Unitary Board Meeting Minutes

Date and time: Wednesday 13 May at 10:30hrs

Venue: Canary Wharf and virtually via Microsoft Teams

Members Present:

Rachel Watson	Director General/Chair
Steve Noonan	Deputy Director General, Investigations, Oversight & Casework
David Cryer	Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Christine Elliott	Non-Executive Director
Suzanne Jacob	Non-Executive Director
Andy Johnson	Director of Strategy, Policy and Impact
Rommel Moseley	Non-Executive Director
Julia Mulligan	Senior Independent Director
Clive Quantrill	Non-Executive Director

In Attendance:

David Emery	General Counsel
Chris Felton	Head of Home Office Sponsorship Unit, Home Office
Misha Upadhyaya	Chief of Staff
Penny Finch	Governance Manager
Sascha Kiess	Head of Service Design and Improvement (Item 10)
Florence Agyei	Director of People and Change (Item 11)
Craig Wagstaffe	Risk and Audit Officer (Item 12)

UB 05/26/01 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting commenced at 10.30hrs and was quorate. The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting, including Chris Felton, the Head of the Home Office Sponsorship Unit, joining the Board.

UB 05/26/02 APOLOGIES

None received from board members.
Rob Barnes, Director of Transformation, sent apologies to the Board for UB 05/26/09 Transformation report.

UB 05/26/03 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Suzanne Jacob is a participant in the review of the Metropolitan Police Service alongside Gillian Fairfield. This work commenced in January 2026 and will continue through to the summer.

Julia Mulligan has been appointed to the Police Leadership Commission. The Commission is tasked with assessing current leadership capabilities and challenges in policing and making recommendations for changes. Julia also discloses interests as the Chair of the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS).

UB 05/26/04 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2026 were reviewed by the Board. Subject to a typing correction in UB 03/26/03, the minutes were approved.

Action: David Cryer to revisit the wording of Risk 29 and provide an update to members.

UB 05/26/05 MATTERS ARISING/ACTION LOG

The Board reviewed and provided updates for the outstanding actions, and the following were noted:

- Action 18: Misha Upadhyaya confirmed that the Transformation update in July will include reference to and consideration of AI Governance proposals.

UB 05/26/06 DIRECTOR GENERAL UPDATE

The Director General shared updates with the Board on high-profile priorities. The Board discussed the Director General's evidence to the Nottingham Inquiry on 15 April, reflecting that the IOPC's openness about previous failures and willingness to learn difficult lessons had been positively received. The Board praised the legal team's preparation and supported the creation of a small inquiry team for future requests. Members agreed the organisation's willingness to learn lessons and account publicly for mistakes had led to productive outcomes and improved victims' experiences.

Christine Elliott updated members on a recent Policy Exchange event about Nottingham, where systemic and policy changes in the criminal justice and health systems were discussed. The Board noted that accountability across the criminal justice system remains a significant challenge, of which the IOPC is only one part. The Director General advised the Board that the IOPC continues to engage the Home Office on reforms to the police accountability system set out in the White Paper, particularly the wider system review agreed by the Home Secretary. The Board noted the shared interest with wider police leadership in improving the system. Steve Noonan, Andy Johnson and the Director General recently met the new NPCC Conduct Lead who is keen to work with the IOPC in engaging Government to progress these measures at pace.

The Director General recently wrote to Sarah Jones MP regarding commencement of provisions in the Crime and Policing Act 2026. The Board noted the IOPC's strong support for the measures, including changes proposed by the organisation to improve efficiency and proportionality, and recognised that implementation will require staff training and revised guidance.

The Board was informed that Ofcom upheld two IOPC complaints against the BBC relating to the November 2024 Panorama broadcast on the killing of Chris Kaba. Although the BBC accepted breaches of editorial standards, it refused a public apology despite evidence of significant reputational damage. The Board welcomed Ofcom's decision and agreed to write to the Chair of the BBC.

The Director General discussed the continued challenging budget position and confirmed that Management Board is aligning the Medium-Term Financial Plan to strategic objectives. The Board noted that restructuring measures affecting Transformation, Engagement, Policy and People had been shared with staff and welcomed the transparent communication and engagement with PCS. The Director General has written to the Permanent Secretary and will continue discussions with the Home Office about the budget allocation and delayed exits. The Board also discussed Operation Beaconport, which will review group-based child sexual abuse and exploitation cases where no further action was taken, and supported the Director General to write to the Home Office regarding additional funding for Operation Beaconport.

Action: The Director General to write to the Chair of the BBC in light of Ofcom's decision.

UB 05/26/07 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Steve Noonan presented the circulated performance paper to the Board. The Board noted that all end of year KPIs for 2025/26 had been met against a context of senior leadership restructuring, national transformation and the highest demand on record. Board members praised the exceptional performance of the teams, thanking both the team members and leaders in enabling this successful year throughout IOC.

The Board heard that the Assessment Unit continues to perform strongly, maintaining a two working day turnaround despite 600 referrals in April, a 4 per cent increase. Casework remains modelled to manage demand at 290 cases, with remodelling required should demand exceed 300. The Board also noted that average review times had reduced from 167 days to 67 days, with further improvement expected through increased productivity and the future benefits of AI.

The Board noted that revised Customer Contact Centre opening hours had already improved the team's ability to respond to rising online demand. Steve confirmed that the revised opening hours are likely to remain in place and welcomed the offer to connect with Crimestoppers UK to share learning on call handling and technology adoption.

The Board also discussed the reduction in mandatory training completion to 79 per cent and was advised that this largely reflected accreditation requirements and the position of colleagues on long-term sickness absence. Assurance was provided that this is actively under review and will continue to be monitored at Management Board.

The Board noted questions raised regarding the 12 month and 6 month KPI targets. Steve advised members that there is greater scope to influence the 12 month measure, whereas the 6 month target is constrained by older cases carried over from the previous year, making this a stabilisation year.

In further discussion, the Board considered the extent to which improvements reflected transformation or increased productivity. Steve advised that the balance differed across functions but highlighted the importance of recent senior leadership changes. Non-Executive members also reflected positively on the impact seen during the recent Sale office visit. Members discussed the need for contingency through succession planning, workforce planning and sustaining case closure rates, while noting that some post-final caseload remains dependent on external action.

UB 05/26/08 RESOURCES REPORT

David Cryer presented the resources paper to the Board, highlighting the previous year's financial outcomes, which included an overspend in the main budget and an underspend in capital. The Board noted ongoing efforts to improve forecasting and financial control, aiming for greater stability in future reporting. A key concern raised by members was the insufficiency of the current cash allocation from the Home Office in the current year. Discussions with the Home Office are ongoing to address this issue and continue to lobby for an increase in the IOPC's allocation.

Board members also discussed changes to the financial authority policy, receiving assurance that very few approvals are expected at present. The Board agreed that centralising approvals is necessary for audit compliance and financial discipline and are content with the agreed measures.

Board members sought assurance on the recurring operating pressures, noting that the majority of costs are people-related, with the remainder tied to long-term contracts for technology and office space. Members heard that confirmed that the arrangements are tight but credible, with a three-year plan in place by Management Board to maintain close control and oversight of these areas. The Board approved the updated allocations and interim changes to the financial authority policy.

The Board also discussed achieving value for money in accommodation bookings, with the Board considering alternatives to the official provider if they can demonstrate cost savings. Executive members will continue to consider viable options for the most achievable VFM outcomes.

UB 05/26/09 UPDATE ON BUSINESS PLAN

Andy Johnson presented the Business Plan and Corporate Strategy to the meeting.

The Board reviewed the Business Plan and Corporate Strategy, focusing on the alignment with the Transformation programme and the need for updated strategic direction. Recent changes to the Business Plan included: clarifying the metrics for improved service user experiences; adding a measure for self-disclosure of disability within the People KPIs; and updating the learning KPI to use stakeholder survey data.

Andy shared recent Home Office feedback with the Board, which included requests for an efficiency KPI, a baseline for learning, and ideas for reducing the demand for reviews. The baseline for learning was confirmed as 56%, and ongoing projects with police forces and oversight teams were highlighted as ways to address review demand.

The Corporate Strategy has been developed to directly align to the transformation programme and Board members were pleased to see the parallels. The Board discussed the need for an Equality Impact Assessment, the importance of clear terminology (such as "trusted" and "value"), and the inclusion of a graphic to clarify the operating model for stakeholders. The strategy was noted to have a two-year horizon, and members considered whether it was sufficiently forward-looking, especially regarding upcoming legislative changes and the balance between timeliness and quality in performance metrics. The board also discussed the need to emphasise prioritisation of independent investigations that are IOPC-led.

Andy agreed to update the documents based on the feedback from members, including clarifying terminology, adding forward-looking elements, and ensuring alignment with the business plan. The Board also acknowledged the need for ministerial approval before publication, noting that previous Business Plans for 2024-25 and 2025-26 have not been published due to awaiting Home Office approval.

Board members committed to sending the updated documents to the Home Office and seeking approval as soon as possible, aiming for publication before the year end.

Action: Andy Johnson to update the Corporate Strategy and Business Plan based on board feedback and send to the Home Office for ministerial approval.

UB 05/26/10 TRANSFORMATION

Sascha Kiess joined the meeting and Misha Upadhyaya presented the circulated paper to the Board.

Board members were updated on phase two progress, noting a 42% increase in casework productivity and the introduction of new quality and people measures, with tracking to be included as part of a dashboard from July 2026. The Board discussed the 'amber' programme status and received assurance that this is due to dependencies primarily on financial planning and resources – which are both in hand.

Members observed that the transition from consultant-supported transformation to internal ownership has been smoother than in many organisations, and emphasised the importance of sustaining continuous improvement beyond the formal programme. Plans for a board workshop to support this transition were welcomed.

Board members highlighted key milestones, including the CPD launch in investigations, process improvements in casework, and PIP 2 programme development as particular highlights. The need to embed transformation capabilities within permanent teams, clarify operational ownership, and avoid reliance on singular Transformation programme structures was raised. Board members stressed the importance of adaptability, to respond to future legislative changes, prioritise the service user experience, while sustaining operational effectiveness.

The Board agreed to monitor interdependencies, resource allocation, and the transition to a steady state in future reports, with a further discussion planned for the upcoming Board away day to continue to support transformation lasting long after the programme has concluded.

Action: Rob Barnes, Director of Transformation, to organise a workshop for the Board about sustaining transformation post-programme.

UB 05/26/11 STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLAN

Florence Agyei joined the meeting and presented the Strategic Workforce Plan to the Board. The Board discussed the aims of the plan: to ensure the organisation has the right capacity, capability, and flexibility to meet our transformation goals. The Board received assurance that updates to the plan (alignment with the Business Plan and Corporate Strategy, and a growing focus on data-driven insights) are moving to produce improved measures, though challenges remain in obtaining accurate, timely data from IOPC systems.

Florence emphasised to the Board that the plan is structured around four pillars: developing a high-performing culture; becoming an employer of choice; achieving equity, diversity and inclusion; and preparing for the future (including digital, AI, and leadership skills).

Board members questioned the confidence in the projected timeline and the reliability of data quality, suggesting a modular approach would be a preferable way to deliver recommendations as the data becomes available, rather than waiting for full data completion. Members emphasised the importance of visible milestones and integrating workforce planning with the broader people strategy.

Members discussed public perceptions and the proportion of ex-police officers in the staff body, noting the need for accurate data to inform workforce balance and independence. Board members suggested this information could be useful for communications and encouraged this reporting to be made available in future.

The Board supported the progress made in the plan, acknowledging the resource and data challenges, and encouraged actionable modules and milestones to avoid delays. The Strategic Workforce Plan will continue to evolve as more data is collected and systems improve, with further updates expected to return to the Board later in the year.

UB 05/26/12 STRATEGIC RISK REVIEW

Craig Wagstaffe joined the meeting and David Cryer presented the circulated paper to the Board. The Board reviewed the strategic risk register, with time spent discussing how to maintain momentum in the management of transformation, political, and organisational risks, and the impact of AI on the IOPC's digital security.

Board members noted that increasing demand is a root cause for many of the strategic risks, and transformation is currently specified as the main mitigation strategy. The crucial alignment between risk controls and transformation progress was emphasised. The Board discussed the challenge of managing expectations, especially in high-profile cases where the IOPC cannot deliver outcomes sought by service users due to legal constraints. Effective communication and direct engagement with service users were identified as important mitigations.

Members were assured to hear that updated risk mitigations will continue to reflect improved direct engagement and trauma-informed approaches, noting that recent changes in this area would likely improve service user experience.

Action: Executive Board members agreed to revisit risk mitigations to ensure they reflect current practices and improvements.

UB 05/26/13 ANNUAL CORPORATE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS REVIEW

David Cryer spoke to the circulated paper and annexes. Board members reviewed and agreed the proposed changes to the corporate governance documents, including the scheme of delegation and terms of reference.

The Board formally approved the following Governance documents for 2026-27: Standing Orders, Code of Practice, Scheme of Delegation and Unitary Board Terms of Reference.

UB 05/26/14 BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE

The Board meeting attendance was accepted as an accurate record.

UB 05/26/15 FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan was reviewed and accepted.
An updated Forward Plan to align with the business plan will be developed over the next few weeks and circulated to members in advance of the next meeting.

Action: David Cryer and Penny Finch to revise Forward Plan and circulate.

UB 05/26/16 DATES, TIMES AND LOCATIONS OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Board confirmed that they were content with future meeting dates as outlined in the paper. An updated list of office visit dates will be circulated to Non-Executive Directors following the meeting.

UB 05/26/17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business.

UB 05/26/18 MEETING REFLECTION

Christine Elliott led the meeting reflection. Christine observed the positively evolving dynamics of the Board, particularly in the context of organisational transformation and how the Board functioned twelve months ago. Christine observed that non-executive directors were now engaging in more targeted and incisive questioning, signalling a shift toward greater accountability and strategic focus. Christine also noted a marked increase in executive participation, with executive members empowered to challenge viewpoints, an indication that the Board continues to move forwards as a genuinely collaborative environment.

Christine reflected that considerable time was spent today reiterating the value of embedding transformation successfully, and Board members have more to do to realise this at the strategic level. Each Board member must remain willing to reflect on and adapt their own contributions. The Board’s openness to new ways of working, and its ability to foster a culture where both non-executive and executive voices are equally valued, is foundational to driving transformation throughout the organisation. Christine underscored that the Board’s own transformation, (in its approach and interactions) is both a catalyst and a prerequisite for wider organisational change, setting the tone for continuous improvement and embedding value at every level.

Close

The Chair thanked the Board and closed the meeting at 13.27.

Name	Rachel Watson
Signature	
Date	8 July 2026