



## ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSURANCE BOARD

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| <b>Date</b>                | 01.06.2026                                    |
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## CRYNODEB GWEITHREDOL | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual outturn report provides assurance on the performance, demand and delivery of Information Services across Gwent Police for the period April 2025 to March 2026. The department continued to deliver statutory and regulated services across Subject Access Requests, Freedom of Information, disclosure functions, DBS, PNC/LEDS Bureau activity and wider safeguarding-related information services.

Overall performance remained strong across key statutory areas, with SAR compliance maintained at 100% throughout the year and FOI compliance at 99.53%, significantly exceeding the statutory threshold. Several operational areas also achieved 100% compliance, including CAFCASS, MIB, ABI, Family Court Orders, Local Authority Child Safeguarding Checks, Probation Domestic Abuse Intelligence Checks, SEWAS Pre-Adopter Checks and Common Law Police Disclosures.

The improved DBS Standards and Compliance gradings provide further assurance of positive service development, with Barring assessed as Outstanding and Disclosure improving by two grades to Good.

The report identifies sustained increases in demand and complexity, particularly in respect of SARs, where demand increased by 46% compared with 2024/25. The implementation of structural changes within Information Services has strengthened senior management capacity, resilience and professional capability, supported by accredited data protection training and clearer management accountability.

Key areas for continued oversight include increasing demand across disclosure functions, the impact of vetting delays on DBS recruitment and productivity, sickness abstraction levels, and risks associated with the current arrangements for Missing Person report recording pending LEDS Person Update rollout. Ongoing mitigations include performance monitoring through the Organisational Resources Board, process automation, strengthened collaboration with partners and planned implementation of CRaSH to improve RTC reporting.

The report is presented for information. No decision is required; however, Board members are asked to note the assurance provided, the areas of strong performance, and the operational risks and next steps outlined within the report.

## CYFLWYNIAD A CHEFNDIR | INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The Information Services Department is responsible for the provision of statutory and regulated functions delivered across four core delivery areas:

- Firearms Licensing (subject of a separate AAB report)
- Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)



- Data Protection disclosures
- Police National Computer Bureau

The department facilitates transactional services to the public and third-party organisations, to include:

- Subject rights - Subject Access Requests (SAR)
- Freedom of Information requests (FOI)
- Children & Family Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS)
- Criminal Injury Compensation Authority (CICA)
- Family Court Orders
- Data Protection requests
- Legal Aid
- Common Law Police Disclosures (CLPD)
- Local Authority Child Safeguarding checks
- Probation Service Domestic Abuse Intelligence Checks
- South East Wales Adoption Service Pre-Adopter Checks
- Road Traffic Collision (RTC) disclosures
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- PNC / LEDS Updating
- Warrants Management
- Road Traffic Collision statistics for Welsh Government
- Firearms Licencing Unit (FLU)

In September 2025 a structural review of Information Services was approved by the Service Improvement Board. Implementation of the new structure began in October 2025.

The Information Services Departmental review resulted in a structural change with the creation of senior management positions (Disclosure Lead and a DBS Unit Manager) to create greater capacity, provide resilience and professionalise the service through accredited Data Protection Practitioner training at SMT level.

## MATERION I'W HYSTYRIED | ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The reporting arrangements have been operational throughout the financial year. Performance throughout the financial year in key delivery areas is summarised below.

### Subject Access Requests (SAR)

Principles set out within the Data Protection Act 2018 provide Individuals with the right to be informed about the collection and use of their personal data. Data Controllers must provide certain information, such as purposes of processing, retention periods, details of data processors. This information is set out within the Corporate Privacy Notice. Under a SAR application, individuals may request access to their personal data held by the force, which can include convictions, Niche occurrences, body worn video footage, custody interviews, 999 calls. This also extends to personal data held about employees or volunteers. SARs must be responded to within one month unless an extension is applicable.

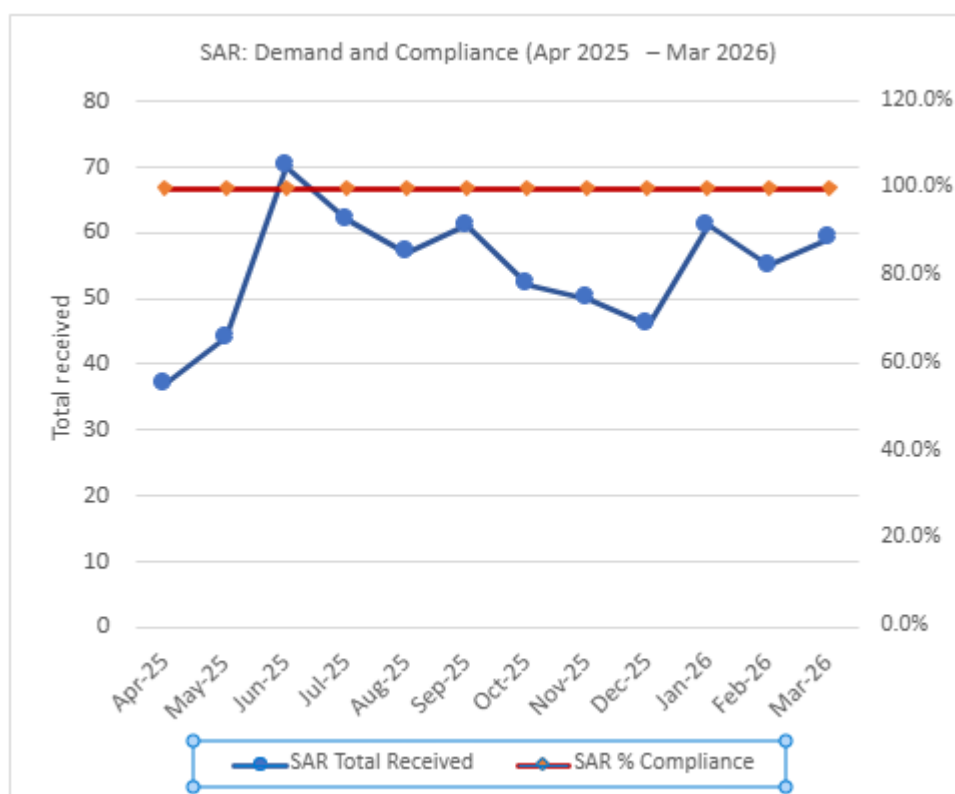
Overall, SAR performance remained consistently strong, with a total of 654 requests received. Monthly demand increased from 37 requests in April 2025 to a peak of 70 in June 2025, before settling into a broadly stable pattern, generally ranging between the mid-40s and low-60s for the remainder of the year. The year closed with 59 requests received in March 2026, indicating sustained demand throughout the period.

In terms of timeliness, compliance was maintained at 100% in every month of the year, demonstrating excellent and consistent adherence to the one calendar month service standard. This is a particularly positive result given the fluctuations in monthly demand, especially during the higher-volume months in the first half of the year. The National average was 68%.

There has been an upsurge in demand for SARs, compared to 2024/25, with the volume of requests increasing by 46%. The complexity of requests for SARs has also increased, predominantly due to the use of AI tools to generate detailed requests; referencing legal basis, case law, regulatory guidance, and broadening the scope of the requests that would otherwise have been based on a specific incident or timeframe that a data subject was interested in. There is considerably more resource time attributed to deciphering requests, on top of the wide-ranging sources of information that need to be explored.

With effect from June 2026, the Data Usage & Access Act 2025 introduced a new statutory 'right to complain' establishes the need for public authorities to implement a formal SAR complaints process. A total of 42 SAR complaints were received and reviewed over the period.

The below chart illustrates the annual performance for SAR:



## Freedom of Information (FOI) requests

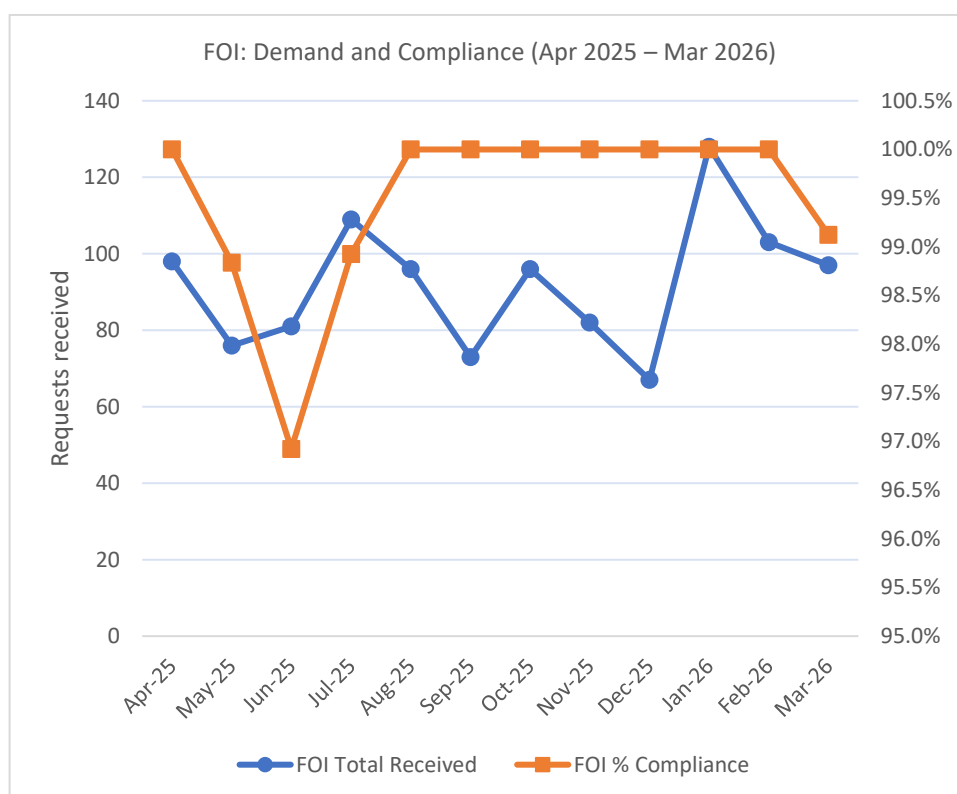
The Freedom of Information Act 2000 grants the public the right to access information held by public authorities with a view to ensuring transparency and accountability in public services. The statutory compliance rate is 90% within 20 working days.

FOI performance remained strong and consistent across the year. A total of 1,106 FOI requests were received, with 1,064 completed during the reporting period. Monthly demand was generally steady, ranging from 67 to 128 requests, with the highest volume in January 2026 (128) and the lowest in December 2025 (67).

Overall compliance was very high throughout the year, remaining between 96.9% and 100.0% each month and exceeding the ICO target of 90%. Nine of the twelve months achieved 100% compliance, demonstrating sustained performance against the 20-working-day standard. Of the 1,064 FOI requests completed during the reporting period, 1,059 were completed within the statutory timescale of 20 working days, representing 99.53%, while only 5 were closed outside the timescale, representing 0.47%. The National average for all forces was 83%.

A total of 44 Internal Reviews were received and processed throughout the reporting period.

The below chart illustrates the annual performance for FOI:



There is a requirement on all public authorities to make certain information available to the public, as mandated by the Information Commissioners Office. Previously disclosed FOIs are published on the Disclosure Log held with the Publication Scheme, available via the website at the following link: [Published items | Gwent Police](#)

## Environmental Information Regulations (EIR)

The EIR provides public access to environmental information held by public authorities. Public authorities must make environmental information available proactively, and members of the public are entitled to environmental information. There were nil requests in respect of the EIR during the reporting period.

## Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)

CAFCASS is an independent arbitration service representing children in Family Court. These include Public and Private Law cases. The function includes the provision of Police National Computer (PNC) review and also locally held Police information. Disclosure is required within 5, 10 or 15 days depending on the level of information requested.



There were 149 requests received and 153 completed across the year. Performance recorded 100% compliance throughout the year.

### **Road Traffic Collision Disclosures (RTC)**

These requests fall into three categories:

- Motor Insurance Bureau (MIB) - disclosures for untraced drivers;
- Association of British Insurers (ABI) - validating insurance claims;
- 3rd Party requests – Insurers registered with the ABI

There are key performance indicators for MIB requests (20 working days) and ABI (30 working days) requests, all other requests are dealt with subject to demand and capacity. 3rd Party requests is a high demand area and there are mechanisms in place to ensure performance is monitored.

Demand for 3rd Party requests totalled 843 during the reporting period. Compliance averaged 94% over the year.

MIB requests totalled 119 during the reporting period. Performance recorded 100% compliance throughout the year.

ABI requests totalled 55 during the reporting period. Performance recorded 100% compliance throughout the year.

### **Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA)**

The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 2003 provides victims of violent crimes the right to make a claim for compensation. This involves the processing of requests and provision of information of police held information to CICA, who handle requests on behalf of injured parties.

There were 1,076 recorded requests during the reporting period. Compliance averaged 84% over the year.

### **Family Court Disclosure**

The Disclosure of Information between Family and Criminal Agencies and Jurisdictions: 2024 Protocol came into effect on 1 March 2024. It replaced the 2013 Protocol and Good Practice Model: disclosure of information in cases of alleged child abuse and care directions hearings. This involves the provision of Police held information as detailed in the Court Order, relating to Private and Public Law matters.

An All Wales Family Court Protocol has been drafted in collaboration with the four Welsh police forces, the 22 Welsh Unitary Authorities and HMCTS. In line with the national policy, this states that responses to requests for information or material should be provided as soon as reasonably practicable and within 20 working days, or as

specified by the Court Order. The local performance measure is 10 working days in which to disclose.

There were 57 Orders received for Private Law, and 578 Orders received from the Local Authorities, during the reporting period. Performance recorded 100% compliance across all Court Orders throughout the year.

## **Data Protection Disclosure Requests**

This involves the disclosure of information within the parameters of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations. There is no specified timescale to respond to these requests. There were 392 recorded requests during the reporting period.

## **Common Law Police Disclosures (CLPD)**

The CLPD provisions relate to the circumstances in which the police use common law powers to disclose police information regarding an individual in order to enable a third party (employer/regulator) to consider risk mitigation measures in respect of an employment or voluntary role believed to be undertaken by that individual. There is no statutory timescale but a local target of 72 hrs in which to disclose.

There were 912 recorded requests during the reporting period. Performance recorded 100% for the year.

## **Local Authority Child Safeguarding Checks**

Section 44 of the Children Act 1989 provide Local Authorities the legal right to remove a child from accommodation or prevent removal, where they have reasonable cause to believe the child would otherwise be likely to suffer significant harm. Relevant person and address checks are conducted with police to assess risk. There is no statutory timescale but a local target of 10 working days in which to disclose is set, unless the request is marked urgent.

There were 2,075 requests during the reporting period. Performance recorded 100% compliance throughout the year.

## **Probation Service Domestic Abuse Intelligence Checks**

The Probation Service is required to undertake domestic abuse checks as part of pre-sentencing reports and the Government Early Release Scheme for prisoners serving



40% of their sentence. Relevant person and address checks are conducted with police to assess safeguarding risk. There is no statutory timescale but a local target of 10 working days in which to disclose is set, unless the request is marked urgent.

There were 3,198 requests received during the reporting period. Performance recorded 100% compliance throughout the year.

### **South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS) Pre-Adopter Checks**

SEWAS is one of five regional services operating under the National Adoption Service. In collaboration with local authorities, they identify and work with looked after children for whom a plan for adoption is appropriate, the vast majority having been through safeguarding and legal processes. Pre-adopter checks support the risk assessment process associated with the recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters, family finding for children and adoption support. Gwent Police has been highlighted as good practice in respect of early stage information sharing practices with SEWAS. Relevant person and address checks are conducted with police to assess safeguarding risk and inform suitability assessment.

There were 52 requests received during the reporting period. Performance recorded 100% compliance throughout the year.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

The DBS Unit is responsible for conducting enhanced DBS checks against potential matches sent by the DBS Agency for nominals applying to work in regulated activity with children and/or vulnerable adults. Activity includes Barring referrals, handling disputes and conducting identification fingerprints.

During the reporting period, Gwent demonstrated a positive overall performance, with particularly strong outcomes in barring activity, effective financial management and disclosure volumes that exceeded forecast. In Disclosure, forecast volumes were 40,251, sent volumes were 43,008 and actual closures reached 43,411, representing closures 3,160 above forecast.

Performance across the year showed variation between workstreams. Barring performance was consistently strong, with all SLA measures achieved in every month and average turnaround times remaining low. In disclosure casework, overall throughput remained strong, with both sent and closed volumes above forecast, aged case measures controlled throughout the year and timeliness improving in the latter part of the reporting period, although some key closure measures remained below target for much of the year.

Recruitment continues to be adversely impacted by vetting delays. Such delays can be up to three months before new staff can be onboarded and issued with a start date reducing productivity in the unit and increasing reliance on overtime to maintain service level performance until new recruits are fully cleared.

Performance against service levels was strong throughout the year. For Disclosure casework:

- aged case measures for 25–44 days, 45–60 days and over 60 days were achieved throughout the year
- workload expressed in days improved during the year and was achieved consistently from July 2025 to March 2026
- the percentage of cases closed within 15 days improved across the year and achieved the 65% target in February and March 2026
- overall, Disclosure performance was stronger in the latter part of the reporting period, with service levels improving while aged case measures remained controlled
- For Barring casework:
  - all percentage-based SLA measures were achieved in every month from April 2025 to March 2026
  - no over-60-day or 90-day workload thresholds were breached at any point in the year
  - average case turnaround remained within service levels throughout the year, ranging from 5.98 days in June 2025 to 15.90 days in March 2026

DBS Standards & Compliance grading for the Barring element resulted in a mid-year grading of 'Outstanding', with this being the anticipated end-of-year grading. The SCU grading for the Disclosure element resulted in a mid-year grading of 'Good', which is a notable improvement on the previous year where 'Inadequate' was graded. This indicates an upward shift by two grades.

Financially, Disclosure operated below budget, with agreed funding of £456,954.54 and total expenditure of £391,019.39. For Barring, agreed funding was £8,314.68 with total expenditure of £7,877.94, also resulting in an underspend against allocation. Any underspend that is not formally redirected to another month, through agreement with DBS, may be reallocated by DBS at its discretion.

## **PNC / LEDS Bureau**

The PNCB team maintain PNC Name and Vehicle updates including entering new records, managing alerts, updating current records and deleting records upon request, court resulting, impending prosecutions, and warrants administration. The team is also responsible for inputting Road Traffic Collision injury reports onto the mapping service (ACCSMAP) and the provision of RTC statistics to Welsh Government, to inform traffic management initiatives.



Implementation of the law enforcement database continues to be rolled out on a modular basis. PNC decommissioning was anticipated September 2026 however this has been postponed pending further activity.

## **CYDWEITHIO | COLLABORATION**

Liaison with HMPPS has seen the introduction of robotics processing activity (RPA), which went live in January 2026. This involves the Probation Service domestic abuse intelligence disclosures. The RPA solution automates the receipt, logging, and retrieval of information from Niche. Actual efficiency savings are yet to be evaluated, notwithstanding there has been a notable reduction in manual intervention by admin staff.

Audio Visual Multi Media (AVMM) tool (PIMLOC Secure Redact) has been adopted on a trial basis. The software automates the anonymisation of sensitive personal data from digital files, enabling image tracing to redact third-party information in line with GDPR, and replacing manual frame-by frame capture within NICE Investigate.

Wales Family Court Order Protocol has been adopted within Gwent and Local Authority partners. This is aimed at reducing the number of cases heard in Family Court by ensuring early disclosure. A reduction was seen in 2024 compared to the previous year, however demand in 2025 has seen an increase of 29%.

DBS PLX checks in scope to reduce April/May based on a revised data upload mechanism which focuses on records that have been updated since last upload, rather than a complete overwrite of existing file. This will reduce the demand for PLX checks generated by the DBS Agency.

Missing Person reports Issue identified with current mechanism for recording Missing Person reports (lost/found) held on PNC. PNCB operate Mon-Fri 0800-1700. Proposal for 24/7 Intel to take primacy for recording on LEDS, with First Point of Contact Centre providing resilience. Change requires LEDS Person Update roll-out.

## **CAMAU NESAF | NEXT STEPS**

- Officers currently submit Road Traffic Collision reports by completing a STATS19 form, which is then submitted to the PNC Bureau for input onto ACCSMAP to support the provision of RTC statistics to Welsh Government.
- The current process is affected by submission delays and data quality issues, impacting the Force's ability to provide complete and timely data to Welsh Government.
- Engagement with Welsh Government, alongside senior officer accountability, has improved the quality of submissions.

- Implementation of CRaSH, the Department for Transport tool, will automate data capture and remove the requirement for the PNC Bureau to double key information.
- CRaSH implementation is expected in Q2 2026/27.
- The Force will continue to report performance across all Information Services areas through the Organisational Resources Board.

## **YSTYRIAETHAU ARIANNOL | FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The ACCSMAP service contract and associated licence costs will no longer be required once CRaSH (Civica) is implemented and operational. The DfT has fully funded the new cloud-based version of the CRaSH system, making it accessible to all forces.

## **YSTYRIAETHAU PERSONÉL | PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS**

Abstraction levels across department have impacted upon the ability to meet operational demand, particularly in terms of sickness levels. During 2025, 25 members of staff (51% of the workforce) attributed to 37 episodes of sickness, totalling 506 working days.

Mandatory training compliance remains strong across the department and there has been a notable increase in leadership training uptake within the SMT.

Information Services was an early adopter in returning staff to on-site working. While hybrid arrangements remain in place, office-based working is prioritised to strengthen collaboration and enable more effective face-to-face training.

The department continues to identify and promote opportunities for personal development and staff retention, evidenced by the nomination of four members to the Talent Management Programme.

## **YSTYRIAETHAU CYFREITHIOL | LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Compliance with legislative functions - Internal Audit of disclosure functions (FOI/SAR) resulted in 'Substantial Assurance' which is a marked improvement on the previous year, where 'Limited Assurance' was assessed.





## YSTYRIAETHAU CYDRADDOLDEB A HAWLIAU DYNOL | EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

This report has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.

In preparing this report, consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998.

## RISG | RISK

Missing Person Reports – Risk identified with current mechanism for recording Missing Person reports (lost/found) held on PNC. PNCB operate Mon-Fri 0800-1700. 24/7 Intel Hub to take primacy (with First Point of Contact as resilience). PNC Update training required for Intel Staff however all PNC training suspended pending LEDS Person rollout. LEDS switchover was anticipated October 2026 however this has been delayed by the National delivery program.

## ATODIADAU | ANNEXES

None to note.

## BUDD Y CYHOEDD | PUBLIC INTEREST

|                                                                                                            |                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| In producing this report, has consideration been given to 'public confidence'?                             | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are the contents of this report, observations and appendices necessary and suitable for the public domain? | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If you consider this report to be exempt from the public domain, please state the reasons:                 |                                                                       |
|                                                                                                            |                                                                       |

I confirm this report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers' meeting 08.09.2026.

I confirm this report is suitable for the public domain for the reasons stated previously.

|           |                                                                                     |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Signature |  |
| Date      | 23.09.2026                                                                          |



