

Unitary Board

Date & Time: Wednesday 12 November at 10:30hrs

Venue: Canary Wharf

Members Present:

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

In Attendance:

Florence Agyei	Director of People and Change
Rob Barnes	Director of Transformation (Item 9)
David Emery	General Counsel
Elinor Howard	Home Office
Lindsay Harvey	Strategy Unit Manager (Item 12)
Keeley Jacques	EA to the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Andrew Johnson	Interim Director of Strategy Policy & Impact (Items 11 and 12)
Misha Upadhyaya	Chief of Staff
Peggy Walters	Deputy Director of Communications and Engagement (Item 10)
Heather Whitver	Head of Finance (Item 13)

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting commenced at 10:30hrs and was quorate. The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting, specifically Florence Agyei who has started her role as Director of People and Change.

2. APOLOGIES

Jodie Gibson, Home Office

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Julia Mulligan is the Chair of the Gangmaster and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) and Chair of the North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

Suzanne Jacob is currently working as an associate with a consultancy firm, which is conducting Phase 2 of the review for the London Policing Board. At present, no conflicts of interest have been identified; however, this information is being shared to ensure Board Members are appropriately informed.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 10 September 2025 were reviewed and approved as an accurate record and can now be published.

5. MATTERS ARISING/ACTION LOG

The Board reviewed the Action log (UB 11/25/05) and the following updates were noted:

- Action 7 – NED engagement – David Cryer has requested that the Non-Executive Directors review the document circulated by Keeley Jacques and ensure their availability is updated on the spreadsheet to facilitate planning and arrangements.
- Actions 15 and 16 – Quality Committee discussions – Rommel Moseley confirmed that these actions have been completed, and the relevant meetings and discussions have taken place.
- Action 14 – Although this item is currently marked as closed, a Board Member noted that, while it was discussed at the Performance and Finance Committee meeting, clarification is needed regarding plans to update the Board. It was agreed that this will be incorporated into the Transformation Update at the next Board meeting.

Action: Include AI Governance in the Transformation Update for the next upcoming Board meeting. (RB action owner)

Action: Keeley Jacques to review previous action items to confirm that any actions relating to Christine have been completed.

6. DIRECTOR GENERAL UPDATE

The Director General presented her report and highlighted:

- Operation Westby demonstrated the effectiveness of the new national model, enabling rapid response to a high-profile case. Despite success, concerns arose about reputational risk and public confidence, particularly regarding officers suspended on full pay or remaining in post. The team acted swiftly after the Panorama documentary, completing misconduct severity assessments and submitting accelerated hearing requests within hours. All procedures were finalised within a week, allowing the MPS to proceed.
- Operation Keasden further showcased the model's ability to prioritise resources and make rapid decisions, earning praise from a Chief Constable for professionalism and pace.
- The IOPC faces ongoing challenges, including complaints from Nottinghamshire families and upcoming cases such as the Martin Blake misconduct hearing, which may be affected by legal changes. These pressures highlight the need for sustained cultural improvement and full transformation.

- The Board noted a positive meeting with Policing Minister Sarah Jones, who supports IOPC's transformation and user-focused performance. A follow-up letter will be circulated. **Action:** MU to share letter from the Minister.

The Board welcomed the proportionate approach and staff engagement, attributing improvements to a clearly communicated risk appetite. Staff felt supported to take necessary risks. Attendance at the Management Board drop in sessions has improved, with greater positivity.

David Emery updated on PCS discussions regarding a Judicial Review, noting a shift in tone. The next Staff Survey is due on an 18-month cycle, with interim pulse surveys planned.

7. PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Deputy Director General of Investigations, Oversight & Casework presented report UB 11/25/07. Key points:

- Referral volumes are rising; November projections indicate more cases will open than close in-month.
- Assessment Unit timeliness is strong at 4.7 days despite 113 additional referrals.
- October was particularly busy due to Operation Westby, Operation Keasden, and the national model launch (6 Oct), with 45 new cases opened.
- New reviews exceeded closed ones for the first time since January, driven by legislative changes.
- KPIs show improved case resolution times; October demonstrated strong progress. Temporary dips are expected but offset by November closures, keeping targets on track.

The Board noted delays in cohort recruitment due to financial constraints. The January trainee intake is postponed to April 2026, with internal recruitment starting June and external hiring later. An away day for Investigation Managers and Team Leaders is planned to reinforce accountability and performance.

Members stressed addressing cultural and morale challenges to ensure alignment with transformation goals. Concerns about burnout in the legal team following a shift in legal risk appetite from cautious to moderate were raised, with emphasis on strong risk mitigation. The Board agreed to review past cases to foster learning and improve processes.

Monitoring demand and exploring predictive capabilities were discussed. Members agreed artificial intelligence could enhance this work. Annual demand statistics are produced, and trend reviews will follow the current busy period to inform performance reporting and provide historical context for in-year KPIs.

8. RESOURCES REPORT

The Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented paper UB 11/25/08, outlining financial results to September 2025:

- The organisation is forecasting an overspend of £1.94m.
- The Director General will meet the Permanent Secretary this week; the Home Office has been briefed. The increase reflects lower turnover, and further savings are required.
- All NEDs, Executives, and the Home Office have been updated on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP),. The plan will move from three scenarios to one consolidated scenario.
- No additional funding is expected; any received would go to Investigations and Casework, though a funding decrease is more likely.
- Sensitivity analysis, based on Board input, considered lower turnover and pay rise scenarios. These figures now form planning assumptions agreed with the Home Office and IOPC.

The IOPC is increasing frontline resource allocation from 63% to 71% as part of the three-year plan. Success metrics are not yet aligned with performance trajectory. Potential changes include reducing headcount and introducing AI support for forecasting, policy, and HR, followed by a staffing review post-implementation.

The Board reviewed key areas under the MTFP. Next steps include gathering feedback, consolidating it into a cohesive plan, and developing a business plan for next year alongside a 2–3-year transformation plan.

A Board Member stressed the need to monitor legislative changes that could impact operations. Historically, such changes were noted but not addressed promptly. It was **agreed** to consider including this as an agenda item for timely discussion and action.

9. TRANSFORMATION REPORT

Director of Transformation, Rob Barnes, presented paper UB 11/25/09, outlining progress in phase two of the Transformation Programme:

- The programme rating moved to red due to resource issues across several projects posing delivery risks. Most challenges have now been resolved, returning the rating to amber. These issues can be managed at project level.
- The stakeholder management system is live, giving the engagement team a robust case management platform comparable to operations, enabling better cross-cutting work with IOPC data.
- Proof-of-concept pilots using MS Copilot for executive support, research, and oversight are underway, alongside the rollout of Copilot Chat for all staff.
- The programme launched successfully in summer, receiving excellent feedback and strong attendance.

- Detailed planning for 2026/27 is progressing, aligned with Lindsay Harvey's Business Plan work. The critical path to December's Transformation Assurance Group and Management Board is emerging, integrating benefits plans and delivery.

The circulated programme plan contained an error; a corrected version will follow.

Action: RB to circulate updated plan.

Initial assessments suggested the proposed programme could deliver a 30% productivity increase in investigations and 25% improvement in reviews. Further trial data will provide assurance on the achievable outcomes. Focus is now shifting from productivity to defining quality benefits for Investigations, Oversight, and Casework, with input from user panels and the Quality team.

The next quarterly in-person sessions in November will feature interactive workshops on proportionality beyond operations, understanding AI, and responding to the staff survey. Future sessions will incorporate updates on the 26/27 Business plan, reinforce achievements, next steps, and staff impact.

The team will work with the Leadership Forum to position leaders as transformation champions. Upcoming efforts will focus on team-level discussions supported by tools and guidance.

Board members welcomed progress and look forward to further updates.

10. COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Deputy Director General (Strategy, Engagement and Communications), Kathie Cashell, introduced Peggy Walters, Deputy Director of Communications and Engagement, who presented paper UB 11/25/10 and highlighted to the Board:

- The team delivers a high volume of activity, but measurable impact is inconsistent. Operational issues dominate due to the public and high-profile nature of work, resulting in a reactive approach. Proactive campaigns to build brand recognition and explain the IOPC's role have been limited, mainly due to insufficient planning and lack of clear position statements.
- A cultural shift toward collaboration and resource sharing is underway, including using digital channels to amplify media efforts and strengthen brand awareness.

The Board heard that the team now works closely with the Director of Engagement on initiatives such as Operation Westby, and Operation Keasden, demonstrating transformation benefits and enabling faster delivery.

Board members were informed that coordination with the Policy Team ensures cohesive messaging across presentations, media, and speaking engagements, supporting leadership visibility and influence. A current case study involves Clare's Law and Good Morning Britain has invited the IOPC for an interview in mid-November. The Board heard how this reflects a shift toward targeted, proactive media engagement to build awareness and public confidence.

Complaint statistics are produced but have been underused to date. Plans to be more proactive include issuing a press release for the latest edition and creating a flagship publication with integrated analysis, positioning the IOPC as a leading source for

journalists. The new Communications and Engagement strategy aims to future-proof the IOPC by positioning it and its leadership as integral to British society, building resilience against political and economic shocks while growing brand awareness, reach, and engagement. Timelines and actions are detailed in the paper.

Board Members agreed to add a detailed discussion of the communications strategy to the next Board Away Day agenda.

11. NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

Deputy Director General (Strategy, Engagement and Communications) Kathie Cashell introduced the item, with Andy Johnson, Interim Director of Strategy, Policy and Impact, presenting paper UB 11/25/11.

Board Members felt the current strategy did not align with the transformation programme or organisational direction. Feedback has been incorporated into a proposed new strategy and vision focused on improving the police complaints system to build trust and confidence.

The Board were invited to consider two mission options: one emphasising independence and another user confidence. Objectives have been revised to align with transformation, with a fourth added for communications and engagement following discussions led by Kathie Cashell and Peggy Walters. Board members considered that the new strategy will align with the Transformation Programme timeline to March 2028.

The proposed three-year strategic plan was discussed, and Board Members were invited to review options and provide feedback on the vision, mission, and objectives.

Key points raised by the Board included:

- The vision states “being an effective complaints system,” while objectives use “a brilliant service.” This ambition needs clarity and consistency about whether we are striving for ‘effective’ or ‘brilliant’.
- The fourth ‘additional’ objective should be more concise and clearly articulated.
- Missions should explicitly address people with less trust in policing and where the IOPC shares responsibility for closing that gap.
- Consider referencing staff expectations to support aligning goals and behaviours.
- Independence should sit under “effective complaints system.”
- Include detail on using data for harm prevention, line management, and technology’s enabling role.
- Indicate pace of change as an important characteristic.

The Board welcomed the next steps as presented by the team to incorporate feedback and engage staff from the wider organisation. The Board’s feedback was acknowledged and the strategy will be reviewed to ensure what is “effective” feels sufficiently ambitious for the organisation.

12. BUSINESS PLAN 26-27 (PAPER REF UB 11/25/11)

Deputy Director General (Strategy, Engagement and Communications) Kathie Cashell introduced the item, noting the Medium-Term Financial Plan had been considered alongside the Transformation update.

Critical and important priorities were presented to the Board, including one priority deemed both *critical* and *important*, reflecting previous feedback. This iteration of the strategy is more directive, with work underway to specify actions for the phase one implementation. Proposed actions were detailed in the annex.

Board Members were invited to agree the priorities and comment on alignment with expectations for the business plan.

The discussion focused on language, particularly around psychological safety and political matters. Members noted references to the Fairfield review and suggested these priorities should reflect the current and planned activity. Productivity was highlighted as a critical priority, covering both time and cost. Concerns were raised by the Board that positioning “quality” at the bottom of the paper implies lesser importance; it was agreed quality should be linked with productivity to reflect its significance.

The Board reflected that the ambitions needed clearer wording to express intent, including system-led corporate functions, innovation, timeliness, and accountability. The KPIs and targets were reviewed and the Board proposed the following suggestions:

- Under “A Brilliant Service,” include “digital” as a key lever.
- Suzanne Jacob will propose alternative wording for page 90 (**Action:** Suzanne to email Andy Johnson).
- Clarification is required on slide 7 regarding the KPI on employer perceptions and its ability to demonstrate the improvements outlined.
- EDI ambitions need clearer articulation and alignment with existing strategies and retention plans.
- Add KPI to track completed cases (it was **agreed** for this metric to be added).

The Board **agreed** that the new strategic period will run until March 2028, aligned with the Transformation programme. A consolidated plan will be reviewed by the Board in January with a draft business plan and KPIs included. By March, confirmation of Scenario 1 in the Medium Term Financial Plan will shape the final plan. Engagement with Heads of functions and Board members will refine deliverables and clarify what will not proceed if Scenario 1 does not occur.

13. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

The Annual Report and Accounts were presented to the Board by the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources, the Board was updated on the intention to finalise the accounts before Christmas, with the statutory deadline at the end of January.

An Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) meeting is scheduled for 17th November which will be an opportunity to review the paper and the Board **agreed** for Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) to approve the final wording of the report.

It was noted that Heather Whitver, Head of Finance, has done a significant job in resolving issues with payroll data and our technical accounting of leases. The Board expressed appreciation for Heather's efforts in addressing these issues.

14. UPDATES FROM UNITARY BOARD COMMITTEES:

PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Julia Mulligan noted that several matters have been addressed during the course of this meeting, expressing thanks to Steve Noonan for his significant efforts. The quality of discussions during the Committee meetings has been excellent, and the opportunity to have attendees from his area of the business has provided valuable, granular insight into operational matters.

PEOPLE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

Christine Elliott advised that the main feedback from the People and Culture Committee, reinforced by observations during this meeting, relates to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Equality Impact Assessments (EIA). There are challenges in embedding EDI consistently across the organisation, with some areas demonstrating stronger progress than others. Recent recruitment rounds highlighted issues around language and other factors that require review to avoid unintentionally alienating candidates and to ensure inclusivity. Lessons should be drawn from colleagues' experiences, and it was noted that geographical factors may also influence outcomes, given variations in recruitment pools. This is a complex area that requires greater attention.

15. BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE

The Board meeting attendance report was considered accurate and noted.

16. FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan was discussed addressed and highlighted the below:

- Annual review of Code of Practice and Annual review of Governance Documents (Standing orders, scheme of delegation) shows that it was presented in July however this did not take place. It was **agreed** that needs to be updated on the Forward Plan.
- In relation to a comment about AI Governance, this will be incorporated into the Transformation paper and will include the plans for the rollout of AI.

17. DATES, TIMES AND LOCATIONS OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) meeting scheduled for 27th January 2026 is currently listed as an online session. It was **agreed** that this should be amended to an in-person meeting, subject to availability.

Board Members were invited to check their availability for the proposed Unitary Board away day date, 17 June 2026, and inform the Governance team by email if this date is suitable.

It was noted that the terms of Rommel Moseley and Christine Elliott will conclude in February, and Rachel Watson will be engaging with ministers to address this matter.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

19. MEETING REFLECTION

Clive Quantrill facilitated the meeting reflection and extended a warm welcome to Florence. He noted that attendees prioritised business planning. There was a strong sense of celebrating achievements across all levels of the organisation, and the Transformation Team is actively gathering evidence to support progress. It is encouraging that staff remain positive. The strategic plan continues to be refined and remains a central focus. Overall, the meeting was characterised by energy, decisiveness, and a clear commitment to organisational priorities.

The Chair thanked the Board and closed the meeting.

NAME	Rachel Watson
SIGNATURE	
DATE	9 January 2026