Chief of Police
Update Report to the Winnipeg Police Board

To: Chair and Members
Winnipeg Police Board

From: Gene Bowers, Chief of Police

Subject: Update Report

Date: June 5th, 2026

Today, as part of my submission to the Board you will find the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) first quarter updates for the 2026 Finance and Business Plans. You will also find several mandatory reports including our annual reports on Use of Force Reports, Bias Free Policing and Police Vehicle Operations. Once released, our annual reports are posted on our website.

The closing of Q1 marked twelve months of my tenure as Chief of Police. Throughout that time, I worked closely with my Executive team to share my vision, provide support, and foster alignment to ensure the Service is moving forward with a strategic focus.

I would like to note that last year, members of the Service were dispatched to a total of 254,183 events. Within these events, 780 reported incidents resulted in either the application of force or the presentation of a weapon by police members to gain compliance. Members resolved 99.7% of all dispatched events without having to resort to force.

Within the dispatched events, the Professional Standards Unit received a total of 127 complaints; 89 of the complaints did not require a formal investigation. The remaining 38 investigations were performed by the Professional Standards Unit. Two complaints were related to improper bias of which both investigations found that members acted appropriately.

Last year, there were 47 police pursuits. In adherence with policy and safety considerations, 31 pursuits were aborted; 14 pursuits resulted in an arrest being made and 4 pursuits resulted in injury (two suspects, three police members and one third party).

The Service is committed to bias-free policing and aligning with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. The Service has several directives that address the various standards, laws, code of conduct and regulation relating to bias, ethics, and cultural awareness. Every year, all members, both sworn and civilian staff, receive organizational communications detailing expectations and responsibilities of the membership.

The Service also demonstrates its commitment by providing extensive training to Recruits, Central Processing Officers (CPO) and Cadets. Officers receive over one week of bias-free

policing training, while CPOs and Cadets receive less as the time allocated is proportionate to the length of the training programs. Core to the training is bias-free approaches and human rights issues, including science-based methods to prevent implicit or unconscious bias. The training is designed to help members understand the legal and ethical implications of bias in policing, to promote openness and an appreciation for all cultures and communities, and to reinforce the importance of fair and equitable service delivery. A portion of the training is facilitated by external experts, community members or agencies to ensure the lived experiences and history are shared from their perspective.

Additional training is also made available to all sworn and professional members through the Training Division Course Calendar and the partnerships with the Canadian Police Knowledge Network, the City of Winnipeg's Corporate Training Division and various community members and external agencies. The variety of courses offered includes, Understanding and Developing Cultural Competence, Beyond Bias, Cultural Competence, Delivering Exceptional Customer Service Across Cultures, Using Racially and Ethnically Inclusive Language, Sweat Lodge Ceremony, and Trends in Diversity.

Our detailed Q1 Business and Finance updates speak for themselves. However, highlights from the various reports will be presented at the meeting. As with previous quarters, I intend to structure this report around competencies, with some highlights from both our finance and business plans. During the Board meeting I will also have presentations on the Rapid Response Unit, Body Worn Cameras and the Manitoba Integrated Missing Persons Coordination Centre.

PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

1. COMMUNITY SAFETY

During this quarter, the WPS continued to prioritize visible, accessible, and effective policing focused on reducing violent crime, property crime, traffic-related incidents, and victimization, while strengthening public confidence.

Operational Focus and Visibility

Through the implementation of monthly productivity measurements, regular monitoring and ongoing discussions with the commanders is helping to ensure the effective deployment of WPS policing resources. Additionally, the creation of the Rapid Response Unit in May is already relieving pressures on frontline general patrol units, improved response times, and freeing up Divisional Community Support Units to re-focus their efforts on areas impacted by emerging crime trends.

Targeted patrols and collaboration with our partners, which include Downtown Community Safety Patrol and the City of Winnipeg's Community Safety Patnership, have strengthened our capacity and our visibility in priority areas. Targeted patrols are aimed at enhanced safety and improved public confidence, and during Q1 we saw results:

- 25% increase in Foot Patrol hours (4,471) in the Downtown Foot Patrol Zones
- Deployment of Foot Patrol officers in Osborne Village is having a positive impact on deterrence and community confidence

Crime Trends and Outcomes

Targeted enforcement strategies continue to deliver positive results:

- **Violent Crime:** The Manitoba Integrated Violent Offender Apprehension Unit (MIVOAU) arrested 97 violent offenders in Q1; 40% of those arrested were for serious assaults and 6 arrests were related to homicide. During this quarter MIVOAU reached the milestone of 1,000 arrests since the unit's inception.

- **Property Crime:** On March 9th, Property Crime Unit Investigators arrested a 37-year-old female for a series of retails thefts from 23 business during which she stole merchandise valued at more than $10,000.

- **Drugs and Weapon Crime:** On March 7th, Central Division Community Support Unit officers entered a drug trafficking investigation. As a result, seven individuals were arrested and the following was seized: approximately 11 grams of cocaine, 27 gabapentin pills and 30 Percocet pills, as well as 4 replica air pistols, a collapsible baton, machete, fixed blade knife, body armour, approximately $550 in Canadian currency and a 2015 Rockwood Roo travel trailer (estimated value = $20,000).

- **Traffic Safety:** Traffic Division officers conducted the "Don't Drive High" information and enforcement campaign. During this campaign, WPS officers conducted 258 traffic stops, resulting in 112 drug screening tests. 63% of those tested were found to be driving under the influence of drugs.

- **Victimization:** April was Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The WPS released a series of short videos delivered through social media platforms targeting parents and youth highlighting the risks of meeting people online, the sharing of intimate images and sextortion schemes.

The WPS will continue to assess crime trends and adjust both deployment and public education strategies accordingly.

Community Confidence and Engagement

Community safety is multifaceted and requires more than simply an effective response to calls for service. Being visible and present in the community builds both trust and confidence with the communities we serve.

I participated in numerous community and business events, with many highlighted below:

- March 19th – Launch of the Manitoba Women in Law Enforcement
- March 25th – Walked with Northwest Bear Clan Patrol and City Councillor Sharma in Garden City



- April 9th – Joined the Brave the Shave event in support of Cancer Care Manitoba



- April 27th – Joined Sargeant Business Community at their Retail Crime Prevention Conference

- May 1st – Spoke at the Winnipeg Boys and Girls Club AGM



- May 5th – Red Dress – National Day of Awareness walk
- May 12th – Community Panel Discussion – Supervised Consumption Sites
- May 13th – Provided opening remarks at Victim and Survivors of Crime training event
- May 21st – TJ's Gift Foundation Gala Dinner



- May 22nd – Treaty Releations Committee of Manitoba 20th Anniversary event
- May 25th – Met with president of Pride Winnipeg

- May 29th – Pride flag raising at City Hall



- May 30th – Ride for Dad



- May 30th – 60th Anniversary of Guyana's Independence reception



Through visible policing, targeted enforcement, victim-centered practices, and strengthened community relationships, the Service continues to make measurable progress toward safer communities and sustained public trust.

2. OVERSEE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout this quarter, the WPS has operated a coordinated communications strategy aimed at informing the public, improving transparency, and growing public trust.

External Communications and Public Awareness
The WPS continues to focus on meaningful public communication, which is timely, transparent and strengthens public understanding.

Communication strategies included:

- **Media Advisories**
    - Provides timely notification of emerging incidents, safety risks and policing activity, designed to inform and provide public safety information.

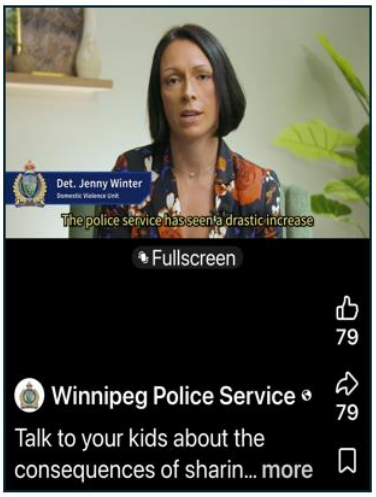






- **Media Releases**
    - Provides consistent reporting and information on crime trends, enforcement activity and WPS priorities for both the media and public. Helps to foster public understanding of emerging issues such as violent crime patterns, property crime and safety risks.
    - Between February 21st to May 28th, 2026, the WPS published 155 news releases. The WPS News Release Webpage was visited **51,281** times, with three releases garnering the most attention:
        - News Release – Interprovincial drug investigation leads to largest illicit drug seizure in Manitoba history, 33 individuals arrested page was visited **18,766** times
        - News Release - Homicide Investigation – Public Assistance page was visited **15,320** times
        - News Release – Transit bus assault and retail store assault of school-aged child leads to arrest of 27-year-old man page was visited **11,997** times

- **Proactive Public Safety Campaigns**
    - Designed to align with operational priorities and create public awareness about current crime trends, victimization and public safety.







- **Community Engagement**
    - Used to build trust and confidence in the WPS as a partner in collaboration with the community.







- **WPS Website Engagement**
    - The WPS website remains an easily accessible platform for the public to access information about the Service. Between February 21st to May 28th, 2026, the following engagement metrics are provided:
        - **Online Record Checks** page was visited **53,083** times

- **Report a Crime** page was visited **42,595** times
- **Police homepage** was visited **41,362** times
- **Crime Stoppers Wanted** visited **33,034** times
- **Recruitment** page was visited **27,785** times
- **Manitoba's Most Wanted** page was visited **14,622** times

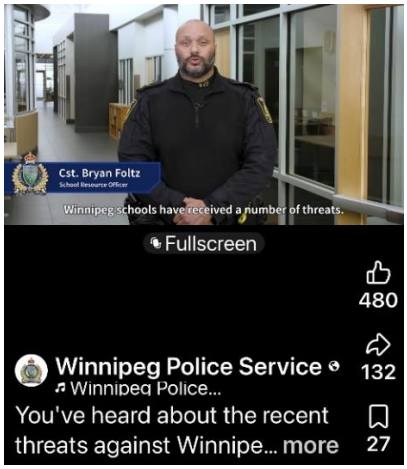
- **WPS Digital Engagement**
  - The WPS utilizes numerous social media platforms as part of our coordinated communications strategy. Between February 21st to May 28th, 2026, the WPS posted over 400 times with the following posts garnering the most views:

    - **YouTube** - "Just Hang Up!", an educational campaign aimed at older adults to avoid phone scams.



    - **Facebook** – Threats at school video
      - ✓ Reached 47.8K people
      - ✓ Generated 567 likes & interactions
      - ✓ Shared 139 times

    - **Instagram** – Threats at school video
      - ✓ Reached 42.3K people
      - ✓ Interacted with 2,343 times (liked, shared or saved)



Strategic Plan Communication

The WPS Business Plan aligns with and operationalizes the Service's Strategic Plan, which was established by the Winnipeg Police Board. The first quarter update to the Business Plan speaks directly to the WPS progress, addressing key initiatives and measurable outcomes.

The Business Plan update ensures the public, justice partners and our members understand how our strategic priorities and goals align with community safety.

Internal Communications and Organizational Understanding

Internally, I have prioritized clear, consistent communication across the entire WPS to ensure organization priorities, expectations and goals remain in focus.

Service communication has been accomplished throughout the ranks ensuring operational understanding and coordination, through:

- Business Plan Development with WPS Senior Management Group to foster understanding and create ownership of specific priorities and initiatives.
- Executive Management Team meetings to ensure organizational priorities remain aligned with the WPS Business Plan and progress is measured.
- Senior Managers have been tasked with communicating Service priorities to their members.
- Quarterly Strategic Tracking and Reporting (STAR) meetings, to ensure the initiatives to address the WPS's four strategic priorities and sixteen goals are measured and reported.
- Monthly performance reporting ensures adherence to WPS strategic priorities and goals.
- Internal platforms such as Member Updates, Chief's Status Check and Routine Orders provide communication directly to all WPS members and helps solidify understanding.
- I have focused my Executive Management Team on being more present with our frontline members through joining shift briefings, walking the beat and going on ride-a-longs with general patrol units.

The WPS's external communication strategies continue to engage the public, building understanding and trust. Internally, by focusing on coordinated communication we continue to foster Service-wide alignment with the WPS strategic priorities and goals.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL AND MEMBER WELLNESS

During this quarter, the WPS continued to expand our comprehensive approach to organizational and member wellness. Through my 36-year policing career, I have seen firsthand both the positive and negative impacts of policing on our members.

Member Wellness and Support

The WPS continues to focus on supporting the physical and psychological well-being of sworn and civilian members, through:

- Greater access to mental health support, including peer support programs and mental health clinician.
- Continued promotion of wellness programs, such as the member-driven Care Committee designed to foster connection and mutual support, peer support program and enhancements to the WPS Wellness Dashboard.
- Support following critical incidents, ensuring timely follow up and access to appropriate resources for members impacted by operational stress.

This work is important, as it helps to normalize and encourage seeking support in times of need.

Leadership

I have reinforced the importance of leadership at all levels and the value of clear expectations for all members at all ranks.

Through the development of new L.E.A.D. training (Leading with Empathy, Accountability and Dedication) we have equipped leaders with the tools necessary to lead. These consistent and accountable leaders understand the necessity to prioritize both operational effectiveness and the well-being of members.

Operational Workload and Resources

To address frontline demand, I have equipped general patrol Divisional Commanders with additional staffing resources to manage their respective dispatch queues.

Additionally, the newly deployed Rapid Response Unit (RRU) is a versatile and comprehensive support for frontline policing and community safety efforts. This unit has been introduced to relieve pressure on frontline officers, while ensuring timely response and improved service.

Accountability

WPS members want professionalism and accountability within the workplace. I have taken a series of actions to strengthen accountability and public trust; some noteworthy actions include:

- Strengthening leadership accountability through strategic planning sessions with both my Executive Management Team and WPS Senior Management Group.
- Improving transparency with the public through meetings with Manitoba Justice specific to planning for regulations and standards under Manitoba's Police Services Act to allow for greater transparency.

- Establishing clear performance expectations and developing key performance indicators to ensure accountability at every level of the Service.

Member Appreciation and Recognition

Prioritizing appreciation and recognition help to ensure our members feel valued, while strengthening commitment and contributing to both organizational and member wellness.

Appreciation and recognition take many forms, including recent acknowledgement of individual members and Service excellence:

- The James Toal Award of Excellence – James Sushnyk
- The Civilian Dedication Award – Maureen Musgrove
- National Telecommunicators Week
- National Police Week
- International Missing Children's Day – Missing Persons Coordinators

4. DRIVE INNOVATION AND MODERNIZATION

During this quarter, the WPS advanced several technologies which will enhance our Service's delivery model, create efficiencies and support community safety.

Data-Driven Policing

We continue to leverage data specific to operations and resource deployment, through:

- Crime analysis to identify crime hotspots and areas of risk.
- Targeted deployment strategies, such as Bail Compliance Unit, Rapid Response Unit, Manitoba Integrated Violent Offender Apprehension Unit, Foot Patrols and Community Support Units.
- Aligning dispatch queue volumes with supplemental resource deployment to ensure improved service delivery.
- Dashboards used to measure monthly productivity assessments to ensure effective service delivery service.

Service Delivery Partnerships

The WPS continues to explore and implement new service delivery partnerships with the goal of improving our quality of service and responsiveness.

- A data sharing partnership with the Downtown Community Safety Patrol (DCSP) to leverage their capacity to assist with specific calls for service.

Enhanced Functionality and Deployment of Existing Technologies

The Service's deployment of both the Connected Officer Program (COP) and Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS) platforms continues to evolve and create measurable efficiencies.

- Work is underway to update the COP and DEMS applications to their most current versions, which will provide enhanced user experience and additional functionality.
- The COP mobile application has been integrated into our existing DEMS environment, increasing the capacity for frontline and investigative officers to collect, manage and share digital evidence.

Technological Innovation

The WPS continues to explore and implement new technologies to improve the quality of investigations, create efficiencies and enhance public safety.

- Work is underway to replace our existing video interview room recording system with Axon Interview which is a powerful tool that delivers enhanced functionality through transcription, portable interview kits and automatic integration with our existing DEMS.
- The upcoming transition to Taser 10 directly supports community safety, providing a 45-foot deployment range (almost doubling our existing Taser 7), and increases deployment opportunities with ten independent probes. Service-wide roll-out is anticipated in late Q2 or early Q3, 2026.

Body Worn Camera Pilot Project

In Q1, the Service began the planning phase of our Body Worn Camera (BWC) pilot project, with the objective of testing and measuring this technology's ability to:

- Improve transparency and accountability
- Enhance public and officer safety
- Support investigative and court outcomes
- Build organizational readiness and capacity
- Assess the technology and our infrastructure readiness
- Identify future staffing implications

Throughout the six-month pilot that will commence in Q2 the Service will gather feedback from officers, justice partners and the public, in order to make data-informed decisions specific to any broader implementation.

This quarter is an example of my commitment to modernizing our police service with the goal of creating efficiencies and positively impacting community safety.

5. BUILD COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND ADVANCE RECONCILIATION

I have stated on numerous occasions my desire for the WPS to become leaders in Reconciliation. I believe this is only achievable by weaving reconciliation into the fabric of the Service. This statement is more than words, it is a continued commitment to action, by being present, listening and learning.

Throughout this quarter, the WPS has continued to strengthen and expand our partnerships with Indigenous and diverse community organizations, leaders and governments.

Promoting Internal Awareness

I have empowered our Indigenous members with opportunities to directly shape the Service's continued work towards Reconciliation, being respectful of the "nothing about us without us" principle.

Through participation in the Chief's Working Groups, Indigenous members have developed several meaningful initiatives designed to support and grow relationships with the Indigenous community, as well as build upon our shared commitment of Reconciliation.

Indigenous members worked directly with WPS Elder Mike Calder to ensure our work is culturally appropriate. We look forward to releasing details on several of these initiatives throughout June – National Indigenous History Month.

Similarly, I have worked directly with members from our 2SLGBTQIA+ Chief's Working Group to listen and learn about their lived experiences. Their willingness to share their perspectives has laid the foundation for a meeting between myself and the Pride Winnipeg President.

Although the relationship between the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and police has been strained, I am committed to fostering inclusion, respect and dignity, both within the WPS and the community.

In fact, this month will mark a historic moment for the Winnipeg Police Service as the Pride flag will be raised at our Headquarters building, restating our commitment to collaboration with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Many of these initiatives have resonated throughout the Service by increasing awareness, informing training and encouraging participation, and perhaps most importantly, ensuring that internal awareness continues to grow.

Advancing Reconciliation

I have continued to focus on meaningful communication with Indigenous leaders in both times of crisis and proactively.

In March, I was honoured to join Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) at their safety assembly, where several members of the Winnipeg Police Service participated in this meaningful discussion.



I continue to participate in community events honouring Indigenous communities. The May 5th Red Dress – National Day of Awareness walk was impactful and provided an opportunity for me and other WPS members to support the Indigenous community.



During Q1, planning specific to the WPS Indigenous Advisory Circle has continued with a targeted start in the coming months.

Community Engagement and Trust Building

Across the Service, members are involved in community boards, committees and agencies; they participate in community events and celebrations; and they work to foster positive relationships and partnerships with Indigenous, newcomer, diverse, racialized and other communities.

Division 51 Community Relations members take part in several community events. These are just some of the events that the Crime Prevention, Diversity, Indigenous Partnership (IPS), Cadets, Victim Services, Volunteer Services, School Resource, and School Education teams participated in during the past quarter:

- March 6 Speed Job Fair
- March 7 Save Our Children March
- March 8 Iranian Monarchists Rally
- March 11 Manitoba Moose – Project 11 - School Day Game
- March 12 Robertson School – Science Fair Judging
- March 19 Lord Nelson School Passion Project Fair Judging
- March 20 Manitoba Islamic Association – Ramadan Eid Al Fitr
- March 21 Devil May Care – Special Olympics Fundraiser
- March 28 Polar Plunge for Special Olympics
- March 28 Cooper Nemeth Memorial Hockey Day
- March 31 Youth Basketball Tournament – Elmwood Community Resource Centre
- April 1 Brave the Shave
- April 1 Youth Basketball Tournament – Elmwood Community Resource Centre
- April 2 Youth Basketball Tournament – Elmwood Community Resource Centre
- April 2 Autism Winnipeg PACE Annual Autism Awareness Day Walk
- April 4 Manitoba Moose Hockey Club - Mascot Palooza
- April 7 Sobeys - Coffee with a Cop

- April 11 Cadet Dog & Pony – Trade Show
- April 14 Sikh Flag Raising – City Hall
- April 17 Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology Annual Pow Wow
- April 21 City of Winnipeg - Waverley West Ward Personal/Business Safety
- April 22 N'dinawemak Community Care Team 2nd Annual Anniversary Walk
- April 25 Stop Endless War Rally/March
- April 27 Sargent Business Community (SBC) Conference
- April 30 Mini Olympics Duathlon - Sisler High School
- May 1 MADD Parade for Victims of Impaired Driving
- May 1 Mayday Protest - MB Legislature
- May 2 Japanese Cultural Association of Manitoba - Community Event – Kids Club
- May 2 Old Navy Outlet Collections Mall - Kids Safety Event
- May 2 Old Navy (Gap Inc) Polo Park
- May 2 37th Annual Traditional Graduation Pow Wow at University of Manitoba
- May 3 WPS Half Marathon
- May 3 Cinco de Mayo Celebration
- May 4-8 North American Occupational Safety and Health Week
- May 5 Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Awareness Walk
- May 6 McDonald's McHappy Day
- May 6 Vincent Massey Career Fair
- May 7 Save Our Children March
- May 9 Physio Fit Run
- May 9 Manitoba Organization for Victim Assistance Car Parade
- May 9 Walk Against Safe Consumption Site
- May 20 PKE Resource Show – Active Aging in Place
- May 20 Miles Macdonell Collegiate – Divisional Pow Wow

- May 23 Island Lakes Family Fun Day BBQ
- May 24 The 2nd Annual Circle of Unity Gathering
- May 26 Guyana Flag Raising
- May 26 Winnipeg Pro Pride 2026
- May 27 PKE Resource Show - Active Aging in Place
- May 27 Pembina Trails Spring Pow Wow – Fort Richmond Collegiate
- May 27 Great West Maintenance – Open House
- May 27 National Day of Action Walk
- May 28 St. James Assiniboine School Division Graduation Pow Wow
- May 29 Pride Flag Raising Ceremony – City Hall
- May 29 School Patrol Awards
- May 29 Recruit Class 173 Graduation Ceremony

The Service's Indigenous Partnership Section (IPS) continues to engage with the community directly, providing culturally appropriate support at various engagement opportunities:

- Weekly outreach at community organizations that provide service to Indigenous community members
- Multi-weekly visits to evacuation centers throughout the city, housing Cross Lake evacuees
- Attending community events (walks, vigils, protests)
- Engaging members in cultural learning opportunities and internal training

This quarter, the WPS continued to focus on community partnerships and reconciliation efforts.

In closing, I anticipate further opportunities to build as "Partners in Community Safety", moving our many shared initiatives forward.

Gene Bowers, Chief of Police