty and the adverse impact this continues to have on the work life balance of police officers;



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4. An increase in annual leave entitlement. Given that there is currently no increase in entitlement after 20 years service, consideration of an increase is requested to take cognisance of the fact that, due to recent changes to pensions, many police officers will in future be required to work significantly past the 30 years service mark. For example an 18 year old joining the PSNI would have to work for 42 years to attain a full unreduced pension (or a minimum of 37 years for an actuarially reduced pension);

5. The increase in Maternity / Adoption pay for police officers from 18 weeks full pay to 26 weeks full pay in line with police officers in England and Wales.

6. The re-introduction of either overtime payments or a non-pensionable supplement for Inspecting Ranks, which takes into consideration the additional hours many are required to work in performing their duties.

7. A Determination is added to the PSNI Regulations stating that pay increments are payable annually. This would align the PSNI Determinations with Annex F of the England and Wales Police Regulations 2003.

On behalf of our members, PFNI want to put on record their increasing dismay, anger and disillusionment with the current police pay process. With the on-going cost of living pressures and in the aftermath of what is considered to have been the most significant data breach that has ever occurred in the history of UK policing, and some four months after our colleagues in England and Wales received their 2023 award, our officers are still awaiting specific details and confirmation of what their pay award will be and when they will receive it.

This is exacerbated by our Government Departments also delaying police officer incremental pay progression for the third year running. This was belatedly resolved in November 2023 however the matter still remains unresolved for future years. PFNI have adjourned our Judicial Review proceedings in the hope that a negotiated resolution can be achieved to avoid further litigation. Regrettably many of our members have lost faith and stopped expecting any tangible recognition from our Government Departments for their unique role and responsibilities keeping people safe.

As police budgets face challenging deficits and resources continue to diminish so does the ability for our members to protect the public effectively. The lack of police recruitment, severe challenges in officer retention and the recurring annual delay in delivering the police pay award, all negatively impact officer morale. As a result of these worsening issues, the PSNI will be smaller, less visible, less accessible and less responsive.

Our officers see a greater need than other public sector groups to ensure that deliberations on issues directly affecting their pay and conditions are balanced and fair, so they feel valued by Government. Our Government Departments must listen and not ignore the needs of those in the police service simply because they do not have the right to take industrial action. Police officers deserve a pay award that acknowledges the ongoing cost-of-living pressures, the unique responsibilities placed on them by society and the restrictions imposed on their private lives and profession (such as industrial rights).

Appendix F- Correspondence from PFNI to Justice Minister



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Naomi Long MLA
Minister for Justice
Department of Justice
Block B Castle Buildings
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Belfast BT4 3SG

Via email only: DOJ.MinistersOffice@justice-ni.x.gsi.gov.uk

8 February 2024

Dear Minister Long

Firstly, I wish to formally congratulate you on your re-appointment to the role of Justice Minister. The return of MLAs to Stormont is very much welcomed by the PFNI as there are many issues particularly affecting policing that require urgent attention.

Initially, on behalf of our members, it is our hope to secure an expeditious resolution to the ratification of the 2023 PRRB recommendations and release/supply of the associated PRRB report so to enable us to properly prepare our 2024 written submission.

I understand you have recently met with the Chief Constable, and we would very much welcome an opportunity to have a personal meeting with you at your earliest convenience.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend a formal invitation to our Annual Conference which takes place on Wednesday 29th May 2024 in the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick. As per previous years, we would kindly extend the opportunity for you address conference following my keynote address, which is scheduled to take place in around 11am.

My office will be happy to provide further details in due course and will also be extending formal invitations to your Permanent Secretary and DOJ representatives.

I look forward to hearing from you and advancing positive and collaborative working relationships with yourself and department colleagues.

Yours sincerely

Liam Kelly
Chair
Police Federation for Northern Ireland

Cc Amanda Montgomery, Police Powers & HR Policy Branch

Appendix G – Correspondence from Justice Minister re: remit letter considerations

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Minister's Office Block B,
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Tel: 028 9076 5723
DOJ.MinistersOffice@justice-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: SUB-1010-2024

Your Ref:

Dear PAG members

15 February 2024

PRRB REMIT LETTER 2024/25

I am writing to inform you that I have issued the Department's remit letters to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) and the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) on 15 February 2024 and have asked them to initiate the pay round for 2024/25. A copy of the letters will be issued to you in due course.

On 7 December my officials invited you to put forward issues you wished to be considered for inclusion in the remit letter. In the interests of clarity, I am now writing to inform you why the following issues were not included in my request to the PRRB.

Consideration of allowances currently available to officers in England and Wales to PSNI officers including the introduction of Unsocial Hours Allowance.

The principle of broad alignment applies to police officer core pay and main allowances with that of officers in England and Wales. Regional variations apply for example the payment of Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance (NITA) is unique to Northern Ireland, and the unsocial hours allowance which applies to England and Wales. The Home Secretary's remit letter has asked the PRRB to assess the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) timetable for its upcoming review of allowances within Home Office forces.

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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Department of Justice officials will monitor progression of the intended review of allowances in England and Wales to determine any impact for officers in the PSNI. It is therefore not appropriate to refer this to the PRRB at this time.

On-Call Allowance

On-Call Allowance was included in the Department's Review of Allowances, upon which members were consulted. It is therefore not appropriate to refer this to the PRRB.

Additional discretionary bonuses for senior ranks

The Department has been asked to include '*parity of additional discretionary bonuses*' for senior ranks in its remit letter to the PRRB. Member inputs referred to the Competence Related Threshold Payments (CRTP) which are currently accessed by federated ranks, and Targeted Variable Payment (TVPs) as introduced in England and Wales have been cited as examples.

As with On-Call allowance, CRTP is included in the Department's Review of Allowances. It should be noted that CRTP was phased out in England and Wales between 2013 to 2016 on the recommendation of the PRRB, prior to which it extended only to the federated ranks.

TVPs were introduced in England and Wales in 2021 by Determination and extended after one year by the Home Secretary and were introduced as a temporary measure to address issues specific to some forces. To date, the PSNI has not assessed the need for these payments; however, officials understand that these payments will continue to be assessed and put forward for the NPCC's review of allowances.

As these allowances are under review in both Northern Ireland and England and Wales it would not be appropriate to refer these to the PRRB.

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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Implementation of 2023/24 recommendations, to include an increase to Chief Superintendents pay point 3 by £5,675 and a commitment to timely implementation of recommended pay awards in future reviews.

The Department maintains the principle of broad alignment of core pay with forces in England and Wales and each year officials work to progress where possible the recommendations of the PRRB. In the absence of the Northern Ireland Executive, however, the PRRB recommendations for 2023/24 were deferred until a decision on public sector pay could be made by the Executive. All stakeholders have had sight of the PRRB report and recommendations which will be progressed as soon as is possible. It would, therefore, not be appropriate to refer this matter back to the PRRB for consideration.

Introduction of payments for Rest Days and Public Holidays

The PRRB has considered this issue during previous pay rounds. The PRRB suggested in its report for 2020/21 that consideration should be given to this issue. My Department has engaged with the PSNI on this issue and await a response. It is, therefore, not appropriate to refer this to the PRRB.

An introduction of the 'retire and return scheme' as applied for officers in England and Wales under Home Office Regulations.

Police forces in England and Wales have the discretion to recruit retired officers. The Home Office has confirmed that there is no formal 'scheme' but note the guidance from the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) regarding the application of this discretion. The recruitment of retired officers is not provided for by Home Office Regulations or Determinations. Each force assesses the need, affordability, and benefit to that force of recruiting retired officers.

Should the PSNI Chief Constable seek to consider the recruitment of previously retired officers, the Department will engage with PSNI and NIPB colleagues to ensure that any proposals meet with the requirements of existing Northern Ireland legislation. As this

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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



would be a matter for the PSNI to consider in the first instance, it is not appropriate to refer this matter to the PRRB.

An increase in annual leave entitlement

A request to include an increase to annual leave entitlement was put to the Department, citing links to changes in the police pension scheme. Public sector pensions are the responsibility of His Majesty's Treasury (HMT) and the Department of Finance (DoF) and changes have affected all public sector workers. This request has not been submitted to the PRRB by Home Office forces and, without any substantive supporting evidence, it is not appropriate that this is put to the PRRB at this time.

An increase in Maternity/Adoption pay from 18 weeks full pay to 26 weeks full pay

This issue has been discussed at Police Advisory Group (PAG) meetings. The Department has now received the outline business case for this from PSNI on 25 Jan 24, and it is currently being reviewed. It is, therefore, not appropriate to ask the PRRB to consider this issue.

Introduction of overtime payments or non-pensionable supplement for inspecting ranks.

This payment is not currently paid to Home Office forces, and they have confirmed that they have not received a similar request. Without substantive supporting evidence, it would not be appropriate to refer this to the PRRB.

Introduction of a Determination to facilitate annual incremental progression payments.

Stakeholders will be aware that the Department worked to progress incremental payments for 2023/24 through the requisite approvals process, which progressed for that year only. I will give further detailed consideration to this recommendation in due course, taking into account wider public sector implications. As this has already been subject to consideration by PRRB it would not be appropriate to refer this for further consideration at this time.

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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Should you have any queries relating these issues my officials will be happy to discuss them further with you.

I understand PRRB officials have contacted you with provisional dates for receipt of your written evidence and a timetable for oral evidence sessions. We are assured that confirmation will be issued shortly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Naomi R Long".

NAOMI LONG MLA
Minister of Justice

Please ensure that you quote our reference number in any future related correspondence.

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Appendix H – Correspondence from Justice Minister to PFNI re: Pay award and PRRB report

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



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Our Ref: INV-1020-2024

Liam Kelly
Chairman
Police Federation for Northern Ireland
Via email: chairman@policefedni.com

21 February 2024

Dear Liam,

Thank you for your letter of 8 February inviting me to attend and address your annual conference on 29 May.

Should circumstances allow, I would be happy to accept your kind invitation. As you will understand I am unable to confirm my attendance at this stage, but my office will advise if I am in a position to attend following receipt of your formal invitation.

Your letter refers to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) report and recommendations for 2023/24. I understand that while the PRRB has requested that their report remains in confidence until publication, I have been advised that PFNI officials met with Departmental officials on 9 October 2023 to view the report in confidence. I trust you found this helpful.

I wish to assure you that consideration of a pay award for all public sector workers is of the utmost importance for the Executive as a whole, and an award for PSNI officers is a

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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



priority decision within my remit as Justice Minister. Should the PSNI be able to confirm that the PRRB recommendations are affordable my officials will work with the PSNI to expedite pay remits through the requisite approvals process.

I look forward to working with the Federation and am happy to meet with you and your officials. Please contact my office at your convenience to arrange a suitable date and time.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Naomi Long".

NAOMI LONG MLA
Minister of Justice

Please ensure that you quote our reference number in any future related correspondence.

Appendix I – NI Remit Letter

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Minister's Office Block B,
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Our Ref: SUB-1010-2024

Zoë Billingham
Chair
Police Remuneration Review Body
Office of Manpower Economics
3rd Floor, Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
LONDON
SW1H 0TL
Via email: gabrielle.kann@businessandtrade.gov.uk

25 February 2024

Dear Zoë,

POLICE REMUNERATION REVIEW BODY REMIT FOR 2024/25

I would like to thank the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) for the work undertaken to support the 2023/24 pay process and for receipt of its ninth report for Northern Ireland.

It is regrettable that in the absence of a Northern Ireland Executive the Department has to date been unable to conclude the pay round for 2023/24. I wish to assure you that this is now a priority decision which I will give my full consideration to.

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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



However, this cannot delay considerations of the next pay round, and therefore I am writing to ask the PRRB to commence its annual review in respect of officers of the PSNI for 2024/25, in conjunction with that for police officers in England and Wales.

In line with the principle of broad alignment of PSNI officer pay with those in England and Wales, I ask you to formally commence the 2024/25 pay round and I refer to the PRRB the following matters:

- How to apply the pay award for 2024/25 for police officers in the PSNI up to and including chief superintending ranks;
- Consideration of the regular elements of the Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance and the Dog Handlers' Allowance.

While the Northern Ireland Public Sector Pay Policy has not been set for 2024/25, I would ask that the PRRB give careful consideration to the affordability position in Northern Ireland which will be set out in both written and oral evidence.

As in previous years, I would invite you to have regard to PRRB's standing terms of reference. We would welcome receipt of your tenth report and recommendations by the end of June 2024. I look forward to working with you and your members in support of the process for the year ahead.

Yours sincerely



NAOMI LONG MLA
Minister of Justice

Please ensure that you quote our reference number in any future related correspondence.

Appendix J – NPCC Joint Statement

Joint statement

This is a joint statement on behalf of the National Police Chiefs’ Council, Chief Police Officers’ Staff Association and the Superintendents’ Association of England & Wales, and Northern Ireland.

This year’s submission sets the direction and outlines the need for a wider review of the police pay structure, underpinned by the development of a longer-term work plan and people strategy for the service. It also focuses on immediate areas for action in relation to constable pay and the annual pay award to ensure policing attracts and retains the professional skills and leadership needed to take the service forward.

Policing remains a demanding and stressful occupation where individuals are exposed to high levels of threat and emotionally demanding situations. It is a profession that requires moral and physical courage. Most citizens will experience between three to four potentially traumatic events in their lifetime, whereas each police officer is likely to experience between 400 to 600 in their policing career.^[1] Exposure to traumatic incidents is high, with 1 in 10 officers reporting unarmed physical attacks from the public at least once a week.^[2] 18% of officers reported that they had required medical attention for injuries caused by work-related violence during the previous 12 months. The P-Factor purports to recognise, by way of remuneration, the unique nature of policing both in terms of the physical and emotional factors, but also the inability to withhold labour, increasingly used in other sectors as a lever for pay negotiation. It is estimated^[3] that in the year to May 2023 c3.9million working days were lost through industrial action fuelled by concern amongst public sector workers over real terms pay decline.

Police Officers were awarded a 7% consolidated pay rise from 1st September 2023 across all ranks as the main element of the pay award in response to the 2023 PRRB report. It is acknowledged this sought to balance issues of recruitment and retention necessary to maintain officer levels, a key government commitment, whilst recognising affordability. Although welcomed, in this year’s PRRB’s considerations this must be set against the context of inflation running at 6.7%,^[4] as well as the evidence presented last year of the real terms pay cut over the last decade (pay award v September cpi) of almost 17%. **This year’s submission therefore seeks a funded, above inflation pay award that is applied equally across all ranks, together with a recommendation for a longer-term strategy linked to a future multiyear settlement aligned to the next CSR that continues to reduce the real term pay cuts described above.**

The service has demonstrated its commitment to building the workforce, maintaining officer numbers, and improving workforce representation.^[5] The not unreasonable expectation from Government and the Home Office that the service will improve both efficiency and productivity on the back of the significant investment in policing needs to be tempered with the reality of a slowly maturing workforce where one in five officers are currently in training and 40% of the workforce having less than five years’ service. In the short term, the service needs to build the experience and expertise of the Uplift generation, whilst securing investment in the infrastructure and technologies which will maximise their productivity.

Across forces in England and Wales,^[6] officer numbers may be at their highest level but for individual forces and the system as a whole capacity remains below 2010 levels.^[7] When population growth is factored in, the growth in officers has not brought additional capacity and crime data finds that workload per officer exceeds 2010 levels. That said, the service also recognises that productivity gains in relation to the workforce can and must be made as articulated in the Police Productivity Review report^[8], through working in partnership, exploiting technology and sharing good practice.

Although pay has not previously featured high on the list of attraction drivers, the stark reality of the rising cost of living means it is becoming more important in relation to both recruitment and retention, with 86% of police officer reporting *feeling 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their basic pay* and 69% that they *worry about the state of their finances 'every day' or 'almost every day'*.^[9] There is also clear evidence of increasing numbers of police officers not joining the police pension scheme due to their personal financial circumstance. There remains a risk that if we do not adequately reward to a level that recognises individual and collective societal contribution, and allows a good standard of living, we increasingly limit our recruitment pool especially for those transitioning careers and will struggle to drive higher professional standards and rebuild public confidence.^[10]

The service is not self-funded and the ability to absorb additional cost pressures and invest in the areas that will drive efficiency is limited. Between 2010 and 2023, police funding increased by 23% compared to a 43% increase in inflation. The majority of the increase in grant funding in recent years has been to fund officer growth and therefore did not represent additional spending power. This said, the service is equally committed to improving the way it costs new burdens associated with; changes to legislation, standards, policies, and guidance, including recommendations and requirements made by inspectors and other regulatory bodies.

This year's submission again outlines the challenging financial position for the sector and the need for central funding to support the pay award. Although central funding (above 2.7%) was made available to forces for last year's award, funding was proportioned by grant, resulting in a shortfall in 18 forces, causing significant impact on local budgets, and a surplus in 25 forces. Should the same approach to allocating funding be applied for this year's pay award, additional targeted support for the worst affected forces will be required. **Affordability needs to consider not just the national context but pressure points in individual forces, both revenue and capital, which have been compounded by a centrally mandated workforce strategy with funding tied into police numbers.**

We would ask the PRRB and SSRB to make the appropriate recommendations on police pay to the Secretary of State and Prime Minister which take full account of the areas outlined, current and future economic conditions and which are fully funded.

^[1] Research Capture data on traumatic incidents, Avon and Somerset Police Federation, 2021

^[2] National Policing Wellbeing Survey, Oscar Kilo with the policing research unit at Durham University, www.oscarkilo.org.uk/resources/national-wellbeing-survey, 2022.

^[3] Resolution Foundation

^[4] September 2023 Bank of England data

^[5] Excludes PSNI and Police Scotland.

^[7] As of 31 March 2023, there were 233,832 FTE police workers (including officers, staff, designated officers and PCSOs), compared to 244,497 FTE in March 2010.

^[8] Policing Productivity Review (accessible) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

^[9] Based on respondents to the 2022 Wellbeing Survey.

^[10] To note PSNI have not implemented the recommended 2023 pay award.

Appendix K - PFEW economic data³⁶

Methodology to estimate the real terms drop in police officers pay due to inflation.



12.1. Methodology to estimate the real terms drop in police officers pay due to inflation

The Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) inflation was used to estimate the average real terms pay decline per pay point for the federated ranks between September 2010 and December 2023.²⁷

The real terms drop in pay due to inflation was estimated for all the ranks/pay points²⁸:

For our real pay estimates we covered the period between September 2010 and December 2023. First, the real pay decline per rank for September each year (or when a pay change took place sometimes in April, and for the last period, December 2022) in relation to the previous period.

The real terms drop in pay due to inflation for each date was estimated using the following formulas:

Formulas:

- A) $\text{Real pay value per period} = \text{pay} + (\text{pay} * \text{real pay change (\%)})$
- B) $\text{Real pay change (\%)} = \text{pay increase (\%)} - \text{inflation rate (\%)}$.

This will give us the corresponding real pay value on each date between September 2011 and December 2023 in relation to the previous period. Note that each time the next figure was estimated based on the previous real pay estimate in order to take into account the previous year pay increase plus the inflation rate, as to keep track of the changes in the value of pay for each year.

Then, we calculated the cumulative change between December 2023 real pay and September 2010 pay. This gave us the cumulative real terms pay cut up between September 2010 and December 2023.

²⁷ [Consumer price inflation tables - Office for National Statistics](#)

²⁸ [Police officers' pay sources: A three multi-year pay settlement for police officers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\); Amendments to determinations 1 April 2014.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\); amendments to determinations \(publishing.service.gov.uk\); Police Remuneration Review Body reports - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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The cumulative real terms pay cut between September 2010 and December 2023 was estimated using the real pay value estimated above and the following formula:

Formula:

C) Cumulative real pay change between September 2010 and December 2023 (%) = (December 2023 real pay – September 2010 pay) / September 2010 pay.

We estimated the cumulative real terms pay cut for each federated rank per pay point.

Then, we estimated the simple average (mean) of the real terms pay cut per rank between September 2010 and December 2023. The simple average (mean) for each rank was estimated by adding the estimated real terms drop in Police Officer's pay due to the CPIH inflation since September 2010 (as of December 2023) per pay point per rank, and by dividing this total by the total number of pay points per rank.

Then, we estimated the weighted average of the real terms pay cut for the federated ranks between September 2010 and December 2023. The federated ranks weighted average is calculated by multiplying each rank simple average (mean) pay by the number of Police Officers per rank taken from the Pay Census 2022-23, which is then added and divided by the total number of Police Officers at the federated ranks taken from the Pay Census 2022- 23.²⁹

The formulas are best illustrated in the following examples.

First, we estimated the cumulative real pay estimates per pay point as follows:

²⁹ The Home Office collect a pay census each year, from each force's payroll, which evidences the earnings of all police officers, and is shared with the Police Federation of England and Wales.

Table 4: Constables' pay point 7 cumulative real pay estimates using Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) inflation – Base year: September 2010 (September 2010 = 100)

Date	Pay point 7	CPIH Index	Pay point 7 % cash increase	CPIH inflation	Diff. cash increase & CPIH	Cumulative real terms value	Cumulative % change
01-Sep-09	£ 35,610	88.3				£ 35,610	
01-Sep-10	£ 36,519	90.4	2.6%	2.4%	0.2%	£ 36,519	
01-Sep-11	£ 36,519	94.5	0.0%	4.5%	-4.5%	£ 34,863	-4.5%
01-Sep-12	£ 36,519	96.4	0.0%	2.0%	-2.0%	£ 34,162	-6.5%
01-Apr-13	£ 36,519	98	0.0%	1.7%	-1.7%	£ 33,595	-8.0%
01-Sep-13	£ 36,885	98.7	1.0%	0.7%	0.3%	£ 33,692	-7.7%
01-Sep-14	£ 37,254	100	1.0%	1.3%	-0.3%	£ 33,585	-8.0%
01-Sep-15	£ 37,626	100.2	1.0%	0.2%	0.8%	£ 33,853	-7.3%
01-Sep-16	£ 38,001	101.5	1.0%	1.3%	-0.3%	£ 33,751	-7.6%
01-Sep-17	£ 38,382	104.3	1.0%	2.8%	-1.8%	£ 33,158	-9.2%
01-Sep-18	£ 39,150	106.6	2.0%	2.2%	-0.2%	£ 33,091	-9.4%
01-Sep-19	£ 40,128	108.4	2.5%	1.7%	0.8%	£ 33,359	-8.7%
01-Sep-20	£ 41,130	109.2	2.5%	0.7%	1.8%	£ 33,946	-7.0%
01-Sep-21	£ 41,130	112.4	0.0%	2.9%	-2.9%	£ 32,951	-9.8%
01-Sep-22	£ 43,032	122.3	4.6%	8.8%	-4.2%	£ 31,573	-13.5%
01-Sep-23	£ 46,044	130.1	7.0%	6.4%	0.6%	£ 31,769	-13.0%
01-Dec-23	£ 46,044	130.5	0.0%	0.3%	-0.3%	£ 31,671	-13.3%

After calculating real pay per pay point for all the federated ranks, we estimated the simple average (mean) of the real terms pay cut per rank between September 2010 and December 2023 as follows:

Table 5: Constables' cumulative real pay decline using Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) inflation since September 2010 (as of December 2023)

Constables	Cumulative % change since September 2010 (as of December 2023)
Bottom pay point (now pay point 1)	-23.4%
Pay point 2	-25.5%
Pay point 3	-27.0%
pay point 4	-26.5%
Pay point 5	-23.3%
pay point 6	-14.7%
Pay point 7	-13.3%
Average (mean):	-22.0%

Then, we estimated the federated ranks weighted average of the real terms pay cut per rank Between September 2010 and December 2023 as follows:



Table 6: Federated ranks' cumulative real pay decline using Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) inflation since September 2010 (as of December 2023)

Federated ranks	Cumulative % change since September 2010 (as of December 2023)	Number of Police Officers per rank - Pay Census 2022-23	Weighted average
Constables' average (mean)	-22.0%	95,622	-17.9%
Sergeants' average (mean)	-11.6%	16,000	-1.6%
Inspectors' average (mean)	-14.3%	4,632	-0.6%
Chief Inspectors' average (mean)	-14.6%	1,278	-0.2%
Federated ranks weighted average		117,532	-20.2%