

Strategy Statement

2026-28





Overview

This is the first strategy statement (the Strategy) of the Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA) and will cover 2026-2028. It sets out:

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Who we are

The PCSA was established on 02 April 2025 as an independent, statutory agency responsible for the oversight of An Garda Síochána. It is made up of an Authority of nine members, supported by an Executive team under a CEO. It is a successor organisation to the Policing Authority and Garda Síochána Inspectorate.

The core objective of the PCSA is to oversee and assess the performance of An Garda Síochána in providing policing services to communities across Ireland and its work with partner organisations to ensure the safety of those communities. This is done through:

- **Determining Policing Priorities** for An Garda Síochána – areas that require extra focus or attention to improve the policing service delivered to the public;
- **Assessing policing performance** against these Priorities, An Garda Síochána's Strategic Plan and its Annual Service Plan, and the National Strategy for Improving Community Safety;
- **Undertaking inspections** and making recommendations to improve policing services;
- **Engaging with communities and stakeholders** to listen to and understand experiences of policing and being policed;
- **Promoting policing standards** and the continuous improvement of policing, in line with international best practice and human rights standards;
- **Promoting awareness and understanding** of policing matters through publishing reports, holding events, and undertaking research; and,
- **Informing and advising** the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration and other key stakeholders on policing matters.

This Strategy sets out how we will perform these functions under four strategic objectives. You can read more about the PCSA and keep up to date with our work [here](#).



Our vision is of an engaged, effective and rights-based policing service that ensures the safety of all communities.

Our objective is to independently oversee and assess An Garda Síochána to ensure the policing services provided to all communities are effective, consistent, and fair.

We will work in a way that:



Provides fair, honest, and independent assessment and advice that supports and promotes improvements in policing;



Places the experiences of communities, particularly the most vulnerable, and of garda personnel at the heart of our oversight;



Is transparent, open, and accountable about the way we go about our work and the evidence we use;



Collaborates with partners and stakeholders to improve policing services and advance community safety for the benefit of our communities; and,



Ensures we work efficiently and meet the highest standards as an oversight body, a public body, and an employer.



Our Strategic Objectives

As set out over the following pages, for the period 2026-2028 we have set four strategic objectives. Under each of these we also outline the key themes that we will focus on and the actions we will take to successfully deliver the strategy.

Our Objective:

Provide Consistent Oversight and Independent Assessment

Under this objective we want to ensure that we comprehensively oversee the range of services provided, and functions undertaken, by An Garda Síochána. This will include heightened focus on areas or themes that we believe require it.

Key Theme	How Will We Do This?
An Garda Síochána's Performance	As appropriate, assess An Garda Síochána's performance against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Policing Priorities 2026-2028, An Garda Síochána's Strategic Plan 2026-2028, and its Annual Service Plans; → Recommendations made by the PCSA, the former Garda Síochána Inspectorate, and other stakeholders; and, → National and local strategies and plans concerned with policing and community safety.
	Undertake specific assessment activity, including inspections, on priority or emergent issues.
	Publish and keep under review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → A PCSA Framework for Oversight that shows how we oversee and assess An Garda Síochána; and, → An Inspection Plan that details the areas that we consider priority areas for inspection.

Key Theme	How Will We Do This?
Equality and Consistency of Service	Assess the quality and consistency of service provided to all communities, with a focus on those who are vulnerable, minority communities, and victims.
	Undertake oversight and assessment at the sub-national level, including by garda division.
	Evaluate the extent to which policing services are consistent with the human rights obligations and duties placed on An Garda Síochána.
Enablers of Policing	Monitor An Garda Síochána systems and structures in place for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Supporting, training and managing its personnel; → Addressing underperformance and undertaking appropriate and timely disciplinary action; and, → Managing and deploying its resources.
	Scrutinise the adoption of new and evolving technologies to ensure that their use is appropriate and proportionate.

Our Objective:**Support and Promote Community Safety**

Under this objective we want to ensure that we play a key role in promoting, supporting, and ensuring community safety through our own work and through oversight of An Garda Síochána.

Key Theme	How Will We Do This?
Engage, Listen and Understand	Place a priority on community experience by undertaking a comprehensive approach to engaging with communities, ensuring we engage with a diverse range of stakeholders on oversight matters.
	Place a key focus on meaningful engagement with communities that have not engaged with us to date, avoiding over-consultation and ensuring there is appropriate feedback and follow-up.
	Strengthen our links and relationships with communities to ensure we are available and in a position to listen.
	Build on our extensive programme of in-person and online meetings with communities by developing new ways of engaging through events, media appearances, surveying, etc.
Work in Partnership	As a key stakeholder, and member of the National Steering Group on Community Safety, contribute to the strategic direction of the new community safety model by monitoring partnership working in policing and reporting on progress and performance.
	Maintain an active engagement with the Local Community Safety Partnerships, directly and through the National Office, to support each other's work in advancing community safety.
	Undertake our oversight and assessment in a way that considers the involvement and input of the necessary stakeholders and partners.
	Deliver on all priority actions identified in our community safety assessment (see p.11).

Our Objective:**Be a Credible, Trusted, and Expert Voice on Policing**

Under this objective we want to ensure that we work towards a longer-term goal of becoming the go-to body on all matters of policing policy, research, and expertise, ensuring that this knowledge is open and accessible to all.

Key Theme	How Will We Do This?
Advise and Inform	Hold at least four meetings with the Garda Commissioner, and at least one with the National Director for Community Safety, in public each year.
	Proactively contribute to legislation, strategy and policy as it involves, concerns, and impacts policing, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Set and review Policing Priorities for An Garda Síochána; → Advise on An Garda Síochána’s Strategic Plan and Annual Service Plans, and the National Strategy for Improving Community Safety.
	Provide regular insight into policing performance through publications, events, media engagements, etc.
	Promote public understanding of policing matters, key issues and debates, and the rights and standards that communities can expect when receiving policing services.
Build and Share Expertise	Publish and implement a research and data strategy.
	Engage extensively with other oversight bodies, the research community, and other expert bodies/groups nationally and internationally to keep up to date with developments and best practice in policing and community safety.
	Utilise research to increase our knowledge and provide insight into policing and the way in which it is experienced by communities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Undertaking research within the PCSA; → Facilitating research by other stakeholders through the provision of funding and/or information; and, → Collaborating with partners to deliver research projects.
	Utilise data, as produced by An Garda Síochána, the Central Statistics Office, and other statutory and non-statutory bodies (including researchers, academics and representative groups) to gain key insights into policing.

Our Objective:**Be a Well-Run and Effective Organisation**

As a new organisation, we are focussed under this objective on having the right people, technology, and resources in place to deliver against the Strategy, in a manner that offers the public value for money.

Key Theme	How Will We Do This?
A Great Place to Work	<p>Maintain and invest in a comprehensive learning and development strategy that focusses on induction, individual learning experiences, continuing professional development, and specialist skills and expertise.</p> <p>Achieve Great Place to Work accreditation.</p> <p>Prioritise staff retention, including through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → A focus on workplace culture; → A supportive and development-focussed approach to performance management; and, → Providing learning and development opportunities.
Efficient, Effective and Value for Money	<p>Ensure appropriate use of public monies through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Fit-for-purpose project planning and management; → Best practice financial, procurement and governance procedures; and, → Regular, risk-based auditing. <p>Identify and utilise opportunities for innovation and digital transformation to increase efficiency and improve capacity, as a small organisation.</p>
Rights-Based and Ethical	<p>Develop and implement a Climate Action Roadmap.</p> <p>Across all of our work, operate within a human rights framework and implement the priority actions identified in our human rights assessment (see p.09).</p> <p>Develop and publish a Code of Ethics and Conduct for PCSA Members and staff.</p>



How we developed this Strategy

This Strategy, and the objectives within it, was set after:

- Reflecting on the views and experiences of communities, stakeholders, garda personnel, experts in policing, and many others through a series of consultations – including those undertaken as part of our development of the Policing Priorities 2026-2028;
- Analysing the current and likely future challenges and issues impacting policing and [community safety](#) in Ireland;
- Considering the existing work of the Policing Authority and Garda Síochána Inspectorate; and,

Assessing the manner in which the PCSA could meet our requirements under the public sector duties on human rights and community safety.

Human Rights Assessment

In terms of human rights, the PCSA has a dual role. Firstly, we must ensure that our work is done in a way that eliminates discrimination, promotes equality, and protects human rights – this is a [public duty required of all public bodies](#). Secondly, we must ensure that our oversight and assessment of An Garda Síochána considers their obligations to do likewise.

We have completed an assessment to see where we can improve in this role.

The key areas identified and priority actions we will undertake are set out below.

On an ongoing basis we will assess our compliance with human rights requirements and best practice and further develop actions to allow us to continually improve.

Key Theme	Priority Actions
Understanding of Minority and/or Vulnerable Communities' Experiences of Policing	Place a key focus on meaningful engagement with communities that have not engaged with us to date, avoiding over-consultation and ensuring there is appropriate feedback and follow-up.
	Undertake and advocate for further research and data collection that provides insight into the lived experiences of communities in respect of policing and community safety.

Key Theme	Priority Actions
Oversight of An Garda Síochána	Ensure the statutory Policing Priorities set by the PCSA, and the views provided to the Garda Commissioner on An Garda Síochána's Strategic Plan and Annual Service Plan, are guided by key human rights issues and considerations.
	Through our oversight framework, utilise human rights as a key lens through which all performance assessments and inspections are conducted – including consideration of An Garda Síochána compliance with the public sector duty.
	Ensure assessments include a key focus on the lived experiences of communities, advised by direct engagement, available research, and consultation with key stakeholders and experts.
Internal Capacity and Knowledge	Publish a framework that will guide how we embed human rights across all teams, supported by a detailed action plan and subject to ongoing public reporting.
	Establish an internal steering group – made up of senior management from across all functions – to oversee the implementation of the framework through the action plan.
	Provide ongoing staff training and development on human rights.
Accessibility of information	Provide our publications, online public meetings, and other communications with the public in an increasingly accessible manner.
	Ensure appropriate access to those who wish to engage with us through Irish and Irish sign-language.
	Put in place a new website that is in line with national and EU legislation and best practice, reviewing regularly.

Community Safety Assessment

There is a [similar public sector duty on certain public bodies](#) to consider the way in which we can help to improve community safety, in particular the safety of those who are vulnerable or at risk.

Our role in respect of community safety will be primarily to assess the extent to which An Garda Síochána is effectively working with partners, and has the support it requires from them, to prevent crime and to keep individuals and communities safe.

The table below sets out some of the key areas where we can contribute to community safety and the priority actions we will take during this strategy period.

Key Theme	Priority Actions
Embedding the Community Safety Model	Through our position on the National Steering Group, contribute to the strategic direction of community safety and raise issues or concerns as they arise in the course of our engagement with communities and assessment of An Garda Síochána.
	Monitor and report on An Garda Síochána's performance in engaging with community safety structures and supporting community safety strategies and plans at a national and local level, including assessment of the input of necessary support by partner agencies.
	Ensure the statutory Policing Priorities set by the PCSA, and the views provided to the Commissioner on An Garda Síochána's Strategic Plan and Annual Service Plan, are guided by key community safety issues and considerations.
	Based on our oversight, community engagement, and research, provide input into the National Strategy for Improving Community Safety and support its delivery.
Active Engagement	Ensure effective joint working and information sharing at a national and sub-national level through: regular engagement with the National Office for Community Safety and the Local Community Safety Partnerships; and, convening regular meetings with the LCSP chairs and vice-chairs.
	Where appropriate, ensure community and An Garda Síochána issues relating to community safety are raised with key stakeholders.
Awareness and Promotion	Utilise, in our reporting and through engagement with stakeholders, our assessments, publications and events to highlight examples of good community safety initiatives.
	Engage in public, at least annually, with the National Director to discuss matters of community safety.
	Provide appropriate assessment and update on PCSA and An Garda Síochána input to community safety through our periodic performance and annual reporting.



Delivery and Ongoing Review

As outlined, this strategy is being set to guide the work of the PCSA for the 2026-2028 period. It will be supported by three annual business plans which will identify specific actions to advance each objective and ensure its delivery.

Each year to show how we are progressing we commit to publishing an overview of the annual plan for that year and an annual report to account for how we delivered against the plan for the previous year.

