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POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee

September 2026 progress update

To	From	Report date
Police Accountability Board	Detective Superintendent Denise Harper	29 September 2026

Headline position. The eligible 1a workforce position at 28 September 2026 is 199.94 FTE against a target of 207.65 FTE. This is a shortfall of 7.71 FTE and equates to 96.29% achievement against the September target. September target allows up to 80% of the full year funding to be obtained.

1. Situation report

- The Senior Responsible Officer remains Detective Superintendent Denise Harper.
- The force continues to deliver the six pillars of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, with the September workforce checkpoint enabling up to 80% of the year's grant monies to be realised.
- The gross workforce in 1a is 205.70 FTE. This comprises 161.22 FTE police officers, 37.48 FTE PCSOs and seven student officers who are counted in the total because they are destined for 1a in Years 3 and 4.
- Long-term absence totals 5.76 FTE, comprising 4.76 FTE police officers and 1.00 FTE PCSO, and must be deducted from the gross position for the September return.
- The resulting eligible workforce position at 28 September 2026 is 199.94 FTE, which is 7.71 FTE below the September delivery-plan target of 207.65 FTE. This has been a conscious decision by the force to forgo the full 80% available amount in September with a view we can still obtain the total annual amount in March 2027 in order to ensure concentrated efforts on responding to the public. £112,084.32 is the amount that has not been redeemed that could have been at the September check point; this can be redeemed at the March 2027 final Y2 checkpoint.
- Neighbourhood Policing Programme training remains in delivery, with further NPP2 and NPP3 activity scheduled during 2026-27.

2. Police back on the beat: workforce growth and visibility

The Year 2 ring-fenced grant is £3,776,426 and the Year 2 uplift is 18 FTE. Funding is assessed against the combined officer and PCSO workforce recorded within 1a, including seven eligible personnel in training who are destined for neighbourhood policing. These

seven officers will come out of training and be assigned a neighbourhood role within the next two years.

As outlined in the previous quarterly report, we've realigned some posts to neighbourhood 1a posts, examples have been the Spree Offender Team and Rural Crime Team; this aligns the teams closer with their communities be that rural or business in line with the work they carry out. This move affirms pillar 5 in relation to safer town centres. Safer Schools officers have been moved into neighbourhood roles; model outlined further in section 3.6.

East Peterborough has had a growth of 1 Sergeant and 2 PCs uplifted to 2-12 and the team has split to cover two separate neighbourhood areas to enable more localised handling of complex issues in response to the ongoing work in relation to Alliance.

Since the last quarterly update we have seen a growth of 10 PCSOs. The September checkpoint is the first finance claim point in 2026-27.

2.1 Most recent long-term absence position

Workforce group	LTA FTE
Police officers	4.76
PCSOs	1.00
Total	5.76

Long-term absence remains volatile and has a direct effect on the eligible workforce reported at each checkpoint. The current total is 5.76 FTE.

2.2 Position at 28 September 2026

Projection step	FTE
Gross workforce in 1a, including seven student officers destined for 1a in Years 3 and 4	205.70
Less: police officer LTA	(4.76)
Less: PCSO LTA	(1.00)
Eligible 1a workforce position	199.94
September target	207.65
Shortfall against target	(7.71)

Achievement level 199.94 FTE represents 96.29% of the 207.65 FTE target. The position at 28 September 2026 is therefore 7.71 FTE below target.

2.3 Financial position

Measure	Projected position
Ring-fenced Year 2 grant	£3,776,426.00
Achievement against September target	96.29%
Projected September claim	£2,909,056.48
Unclaimed balance against full annual grant	£867,369.52

The projected claim of £2,909,056.48 reflects the current finance assessment of the September position. The claim remains subject to final workforce reconciliation, confirmation of eligibility and alignment between the workforce and financial returns.

3. Delivery against the wider Guarantee

3.1 Named and contactable officer for every neighbourhood

- All neighbourhood areas have named personnel and contact routes are available through the force website.
- Local priorities continue to be displayed for each neighbourhood area.

3.2 Guaranteed 72-hour response to neighbourhood queries

The previous reported position was approximately 70% of neighbourhood queries responded to within 72 hours. Performance improved to 96.2% in July 2026 and was 83.3% in August 2026. September is currently tracking at 76% with two days left to reckon. Performance continues to be tracked through Power BI and local supervision. Since the last board I have had a meeting with the tactical lead for NHPG seeking clarity around meaningful contact and what enquiries fall within the 72 hour guarantee. This guidance has been disseminated to NPTs with a view to improving our performance.

3.3 Professional neighbourhood policing capability

Training element	Latest recorded position
NPP1 modules 1 to 3	100%
NPP1 modules 4 to 6	61%
NPP2 modules 1 to 3	77%
NPP2 modules 4 to 6	Due to commence October 2026
NPP3 Sergeant and Inspector days 1 and 2	0% (24 booked; 11 not booked)
NPP3 Inspector day 3	0% (2 booked; 4 not booked)

Completion of NPP training remains linked to the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee and may influence future grant arrangements. Attendance, course booking and completion data therefore require continued active management which is being overseen by a Chief Inspector.

3.4 Neighbourhood policing abstractions

Accurate monitoring of abstractions is necessary to demonstrate the extent to which neighbourhood personnel remain focused on neighbourhood priorities and to provide assurance against the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.

Short term. Cambridgeshire Constabulary has introduced an abstraction policy which sets out the circumstances in which neighbourhood officers and staff may be abstracted from their core duties. The policy provides an immediate framework for greater consistency, oversight and accountability but relies on manually inputted data. Improved digital recording arrangements are being investigated.

Medium term. A digital solution will be requested to provide a more accurate, consistent and auditable account of abstraction rates. A number of digital patrol and deployment products are being explored, I hope to have this landed this year. The intention is to identify a proportionate interim solution that can be implemented for approximately one year, bridging the current capability gap and preparing the force for transition to a nationally agreed product.

Longer term. Following discussion with the NPCC tactical lead for the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, the current expectation is that a national digital solution is likely to become available during late 2027 as part of the national police service offer. Police forces are expected to be asked to use this solution to record and report neighbourhood abstraction rates. Cambridgeshire will therefore seek an interim arrangement that improves current reporting without creating unnecessary duplication or preventing future alignment with the national product.

The proposed approach will strengthen the evidence base, improve transparency and enable more reliable reporting to local and national governance arrangements. Progress on the interim digital option and readiness for the national solution will be reported through the Neighbourhood Policing Steering Group and Quality Testing and Tracking governance.

3.5 NPCC quality assurance of guarantee commitments

The NPCC will undertake quality assurance of selected Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee commitments and further information around timeframes will be communicated shortly. Initial communication has identified three areas to be quality assured, the areas set out below have been identified as relevant to Cambridgeshire's current delivery and assurance position.

Commitment	Requirement	Current position	Assurance / risk
Commitment 2: Pillar 1, police back on the beat	Respond to community and business queries within 72 hours.	Performance improved from approximately 70% at the previous reporting point to 96.2% in July 2026 and 83.3% in August 2026.	Following a meeting to discuss problems with contact within 72 hours for all members of the public clarity given and has been disseminated

Commitment	Requirement	Current position	Assurance / risk
			to the neighbourhood teams which will improve our performance.
Commitment 3: Pillar 2, community-led policing	Provide regular and ongoing opportunities for local engagement, including beat meetings, so communities can raise concerns and influence priorities.	Local engagement is being recorded through Power BI, including community interactions at team level. This provides evidence of activity while improved abstraction recording is developed.	This is the principal quality-assurance risk. Abstraction of neighbourhood personnel to assist with calls for service may reduce the capacity available for sustained local engagement and beat activity.
Commitment 4: Pillar 2, community-led policing	Provide accessible and up-to-date online information about neighbourhood teams, local priorities and routes for community input.	Named neighbourhood personnel, local priorities and contact routes are available through the force website.	The commitment is currently assessed as being delivered. Ongoing checks are required to ensure information remains current and accessible.

The abstraction work described in section 3.4 will support future assurance of Commitment 3 by providing a more accurate account of the time neighbourhood personnel remain available for neighbourhood activity. In the interim, Power BI engagement data will be used to evidence the volume and distribution of community interactions and to identify variation at team level.

3.6 Changes to Safer Schools

The standalone Safer Schools Team is being replaced by a model in which responsibility for engagement with schools and education settings sits within local Neighbourhood Policing Teams. Each school will have an identified neighbourhood policing contact, with activity prioritised according to local threat, harm, risk and vulnerability. Former Safer Schools officers will contribute to the wider range of neighbourhood policing duties supporting the organisation in responding to the public while retaining local expertise and supporting colleagues.

The revised model is intended to make engagement with children and young people a core responsibility across neighbourhood policing. Through the NHPG neighbourhood teams across Cambridgeshire have seen a growth in PCSOs; moving the portfolio to neighbourhoods gives an ability to utilise this resource growth. Delivery will focus on engagement, prevention, problem solving and partnership working, supported by PolEd as the consistent prevention education offer provided to schools by police. PolEd is a PSHE (personal, social, health and economic) and Citizenship education programme that provides schools with lesson plans, assemblies, and resources on topics where policing has expertise, including relationships, keeping safe, understanding the law, and wellbeing. Its aim is to help schools educate young people and keep children safe through evidence-based educational

materials. There are modules of which some are delivered by schools and others by the police.

Schools will retain clear routes into policing, safeguarding and intelligence pathways, while neighbourhood teams will work with education, local authority, safeguarding and youth-service partners to identify risk and intervene early.

Delivery will be monitored through a simple school engagement log, supported by a planned SharePoint solution, recording named contacts, meaningful engagement, key themes, outcomes, POLED status and risk. Sergeant Tinsley will remain as overseeing the school's portfolio from a central viewpoint. Neighbourhood sergeants will review activity monthly, with exceptions and risks escalated through existing neighbourhood and prevention governance. The model will be reviewed after the first academic year to assess school feedback, demand, partnership working and workforce resilience. In the interim delivery is monitored through the monthly child protection meeting.

Since this new model the northern area commander and partnerships Superintendents have attended the Peterborough head teachers cluster meeting to discuss changes and answer questions; same offering has been given to the Cambridge cluster meeting. Reattendance scheduled at the next meeting on the 1st December 2026.

4. Risks, mitigations and next steps

Risk	Impact	Required action
Long-term absence	LTA is excluded from the eligible 1a workforce and has reduced the position by 5.76 FTE.	Maintain weekly workforce reconciliation and identify likely return dates, further emerging absence and available mitigation.
September target shortfall	The position at 28 September 2026 is 7.71 FTE below target.	Complete final data validation and ensure all eligible postings and personnel destined for 1a are correctly recorded.
Movement in and out of 1a	Uncontrolled moves may reduce delivery and create misalignment between HR, workforce and finance returns.	Continue monthly postings governance and require early notification of all changes affecting 1a.
Training completion	Incomplete NPP training could affect professional capability and future funding arrangements.	Prioritise outstanding bookings, attendance and completion of NPP1, NPP2 and NPP3.
Future Years 3 and 4 growth	Further growth may place pressure on workforce flexibility, budgets and other operational functions.	Consideration of NHPG within workforce, finance and operational planning.
NPCC quality assurance of	Abstractions may reduce capacity for regular engagement	Use Power BI engagement data as interim evidence, monitor delivery at team level and

Risk	Impact	Required action
community-led policing	and create difficulty evidencing delivery of Commitment 3.	implement improved digital abstraction recording.

Board assurance and decision point. The position demonstrates substantial achievement at the September checkpoint, with an eligible workforce of 199.94 FTE against the target of 207.65 FTE. This is a shortfall of 7.71 FTE. The immediate priority is to finalise a single reconciled workforce and finance return and maintain clear mitigation and governance through to the March 2027 checkpoint.