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To: Police Accountability Board (PAB)
Report: Q1 2026/27 Performance Update to the OPCC PAB
Overview of Performance in the 12-months to 30th June 2026
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Executive Summary

Overall, the Constabulary remains in a positive position, with HMICFRS assigning the force 'Level One' status under the new UK Policing Performance System, meaning no enhanced support or intervention is required. In addition, the recent removal of the cause for concern relating to response and attendance times reflects sustained improvement in call handling and control room governance.

There are several areas of strong and/or improving performance. While there are still improvements to make, Incident response times improved year-on-year, with both immediate and priority response times improving. Investigation outcomes have strengthened, with the rolling 12-month solved rate reaching 17.8%, supported by improved performance across several crime types and notably increased arrest activity. Victim satisfaction remains high overall; public confidence measures compare favourably nationally; and anti-social behaviour incidents have reduced by more than eight percent.

However, there are also continuing and emerging pressures. Emergency caller demand has increased, while recent caller discontinuance rates require continued focus. Recorded crime rose by 1.7% locally against a national reduction, with increases in several crime types including dwelling burglary, domestic abuse, violence with injury, vehicle theft and drug trafficking. Knife-related performance is mixed, with hospital admissions for assault by sharp object increasing, although serious offences involving sharp or bladed weapons reducing slightly. While any increase in offences is always a cause for concern, it may also indicate an increased confidence to report. The Constabulary's knife crime lead is working to reconcile the detail behind the differing trends.

The Constabulary has established governance mechanisms and operational activity in place to address these challenges, including Operation Retail, Operation Silk and performance oversight through the Force Performance Accountability Meeting and other forums.

1 Introduction

1.1 This report summarises recent performance of the Constabulary. The report covers performance against the organisation's key priorities until the end of Q1 2026/27 (12-months to 30th June 2026), compared to the same point in the previous year (12-months to 30th June 2025).

1.2 The report also summarises the recent introduction of the UK Policing Performance System. Under this framework, Cambridgeshire Constabulary has been assigned Level One status, meaning no action or intervention is required from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) at this time.

2 Update on the Policing Performance System

2.1 As described in the previous performance update report to the OPCC PAB¹ in May 2026, the UK Policing Performance System² is a national framework, launched in July 2026 by HMICFRS alongside the Home Office and the College of Policing. It is a strengthened national approach for assessing, supporting and improving police performance across England and Wales. The framework replaces previous monitoring arrangements with a more joined-up, system-wide model involving wider policing partners.

2.2 The system has two main aims: to provide transparent and consistent assessment of force performance, and to enable earlier, more effective support or intervention where improvement is needed. Its overall purpose is to help forces achieve better outcomes for communities by combining clear standards with practical support. Assessments draw on independent inspection evidence, performance data

¹ Police Accountability Board held on 27th May 2026.

² <https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/policing-performance-system/>

from the Police Performance Framework and insight from the policing sector. This evidence base is intended to support fair, consistent and proportionate decision-making.

2.3 Each police force is assigned to one of four performance tiers: Level One (default/normal); Level Two (enhanced support); Level Three (targeted intervention); and Level Four (special measures). **Cambridgeshire Constabulary has been assigned Level One status.**

3 Call Handling

Cambridgeshire Constabulary has made sustained improvements in call handling, resulting in the removal of the HMICFRS cause for concern relating to response and attendance times. Emergency 999 demand has increased over the past year, with June 2026 seeing particularly high volumes and wider national pressures affecting service levels. Non-emergency 101 demand has reduced slightly over the long term, likely reflecting improvements in service delivery and reduced failure demand. National data indicates system-wide pressures, with fewer forces meeting the 90% service grade of service target.

3.1 On the 9th of July, the HMICFRS cause for concern: ‘The Constabulary needs to improve how quickly it responds to and attends incidents’ was removed³. In doing so, the HMICFRS commented that: *“Overall, Cambridgeshire Constabulary has made clear and sustained progress in addressing the causes of concern. This is particularly evident in the improvement the Constabulary has made in how quickly emergency calls are answered. This represents a strong performance and demonstrates the positive impact of strengthened governance, improved resourcing and a more focused approach in the constabulary control room”*.

3.2 However, the Constabulary recognises that it needs to do more to make sure these improvements are consistent and sustained. It acknowledges the need to further reduce the number of non-emergency callers who abandon their calls, and the need to continue to improve the time it takes to attend emergency incidents. The

³ <https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/publication-html/cambridgeshire-constabulary-causes-of-concern-closed-letter-july-2026/>

Constabulary understands these challenges and has put in place appropriate plans and activity to make further progress.

3.3 Both 999 and 101 call volumes are traditionally affected by seasonality; higher in the summer months and lower in the winter. Indeed, having experienced reduced demand in the winter months, overall call volumes increased into the spring and summer, with month-on-month increases seen from February to June. That said, the long-term trend over the last year differs between call-type: an increase for 999 calls (+2.3%) and a reduction for 101 calls (-1.0%).

3.4 999 call volumes have remained higher than the same month the previous year for ten of the last twelve months; in June alone, there were 442 additional emergency calls received than in the equivalent month a year earlier. Despite this increase, Grade of Service remained above target at 92.1% for the 12-months to June. Indeed, caller demand on both 999 and 101 calls was high in both May and June. Emergency call volumes increased to the highest level seen since September 2023 which contributed to a deterioration in monthly grade of service for both 999 and 101, with both falling below 90% in June.

3.5 National data⁴ indicates similar system-wide pressures, with fewer forces meeting the 90% service target. Just 24 forces met the 90% service target, down from 29 in April and 35 in March. A recent NPCC letter highlighted exceptional national demand for 999 services, with BT call handlers operating at “Black Alert”. While force-level impact data is not available, this context suggests wider pressure across the policing system. Cambridgeshire’s national position fell to 31st for grade of service and 32nd for average caller wait time, with the average wait increasing to 7.9 seconds.

3.6 Although the long-term trend for 101 call volumes continues to fall, with 1.0% fewer calls in the 12-months to June 2026 than the previous year, recent months have seen renewed pressure. June recorded an average of 693 calls per day, the highest monthly level since October 2023, while 101 grade of service fell to 85.5%, the lowest since January 2024. This has contributed to the rolling 12-month average

⁴ DPC (Digital Public Contact) Analysis and Reporting dashboard; latest data is to 31st May 2026. The call answering time is the time taken for the call to be transferred from BT to a force, and the time taken by that force to answer the call.

reducing to 90.7%, 3.5 percentage points below the previous year, with average caller wait time increasing from five to eight seconds.

3.7 Discontinuance rates on both the crime and public lines remain relatively low, albeit has shown several month-on-month increases, reaching 19.1% in June which is higher than the peaks seen last summer and the highest since January 2025. Despite the recent increase, the longer-term trend shows improvement, with the 12-month rate to the end of June at 14.4% compared to 17.4% in the previous year. Data also suggests that c.26% of our discontinuance is 'positive'⁵ i.e. likely due to channel shift when a caller has been made aware of alternatives to holding.

4 Incident Response

Incident response performance has improved over the past year, with Immediate and Priority median response times both better than the previous year and within force aspirations. However, recent months show some emerging pressure, particularly for Immediate-grade attendance, against a backdrop of rising incident demand and the expected summer peak.

4.1 The Constabulary achieved a median immediate grade response time of 15 minutes over the 12-months to June 2026; a one-minute improvement from the 12-months to June 2025 (16 minutes), and within the force's self-imposed target of 15 minutes. In addition, the Constabulary median for priority grade incidents was 48 minutes, an improvement from 51 minutes during the same period in 2025, therefore performing better than the force's aspirational response time of 60 minutes for priority grades.

4.2 In recent months, immediate grade attendance times have shown signs of deterioration. Officers attended 51.8% of immediates within 15 minutes (and 72.0% within 20 minutes) – both representing reductions from the all-time highs seen back in March 2026; this means that the force is still not attending 1 in 4 immediate grades within aspiration.

⁵ Positive discontinuance is defined as the caller's decision to disconnect, shortly after hearing a message advising of the availability of other contact channels.

4.3 Overall incident demand continues to show an annual increase, with the 12-months to June 2026 seeing an additional 0.9% (+1,466) total incidents compared with the 12-months to June 2025. This is expected to increase further throughout the summer months, as the Constabulary approaches its traditional peak demand period.

5 Recorded Crime

In the 12-months to the end of June 2026, overall recorded crime increased (+1.7%; +1,168 offences) when compared to the same point in 2025. This is against a backdrop of a national average reduction in recorded crime. However, the month of June 2026 saw a broadly stable level of recorded crime (-9 offences; -0.1%) compared with the previous June. Crime levels typically show seasonal variation, with offence levels expected to show an increase in the summer following the winter reductions. There are differences and fluctuations across most crime types.

5.1 The 12-month period to June 2026 saw a 1.7% increase overall, compared to the same point the previous year. Latest comparator data⁶ shows Cambridgeshire as one of fourteen forces reporting a year-on-year increase in recorded crime, whereas national average performance data shows a 1.4% year-on-year overall crime reduction.

5.2 Relative to the previous year, the 12-months to June 2026 saw reductions in several crime types across Cambridgeshire, including: Criminal Damage (-3.6%); Business Burglary (-4.7%); Cycle Theft (-9.8%); Public Order (-3.3%); Rape (-4.0%); Personal Robbery (-8.7%); Hate Crime (-4.3%); and Vehicle Crime (-5.7%); with a 13.9% reduction specifically for Theft from a Motor Vehicle.

5.3 Having shown a notable increase between 2020 and 2024, shoplifting offences have reduced by 8.1% year-on-year, thereby bucking the recent national trend. This improvement is likely to reflect the impact of Operation Retail, supported by SPREE teams and dedicated Neighbourhood Officers. Activity has been underpinned by a clear Force 4P delivery plan, strengthened governance and accountability arrangements, monthly performance oversight, enhanced engagement with retailers

⁶ National comparator data available to April 2026. Source: iQuanta; RESTRICTED.

and local BID partners, and improved analytical capability to identify emerging trends, hotspot locations and operational opportunities.

5.4 Increases are seen in other types of crime across the county: Arson (+14.1%); Burglary Dwelling (+16.4%); Child Sexual Abuse (+9.0%); Domestic Abuse (+2.3%); Sexual Assaults (+5.9%); Stalking and Harassment (+0.9%); Violence with Injury (+5.1%); Violence without Injury (+1.9%); Theft of Motor Vehicle (+14.1%); and Possession of Weapons offences (+13.9%).

5.5 In respect of Burglary Dwelling, early analysis suggests several factors may be influencing the increase in recorded crime levels, including repeat reporting by vulnerable individuals; offences being recorded in line with national crime recording standards where incidents cannot be disproven, and additional crimes identified either through TICs, linked offender investigations and/or proactive operations. Several significant investigations during 2025/26 have also resulted in historic and linked burglaries being reopened or newly recorded, contributing both to increased crime volumes and improved detection rates. There is currently no evidence to suggest prisoner release schemes are driving the increase. Local teams continue to actively manage known prolific offenders through targeted enforcement and Integrated Offender Management arrangements.

5.6 There has also been a notable year-on-year increase (+285%) in Drugs Trafficking offences. Offence levels rose considerably from July to November 2025⁷, owing to a change in recording practice, where importation offences are now recorded as crimes rather than intelligence submissions. The Constabulary is tackling this via Operation Silk, which is referenced later in the report (section 10).

5.7 The Constabulary is aware of the challenges posed around the increasing trend in crime types listed above. Robust and established internal management processes⁸ ensure that officers are aware of the issues faced, not just in terms of crime 'type' but also by geography and locality, so that specific plans can be drawn

⁷ Offence levels peaked in November (308) with a marked reduction observed since (June 2026; 96 offences), albeit still above previous average levels of c.30-45 offences per month.

⁸ Includes Daily Management Meetings (DMMs); Tactical Tasking and Coordination Groups (TTCGs); and a fortnightly Crime Performance and Accountability Meeting (CPAM).

up and executed. As seen with shoplifting offences, spree offending teams are typically adept at producing good performance in terms of tackling rising offences.

6 Knife Offences and Serious Violence

Overall, knife-related crime metrics show mixed trends: A&E admissions for assaults by sharp objects have risen in the last year although remain notably lower than 2020 levels, while the Constabulary has recorded more serious sharp/bladed-weapon offences alongside a small improvement in solved outcomes. While an increase in offences is a cause for concern, it may also indicate an increased confidence to report. The Constabulary has also begun tracking performance against the Government's target in the recently published Knife Crime Action Plan.

6.1 The number of admissions to A&E for assault by sharp object for all patients shows an increasing trend during the first six months of 2026. Indeed, for the 12-months to 30th June 2026, there has been an increase (+38.7%; +12 admissions) compared to the 12-months to June 2025⁹. Longer-term, there has been a c.40% reduction since the 12-months to March 2020. During the course of the last year, the number of hospital admissions for assaults where the weapon was a knife has remained broadly stable (15).

6.2 In contrast, in the 12-months to June 2026, there has been a 2.3% reduction (-13 offences) in serious offences involving a sharp/bladed weapon relative to the previous year. The reduction was driven in North Area (-5.6%; -18 offences) which masks a small increase in South Area (+1.8%; +5 offences). In terms of solved outcomes for these offences, there has been a 1.5ppt improvement year-on-year, rising from 16.0% to 17.5% at the end of June 2026. The force continues to work hard to understand the problem, and improved performance is anticipated throughout 2026/27.

6.3 The [Knife Crime Action Plan](#) published by the Government in April 2026 made it clear that the baseline for their target of halving knife crime is the 12-months to June 2024. Page 73 of the plan describes the headlines measures to be used for

⁹ Increased provision of data is likely to be driving the reported rise. A bespoke Power BI report to aid analysis of this evolving dataset was made available to officers and staff in early July.

performance reporting, and includes the following knife-enabled offences: assaults with injury/intent to cause serious harm; robbery; homicide; threats to kill; attempted murder; rape; and sexual assault. Each of these offences is complex, affecting different cohorts of victims, in different places and with distinct underlying drivers. To understand and effectively respond to the challenges faced, the Government are also tracking a suite of supporting metrics beneath this headline measure. This includes NHS data on the volume of admissions to hospital for assault with sharp object injuries (as already routinely reported; see paragraph 6.1 above).

6.4 Cambridgeshire performance¹⁰ against this Government target will be included in this, and future iterations, of this report. The baseline figure for the 12-months to June 2024, is 448 offences recorded and therefore meeting the Government target would mean a reduction to 224 offences. In the 12-months to June 2026, there were 447 such offences recorded.

7 Investigation Outcomes

Investigation outcome performance has improved significantly in early 2026, with the rolling 12-month all crime solved rate increasing to 17.8% by June, up 2.9 percentage points year-on-year and above the latest national and MSG averages. Improvements are evident across both Local Policing Areas and several key crime types, supported by increased arrest activity, stronger use of charging outcomes and continued application of out of court resolutions.

7.1 The rolling 12-month all crime ‘solved rate’ remained broadly stable throughout 2025, at between 14.5% and 15.0% across the year, but has shown significant improvement in the first six months of 2026. Indeed, there has been some notable performance highlights, not least that four of the first six discrete months attained a 20%+ solved rate, meaning the rolling 12-month outcome rate has climbed to 17.8% at the end of June – up 2.9ppt from 14.9% at the same point in 2025. Most recently

¹⁰ There are a number of caveats applied to the collation of this data. One is the correct ‘marker’ being applied into the Athena records management system, in order to correctly identify the type of offence for inclusion. The definition of ‘knife offence’ differs from that used to submit ADR160. This is a Home Office data collection, often used in statistics from the Office for National Statistics, to record offences involving knives or sharp instruments. It captures incidents where a sharp instrument is used (even without causing injury) or intended for use, excluding remote or idle threats. It includes items like knives, axes, and broken bottles, but excludes screwdrivers.

available national data has the overall (national) rate at 15.3% over the 12-months to April 2026, and Cambridgeshire's MSG at 15.6%.

7.2 North Area has seen the same positive trend, with the 12-month solved rate increasing for the ninth month in a row, to 18.0% for year ending June 2026 (+3.5ppt). The monthly solved rate in June was 19.5% (508 solved crimes), significantly higher than the 12-month average and 7.5 ppt higher than June 2025 (12.0%). Both districts recorded a significantly high monthly outcome rate in June; 17.8% for Fenland (114 solved crimes) and 20.0% for Peterborough (394 solved crimes). As a result, both districts' rolling 12-month outcome rate increased to an annual high; up by 0.8ppt in Fenland to 14.8% and 0.7ppt in Peterborough to 19.1%.

7.3 Performance was also positive in the South Area, the 12-month solved rate increased by 0.7ppt month on month to 17.7%. This was significantly higher than 12-months earlier (+2.8ppt year on year). The monthly solved rate was also significantly high - at 21.4% - in June (695 solved crimes). This was the highest monthly outcome rate in the last three years and 7.1ppt higher than June 2025. All districts have a rolling 12-month outcome rate which is an annual high and all districts apart from Cambridge City have a long-term outcome rate which is statistically significantly higher than the same point last year (although still showing notable improvement).

7.4 The improvements have arisen from increases in the solved outcome rates of several crime types, including: Burglary Dwelling (+3.3ppt); Rape (+4.2ppt); Business Robbery (+11.2ppt); Theft from Motor Vehicle (+4.5ppt); Drugs Possession (+4.9ppt) and Public Order (+1.3ppt). There has also been continued significant improvement in the Constabulary's Shoplifting outcome rate (+12.3ppt year on year), with recent performance improvements driven by the work of Operation Retail.

7.5 In respect of Burglary Dwelling, despite the notable increase in offence levels, the solved outcome rate (14.1%) has shown a year-on-year improvement and now ranks significantly higher than both the national average (8.5% solved rate) and MSG average (9.1% solved rate).

7.6 The Constabulary remains focused on achieving the best possible outcomes for all victims of crime. Performance (and related actions) are suitably managed

principally through the Force's monthly Performance Accountability Meeting (FPAM), the Crime Standards Delivery Group (CSDG) and the Crime Performance and Accountability Meeting (CPAM). Analytical work suggests that improved solved outcome performance is intrinsically linked not only to higher arrest rates, but also to the robust application of Out of Court Resolutions (OoCR) and increased rates of charging outcomes.

7.7 The increase in arrests during the last eight months has been notable, with a clear upward trend in arrest numbers being observed. In the 12-months to June 2026, there were 10,945 arrests which represents almost a 10% increase year on year (10,003 in the 12-months to June 2025). An annual high of 1,012 arrests¹¹ were made in June alone. On average there were 33 arrests per day, compared to the 12-month average of 30 arrests a day. For the second month in a row the number of arrests for violence against the person offences (840) was the highest seen in any month. There was also a high number of arrests for domestic abuse (336), criminal damage and arson (204), public order (98) and fraud (24).

7.8 In Cambridgeshire, the term OoCR primarily includes Conditional Cautions (CC) for adults, Youth Cautions (YC), and Community Resolutions (CR). All of these are options for disposing of a crime following investigation, by delivering a positive outcome, i.e. a detected crime. Each have their own nuances and processes.

7.9 During the 12-months to the end of June 2026, there were 3,302 OoCRs issued by the Constabulary, which represents a 1.2% increase when compared with the 12-months to the end of June 2025 (3,263 OoCRs issued). During this period, the figures equate to more than a quarter (c.28%) of all 'solved outcomes' achieved (n=11,904), across both Local Policing Areas. This continues to be reduced compared to the previous reporting quarter, due to an increased volume of charging outcomes the beginning of 2026.

7.10 More than four-in-ten OoCR are issued for violence against the person crimes; predominantly lower level offences such as common assault and battery. OoCR are also frequently used for drugs offences (mainly simple possession

¹¹ July 2026: 1,058 arrests were made, therefore surpassing June's previous high.

offences) and theft offences, excluding burglaries. Two-thirds (2,160; 69.1%) of OoCR issued were Community Resolutions, and this is broadly true for disposals across both Local Policing Areas. A CR is for use in lower-level crime and is guided by a crime's score on the gravity matrix. To deliver a CR, a victim statement is not required, and neither is a PACE interview, but the offender must show some acceptance of responsibility. Failure to comply with a CR is not an enforceable matter, and it is also important to note that a CR is not a conviction.

7.11 Some common diversions used on a CR are:

- Writing a letter of apology;
- Completion of online courses such as anger management, thinking skills;
- Substance misuse referrals; and
- An officer consequence session (an officer explaining the consequences of the criminal actions etc)

7.12 In terms of scrutiny and oversight mechanisms, there are two scrutiny panels (Adult and Youth Panels) to review previously completed investigations where OoCR were utilised, and so provide comment on the suitability of use of OoCR in those investigations. These panels are chaired independently but a 'police voice' is required, to provide professional advice and guidance as a subject matter expert. The Terms of Reference for each panel have recently been refreshed. There is a continued drive to increase officer knowledge and confidence in the application of OoCR.

8 Victim Satisfaction and Public Confidence

Overall victim satisfaction rates have remained broadly stable (and relatively high) throughout the course of the last year. There are small differences for victims of different crime types; victims of Dwelling Burglary return the highest satisfaction rates, and has shown improvement during the last twelve months. Satisfaction rates for victims of Hate Crime fell notably. Although numerically lower than Dwelling Burglary satisfaction, the satisfaction rate for victims of Violent Crime have improved. The Crime Survey for England and Wales shows Cambridgeshire ranks high in several measures, and ranks second in the country for 'Trust in Police'.

8.1 Overall satisfaction with victims' whole experience with Cambridgeshire Constabulary has improved in recent months, reaching 79.4% (n=1,269) in the 12-months to June 2026, up by 1.3ppt relative to the same point in 2025. Indeed, each of the last four discrete months (March to June inclusive) has returned satisfaction rates in excess of 81%. A previous peak of 80.3% was reached in the 12-months to the end of January 2025, but satisfaction rates had since reduced and stabilised around the 78% mark since then.

8.2 Satisfaction rates for victims of Dwelling Burglary remain the highest, at 88.1% (n=472), up 2.7ppt from a year prior. Despite scoring highly in June 2026 (93.8%), Hate Crime victim satisfaction reduced significantly over the last 12-months, by 4.8ppt, to 73.2% (n=190); whereas Violent Crime victim satisfaction improved, up 1.8ppt to 74.6% (n=607). Domestic Abuse victim satisfaction has risen, at 81.0% (n=126) over the 12-months to June 2026, up 5.6ppt relative to the same point in 2025.

8.3 The latest Crime Survey for England and Wales data¹² (the 12-month period to year ending March 2026) shows that Cambridgeshire continues to perform well against a number of key metrics:

- Cambridgeshire Constabulary is the second-highest ranked force in England and Wales for 'police in this area can be trusted', with 78.1% of surveyed residents agreeing (national average 72.0%);
- Cambridgeshire Constabulary is the ninth-highest ranked force in England and Wales for 'police would treat you fairly' with 64.8% of surveyed residents agreeing (national average 60.2%); and
- Cambridgeshire Constabulary is the sixth-highest ranked force in England and Wales for 'overall confidence in local police', with 73.1% of surveyed residents agreeing (national average 67.1%)

9 Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour takes many forms, from aggressive, noisy or nuisance behaviour to neighbourhood disturbances involving drugs, abandoned cars or

¹² Data for the 12mths to 31st March 2026; released 23rd July 2026. [Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales](#)

animals. The volume of ASB incidents has fallen during the last 12-months, with the rate of reduction accelerating since the last quarterly report; in addition, response times to these incidents have either improved or remained stable. Work continues to improve how the force identifies and responds to repeat ASB callers.

9.1 In the rolling 12-months to June 2026, ASB incident numbers (n=10,771) showed a reduction (-8.2%), with 959 fewer incidents year-on-year. When broken down by Local Policing Area, reductions are seen in both North and South Areas: North; 458 fewer incidents (-8.3%) and South; 501 fewer incidents (-8.1%).

9.2 Coupled with reducing ASB incident volumes, response times have broadly shown improvement during the last year. At Constabulary level, the median response time to immediate grade ASB incidents was 14 minutes in the 12-months to June, a one-minute improvement from a year prior. For priority grade ASB incidents, the median response time of 31 minutes was stable when compared to a year previously. There are small differences by geography when broken down at Area and district level.

10 Disrupting Drugs Supply and County Lines

Recorded drug offence numbers are influenced by proactive police work more than numbers of most other offence types. In Cambridgeshire, recorded drug offences increased notably (+85.4%) over the year, largely driven by a rise in trafficking offences following a change in recording practice that now counts importation as crime. The Constabulary is managing the additional demand through Operation Silk and an established tactical plan. Drug-related stop and search remains the most common reason for searches, with an improved find rate year-on-year.

10.1 Since the recording of many drugs offences reflects positive, proactive police work, any increase in drug offences is not necessarily seen as a negative indicator of performance. The total number of overall recorded drug offences, for the 12-months to the end of June 2026 (3,228 offences), has shown a significant increase year-on-year, +85.4% higher than the 1,741 offences recorded in the 12-months to the end of June 2025.

10.2 Force-wide levels of drug trafficking offences had remained broadly stable – at c.30-50 per month – in the year to June 2025; however, there was then a sharp, notable increase in offence levels, peaking at 308 offences in November 2025 alone, which compared with 52 in the same month in 2024. This increase was due to a change in recording practice, where importation offences are recorded as crimes rather than intelligence submissions. It is important to note that such offences have reduced in 2026, but remain at higher levels than prior (c.90-120 per month).

10.3 Proposals to deal with this additional demand via Operation Silk are underpinned by an established tactical plan, with benchmarking suggesting other forces are taking varying approaches. The Constabulary's Crime Registrar confirms that the approach taken by Cambridgeshire adheres to national protocol and exemplifies ethical recording practice. There is a clear upward trend in drug trafficking offence levels, with the rolling 12-months to March (1,771) remaining significantly higher than a year earlier (460).

10.4 Although performance at district level is volatile and subject to monthly fluctuation, the previously seen increasing trend of simple possession offences at force-wide level has resumed. Offence levels for the rolling 12-months to June 2026 (1,455) are 14.0% higher than at the same point in 2025 (1,276).

10.5 In terms of detection performance, an overall solved outcome rate of 44.3% was achieved for all drug offences in the 12-months to the end of June 2026, which is significantly lower than reported in the previous year (67.6%). The split by offence type is shown below, with a 2.0ppt improvement seen for possession offences whereas drug trafficking detection performance has notably deteriorated. This is likely driven by the spike in Operation Silk importation offences as described above.

- Drug trafficking: current performance 15.9% vs. 12mths earlier 56.5%
- Simple possession: current performance 76.5% vs. 12mths earlier 71.6%

10.6 Drug-related stops/searches continue to account for the highest proportion of all stops/searches across Cambridgeshire (68.0% in the 12-months to June 2026). Of the 1,976 stops/searches for drugs, drugs were found in 820 of those (a 41.5% find rate) which is improved compared to performance a year earlier (39.4% find rate). Furthermore, drugs continue to account for almost four-in-ten (38.1%) of all

intelligence submissions (n=32,463), although the long-term trend continues to show a reduction.

11 Recommendations

11.1 It is recommended the Police Accountability Board note the contents of this report.