

National Preventive Mechanism – Northern Ireland Subgroup Meeting

Minutes

Date: 10/06/25

Time: 11:00 – 13:00



In attendance:

RL – Chair of the NPM Northern Ireland Subgroup	Chair
JP – Northern Ireland Policing Board	
SG – Head of NPM	
BS – Independent Monitoring Boards	
JDe – Independent Monitoring Boards	
MM – Northern Ireland Policing Board Independent Custody Visiting Scheme	
JK – NPM Secretariat Officer	Minutes
HR – Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC)	
JPe – Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority	
NM – Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority	
SR – NPM Secretariat Support Officer	
JDu – Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland	
AR – Independent Monitoring Boards	
EM – Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	

Apologies:

WM – Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
ME – Criminal Justice Inspection

No.	Items
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1	Welcome and apologies
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RL welcomed everybody to the meeting and invited a round robin of introductions.

2	Approval of March Minutes for publication
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All approve the minutes of the NPM Northern Ireland Subgroup meeting of 6 March 2025, and agree to publication on the NPM's website. JK to publish the minutes on the website.

3	Matters arising
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Agreements and actions from the Subgroup meeting of 6 March 2025 were discussed, and closed, added to the agenda, or added to the actions of this meeting.

4	Subgroup member updates – Q & A
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The Subgroup held oral Q&A on the pre-circulated written updates, for information purposes.

JDu added that she attended the International Corrections and Prisons Association (ICPA) Correctional Research Symposium in Belfast, to speak on a panel with the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS), Professor Michelle Butler (QUB) and a woman with first-hand experience as a prisoner.

SG added to the NPM central team's update with further details on the current NPM Business Plan, particularly the peer review work which will launch in October, as well as his recent work with the Kyrgyzstan NPM. His update covered communication with the SPT, which has resumed visits after liquidity problems, and with the CPT.

5 Workplan updates

5a. Information sharing on deaths and serious adverse incidents

RL has contacted HMICFRS re: routine information sharing, as there is no routine procedure for sharing SAls/deaths in police custody in England and Wales. HMICFRS request data on an ad-hoc basis from IOPC to inform inspections. **RL** will now approach PSNI to scope their definition of SAI, and the information collected, to use as a basis to propose routine reporting to CJI.

JD had secured agreement that prisons would send reports of deaths and SAls to CJI, and some initial reports were received. The Prisoner Ombudsman for Northern Ireland has also advised CJI that they will share reports received. **JD** to arrange a catch up with the NIPS and Prisoner Ombudsman to check the current position.

RL to check in with **ME** re: information shared by the Juvenile Justice Centre.

RL to provide an update on information sharing, deaths and serious adverse incidents, to the Subgroup in September.

RL to contact **WM** to arrange a sit-down session to view RQIA's data tracking system (also with **ME**)

5b. Personality disorder

JK met with **WM** and **RL**, and spoke with **JDe**, to scope topics and approach to research, and invited feedback on a proposal for research and an awareness-raising event.

WM is refining the proposal currently. **JDe** suggested a comparison with pathways available in other UK jurisdictions, to highlight any geographical disadvantage from a human rights perspective. Interviews that reveal the day-to-day healthcare provision and challenges would also be valuable. **SG** proposes incorporating any good practice from other countries.

JDe and **ME** are in touch with governors and staff at Maghaberry, preparing for interviews in mid-July.

All to send comments for amendments to **JK**. **JK** to amend and progress research plan, with likely change to the date of the awareness-raising event.

5c. Adult safeguarding in places of detention

Ongoing work with DoH on adult safeguarding in prisons, RQIA waiting for their update from DoH.

5d. Prisoners held over tariff

The Subgroup discussed a draft NPM briefing paper on forms of indeterminate detention across the UK, following concerns raised in March about the impacts on prisoners of being held over tariff. The paper covered the relevant concerns, and it was emphasised that while indeterminate sentenced prisoners are probably managed better in Northern Ireland than in other parts of the UK, it is still a big problem in practice and may well become a more pressing issue as when prisoners are referred to parole commissioners they have rarely been able to access programmes to demonstrate that they have addressed offending behaviour. The commissioner will then direct them to complete a programme, but that programme will not be available, leaving the prisoner in the same circumstances at the next review. This is still not compliant with international human rights standards.

JD advised that the NIPS has commissioned reviews of psychology services and the Prisoner Development Unit. Discussions are ongoing on a draft report and the recommended model to be completed. It will be worth reviewing these reports when ready.

All agree to add this to the workplan with actions led by the NPM central team and to be agreed by the NPM Steering Group. **JK** to update workplan.

Once NPM actions are agreed, the Northern Ireland Subgroup can decide on any further activities to complete alongside the NPM or other organisations.

All agree to review in September.

5e.

Workplan functionality, additions or changes

No comments. **RL** invites members to flag additional concerns between meetings.

6 Guidance for IMB members BS

Work is ongoing on the updated IMB Handbook. NPM train-the-trainer preventive package to be held on 12 June 2025. **BS** and **AR** are developing a version of the custody visitors' document shared by **MM** – to revisit at the next meeting.

Two new Independent Monitors have been inducted, and three more are shortlisted for interview in the current recruitment round. **RL** and **JDe** have encouraged the DoJ Secretariat to adjust the recruitment process and shared resources from prison monitors in Scotland. The most recent round featured a video.

Assurance from the DoJ secretariat of forthcoming improvements to the IMB website.

7 Update on RQIA's state of the nation report WM

The report is nearing completion and **WM** will provide an update at the next meeting.

8 AOB All

The Subgroup's next meeting will be in person on 16 September. **RL** invites organisations to host, though CJI is happy to host in the Conference Room. **All** to advise of interest and capacity to host.

The 16 September meeting will include a focus on children. **RL** to invite the NICCY. CJI's report on children in the criminal justice system will have some overlaps with children in care. **All** to consider topics for discussion.

Summary of actions and agreements

Task	Lead	Status
All approve the minutes of the NPM Northern Ireland Subgroup meeting of 6 March 2025, and agree to publication on the NPM's website. JK to publish the minutes on the website.	JK	
WM will set up link-in mechanism with DoH representative in the new year.	WM	
SG shared updates at the NPM annual conference and will make sure definition of detention papers are shared with the group (NPM definition of detention and definition procedure).	SG	
All agree to keep IMB guidance/training on the agenda and review.		
All agreed that RQIA should routinely share any notifications they receive with CJI in case of a gap in provision from Ombudsman or Prison Service.	WM and NM	Ongoing
RL and ME continuing work to solve issue of provision of information from Court Custody.		
All agreed that RQIA should routinely share any notifications they receive with CJI in case of a gap in provision from Ombudsman or Prison Service.	WM and NM	
WM to share RQIA's data tracking system with CJI. Probably a sit-down session. To organise with RL and ME for the summer.	WM	
Agreed to keep on the agenda: plan for the data once all received.		
Agreed to keep issue of prisoners held over tariff under review for the workplan		
JPe will provide input re: children for September's Subgroup meeting.	JPe	
RL to approach PSNI to scope their definition of SAI, and the information collected, to use as a basis to propose routine reporting to CJI.	RL	
JD had secured agreement that prisons would send reports of deaths and SAIs to CJI, and some initial reports were received. The Prisoner Ombudsman for Northern Ireland has also advised CJI that they will share reports received. JD to arrange a catch up with prisons service and Prisoner Ombudsman to check the current position.	JD	
RL to check in with ME re: information shared by the Juvenile Justice Centre. RL to provide an update on information sharing, deaths and serious adverse incidents, to the Subgroup in September.	RL	
Personality disorder: All to send comments for amendments to JK . JK to amend and progress research plan, with likely change to the date of the awareness-raising event.	All JK	
RQIA are awaiting an update from DoH regarding adult safeguarding in prisons.		
All agree to add prisoners held over tariff to the workplan with actions led by the NPM central team and to be agreed by the NPM Steering Group. JK to update workplan.	JK	
RL invites members to flag additional concerns between meetings for additions or changes to workplan.	All	
IMB Guidance: BS and AR are developing a version of the custody visitors' document shared by MM – to revisit at the next meeting	BS. AR	
WM will update on RQIA's State of the Nation report at the next meeting.	WM	
RL invites organisations to host the next Subgroup meeting on 16 September, though CJI is happy to host in the Conference Room. All to advise of interest and capacity to host. RL to invite the NICCY. All to consider topics for discussion.	All RL All	