Police Accountability Board

25 August 2026 13:00

Members Present: Darryl Preston (Police and Crime Commissioner)
Simon Megicks (Chief Constable, Cambridgeshire Constabulary)
Jack Hudson (JH) (Chief Executive Officer and Monitoring Officer, Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC))
Phil Trussell (PT) (Chief Finance Officer, OPCC)
Jon Lee (JL) (Chief Finance Officer and Director of Resources, Cambridgeshire Constabulary)

Other attendees: Leighton Hammett (LH) (Assistant Chief Constable, Cambridgeshire Constabulary)
Sarah Cooper (SC) (Head of Corporate Communications, Cambridgeshire Constabulary)
Louisa Barry (LB) (Staff Officer – Detective Inspector, Cambridgeshire Constabulary)
Nicky Edwards (NE) (Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Commissioning, OPCC)
Cristina Turner (CT) (Director of Strategic Partnerships, OPCC)
Catherine Kimberley (CK) (Head of Communication and Engagement, OPCC)
Michelle Lord (ML) (Senior Governance and Compliance Officer, OPCC)
Charlie Murfitt (CM) (Office Manager, OPCC)

1. Welcome and Apologies *(Standing Agenda Item)*

1.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner (the "Commissioner") welcomed everyone who had joined this Police Accountability Board (the "Board").

1.2 No apologies were received.

2. Declarations of Interest *(Standing Agenda Item)*

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Approve previous Board minutes *(Standing Agenda Item)*

3.1 The minutes of the Board held on 7 July 2026 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters/Actions arising *(Standing Agenda Item)*

4.1 There were four actions from the previous Board meeting which were completed.

1) Future update on effectiveness of 3 in 30 to be incorporated in ASB update at the next meeting on 16 October.
2) The source and purpose of forthcoming NHPG quality assurance activity was confirmed as being led by an Inspector at the NPCC.
3) The final version of the Knife Crime Concentration Fund problem-oriented policing plan will be shared with the OPCC upon completion.
4) The Annual Integrity and Assurance Report was confirmed as being referenced within the Annual Governance Statement.

5. Performance Update Q1 2026/27

5.1 This report was presented by the Chief Constable. The purpose of this report was to provide an overview of current performance. The Board was recommended to note the contents of the paper.

5.2 The Chief Constable discussed the impact of significant summer demands on call handling and response performance. It was noted that several days generated demand levels exceeding those normally experienced on a New Year's Eve. Work continues to improve resilience through recruitment, workforce planning and technology-enabled solutions.

5.3 Whilst recorded crime increased by 1.7% over the rolling twelve-month period, crime levels had reduced over the most recent six months. Reductions were reported across several offence categories, including cycle theft, robbery, rape, hate crime and vehicle crime. Burglary remains an area of focus, although recent reductions and improved outcomes were reported.

5.4 The Chief Constable reported continued improvements in crime outcomes, with the overall outcome rate now exceeding 18%. Strong performance was also reported in relation to burglary and shoplifting outcomes. Victim satisfaction and public confidence measures remain high. The Commissioner welcomed the positive performance in these areas.

5.5 The Board discussed the variance between recorded knife crime data and hospital admission figures. It was noted that additional data sources are now included within the analysis and further work is required to understand the relationship between the datasets and provide assurance regarding the overall picture of knife-related offending and harm.

ACTION: Further analysis of knife crime indicators, including hospital admission data, to be reported through future Performance Boards.

6. BCH Collaboration – Firearms & Explosives Licensing Update

6.1 This verbal update was presented by the Chief Constable. The purpose of this update was to provide the Board with developments related to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) accelerated cause for concern. The Board was recommended to note the update and monitor further developments.

6.2 All outstanding renewals dating back to 2023 have been completed and the volume of outstanding renewals from subsequent years continues to reduce. The team is currently processing approximately 200 renewals per week, and temporary permits have reduced significantly. Focus is now moving towards reducing outstanding grant applications whilst maintaining progress on renewals.

6.3 The Chief Constable advised that progress is currently ahead of original projections and that the service is moving closer to a return to business-as-usual arrangements. HMICFRS recently undertook a reinspection, and the Board was advised that the significant recovery work undertaken across the BCH alliance had resulted in substantial improvements.

6.4 The Commissioner acknowledged the progress achieved and reiterated his support for decisions regarding resource allocation required to sustain recovery.

7. Artificial Intelligence

7.1 This report was presented by the Chief Constable. The purpose was to provide assurance regarding the governance, oversight and current use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies within Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

7.2 The Chief Constable emphasised that AI presents opportunities to improve productivity, enhance public services, support operational decision-making and deliver better outcomes for victims and communities. It was noted that technology should be viewed as an enabler to improve efficiency and effectiveness rather than simply a cost-saving measure.

7.3 A discussion took place regarding governance and oversight arrangements. It was recognised that robust governance structures are required to ensure public confidence and appropriate scrutiny as AI capability develops. Several technologies are already being used or explored, including Microsoft Copilot, transcription services, citizen-facing tools and call-handling solutions.

7.4 JH updated the Board on progress towards the establishment of an independently chaired AI Scrutiny Group. Work is ongoing to secure broad representation, and it is anticipated that the first meeting of the group will take place within the coming months. JH will continue to update the Board on progress.

7.5 The Commissioner expressed support for the proposed approach, noting the importance of maintaining effective governance alongside innovation.

8. Corporate Communications Update Q1

8.1 This report was presented by Head of Corporate Communications, Sarah Cooper. The purpose of this was to update the Board on actions carried out by the department during Q1 2026/27 in support of the Chief's statutory engagement role.

8.2 Media activity had increased significantly during the quarter, driven in part by a high-profile incident which generated substantial national interest. The communications team were commended for effectively managing media engagement throughout the period.

8.3 Several successful awareness campaigns have taken place, including activity linked to the Herbert Protocol, which achieved significant public reach and engagement. Positive outcomes were also reported from campaigns relating to road safety, violence reduction and community safety.

8.4 Internal communications activity has continued to support awareness of organisational mission, vision and values, with increasing engagement from staff across the organisation.

8.5 The potential risks associated with emergency government alerts for victims of domestic abuse was discussed. It was agreed that any communication approach should align with national guidance and wider resilience arrangements rather than being developed in isolation

9. Complaints Review Team Update Q1

9.1 This report was presented by the Chief Constable. The purpose of this report was to update the Board on complaints and trends identified through the Complaints Review Team in Q1 2026/27. The Board was recommended to note the contents of the report.

9.2 Complaint volumes increased when compared to the same reporting period in 2025. However, the number of allegations had reduced marginally along with the

proportion of complaints requiring service recovery. A significant proportion of complaints are resolved through early engagement, clarification and explanation.

9.3 The Chief Constable highlighted that victim updates continue to feature within complaint themes, reiterating the importance of keeping victims informed regarding the progress of investigations. It was agreed that maintaining effective communication with victims remains key to promoting public trust and confidence.

9.4 A discussion took place regarding the potential impact of AI on complaint volumes, with observations that AI tools may be being utilised to write complaints, which adds a noticeable amount of depth to a complaint than in previous times.

10. Revenue and Capital Monitoring Report Period 3

10.1 This report was presented by Jon Lee (JL), Chief Finance Officer and Director of Resources. The purpose was to report on the revenue and capital budgets to Period 3 – end of June 2026. The Board was recommended to note the contents of the paper.

10.2 The revenue budget remains broadly balanced with a projected underspend of £172k, whilst the capital programme is forecasting an underspend of £346k. Officer pay underspends were being offset by increased overtime costs and expenditure associated with the firearms licensing recovery programme.

10.3 Additional pressures relating to estate transition costs and fuel expenditure were also highlighted. It was reported that interest earned on cash balances was currently outperforming budget assumptions.

10.4 The Board discussed the costs associated with the firearms licensing recovery programme and sought additional information regarding staffing levels and resource deployment.

Action: JL to provide further detail on the staffing profile and associated costs of the firearms licensing recovery programme.

11. Final Outturn 2025/26

11.1 This report was presented by JL. The purpose was to report on the final outturn position for 2025/26. The Board was recommended to note the contents of the report.

11.2 The final revenue position reflected an underspend of £631k, representing only minimal movement from the provisional outturn previously reported. Capital slippage of £5.5 million related largely to project timing and will carry forward into future financial years.

11.3 The Board discussed the current reserves position and noted that most reserves are earmarked against specific risks, liabilities and future investment requirements. Discussion also took place regarding future estate requirements and technology investment, recognising the ongoing need to modernise infrastructure whilst maintaining financial resilience.

12. Early Intervention and Prevention

12.1 This report was presented by JH and Cristina Turner, Director of Strategic Partnerships. The purpose was to share the draft Early Intervention and Prevention Deep Dive prior to submission to the Police and Crime Panel in September.

12.2 Discussion focused on the impact of partnership working across a range of prevention initiatives, including serious violence reduction activity, youth interventions, offender management and domestic abuse perpetrator programmes. The benefits of collaborative approaches and the importance of demonstrating outcomes from funded interventions was acknowledged by the Board.

12.3 The Assistant Chief Constable and Commissioner discussed the presentation of youth justice data and highlighted the need to ensure that performance information demonstrates impact. It was agreed that further consideration would be given to how these measures are described within future reports.

13. Delivery Plan Update

13.1 This report was presented by Nicky Edwards, Assistant Chief Executive Officer and Director of Commissioning. The purpose was to share the update which is being taken to the Police and Crime Panel's September meeting which reports on delivery across all five pillars of the Police and Crime Plan 2025-28.

13.2 Progress continued across all five pillars, with updates reflecting activity delivered by both the OPCC and partner organisations. A recent internal audit provided substantial assurance regarding governance arrangements supporting delivery and performance monitoring.

13.3 The Commissioner thanked OPCC team members, officers and partners for their contribution and noted the organisation's continued success in securing external funding and delivering innovative projects.

14. HMICFRS *(Standing Agenda Item)*

14.1 The Chief Constable notified the Board that the Firearms Licensing thematic report is expected to be published shortly.

15. Decision Notices *(Standing Agenda Item)*

15.1 The purpose of this standing agenda item was to provide a summary of the decisions of significant public interest that have been taken by the Commissioner since the last Board, which was held on 7 July 2026. These were as follows:

- C-OPCC-26-010 Confidential

16. Any Other Business *(Standing Agenda Item)*

16.1 The next Board meeting will take place on 16 October 2026, 13:00-15:00.



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Darryl Preston

Police and Crime Commissioner