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22 April 2026

Rt Hon. Dame Karen Bradley MP
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POLICE NATIONAL DATABASE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

Following your letter of 25 March 2026 on the significant change of direction for the Police National Database (PND) 1.5 Transformation programme, please see attached responses from the Home Office to your questions in Annex A.

I look forward to our upcoming meeting to discuss the work of the Home Affairs Select Committee.

GARETH DAVIES
PERMANENT SECRETARY

ANNEX A: Responses to questions raised

The PND transformation programme

1. **What is the underlying cause of the apparent failure of the PND transformation programme?**

   The PND 1.5 programme set out to modernise the PND by migrating it to a cloud platform to improve resilience and reduce technical debt. Delivery assumptions have proven incorrect: c.80% code reuse was expected, but only c.20% was reusable, meaning additional work that would push the June 2025 target beyond reach without significant extra time and funding. With the support contract expiring in March 2026 and no further direct award available, the programme explored contingency options, but analysis concluded continuation was not value for money. The programme decided it would exit the contract, bringing the service into Home Office control and in-house support.

2. **When did it become clear to the Home Office that this programme would not be deliverable?**

   Issues emerged in July 2024. From July-December 2024, the Home Office worked with the supplier to replan, and this indicated c.£26m additional cost and a c.15-18-month delay. This was rejected and on 11 June 2025, delivery was formally paused to negotiate contract termination and avoid undue cost to either party.

   With strong legal support, we have now fully signed Service Continuity, Service Exit and PND 1.5 Termination Request For Change and are working on mobilising to commence the PND 1.0 Service Exit Request For Change which will transition the PND service into the Home Office over the coming 18 months.

3. **How much has been spent on the PND since the transformation programme was established in 2021?**

   The PND programme was set up in 2021 when the PND was separated from the National Law Enforcement Data Programme. Work on the 1.5 Transformation programme did not commence until January 2024. By May 2025, around £35.1m had been spent before the transformation was paused.

   The annual cost of running, sustaining and maintaining the live service, which includes elements of continuous improvement (incurred irrespective of transformation) is c£24m per year and since FY21/22 amounts to £111.5m

   Total spend over the period FY21/22 – FY25/26 was £146.6m.

4. **Given that the programme is now being brought in-house, to what extent was the failure of this programme driven by supplier performance?**

PND 1.5 was recognised early on as an ambitious digital transformation programme of activities. Both the Home Office and the supplier worked closely together for many months to understand the depth of the challenges. We ultimately put our trust in the supplier's expertise and track record in providing and maintaining PND since 23 June 2011.

From July to December 2024 the Home Office held workshops with the supplier to agree a realistic revised Initial Implementation Plan, considering the residual technical risks and challenges to complete PND 1.5. The two sides could not come to an agreement, however, in particular about the contracted scope, time required for testing and allocation of residual risk.

5. **If supplier performance was an issue, is the department able to reclaim any money from the supplier?**

After careful consideration and detailed negotiation (and with the benefit of detailed legal advice), the best settlement for the HO was reached, to enable orderly transition and closure, whilst avoiding costly and time-consuming litigation which would have had a potentially uncertain outcome.

6. **What improvements – if any – have been made to the PND as part of this programme?**

The cloud migration work did not result in any improvements to the PND, as it was not completed. Upgrades have been made to the live system to ensure its security and stability (see below).

7. **What risks to the operation and maintenance of the PND arise from removing the current supplier, and how are these being managed?**

PND will move from the supplier's site to a Home Office data centre. This move is underpinned by discovery and planning, experienced teams and robust governance drawing on prior transfer experience; while some disruption risk remains due to the age and complexity of the legacy infrastructure, mitigations are in place and stakeholders will be kept informed; options have been developed with policing stakeholders and Home Office legal/commercial input to address legacy extension risks, TUPE and wider commercial implications involving close engagement with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), the Chief Technology Officer (CTO), and National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority (NISTA).

The future of the PND

8. What is your assessment of how much longer the existing PND system can be sustained, and at what cost?

Instead of migrating to the cloud now, the programme will strengthen the on-premises PND, prioritising stability, security and availability. The expected costs of the stabilisation work are £20.3m. These upgrades are expected to extend service continuity by 5-10 years by tackling technical debt, improving resilience and capacity, and supporting enhanced analytics and safeguarding. Delivering the work in-house is expected to be more cost-effective than third-party support.

The annual run and sustainment cost for the PND are ~£24m. It is expected that costs will continue at these levels once the service is brought in-house. Over the remaining life of the service, costs are expected to be £125m - £263m, assuming 2% yearly inflation and a 5-10year service life.

9. How significant is the risk of a major failure of the existing PND system, and what would be the operational impact on law enforcement?

PND is Critical National Infrastructure; risk of component failure is being managed through specialist Home Office resources and reserved replacement hardware, with contingency plans covering scenarios from individual component failure up to complete loss of service, supported by Home Office Data Centre staff who have the expertise to operate and recover systems of this type. The service remains stable, with customer-facing availability above 99% over the past six months, and the team proactively monitors servers and responds quickly to issues, including known legacy software risks. With the control in place with the addition of the stabilisation plans, the risk of major failure is anticipated to be low.

10. What is the Home Office's long-term strategy for the PND, and what funding has been allocated to achieve this?

The long-term strategic direction of the PND system is yet to be decided and therefore funding allocations have only been sought for the change activities required in the medium term, as outlined in the response under Question 8. Longer-term requirements are due to be reflected in the next spending review (SR) period.

11. What consequences - if any - are there for the future of the PND arising from the Home Office's police reform agenda? For example, would you expect the new National Police Service to take on responsibility for the delivery and funding of the PND?

PND will fall under the auspices of the National Police Service, as would the design, development and implementation of new and / or replacement systems. The detail and timing of that is to be determined.