



Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel - Public Report	
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Agenda Item	X

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Police and Crime Plan – Thematic Pillar Update

ANNUAL INTEGRITY & ASSURANCE REPORT 2025-26 (DRAFT)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update to the Police and Crime Panel (the “Panel”) on the progress made delivering against the ‘Building Trust and Confidence’ pillar in the Police and Crime Commissioner’s (the “Commissioner”) Police and Crime Plan 2025-28 (the “Plan”). This report sets out how the Commissioner gains assurance that ethical standards, transparency, legitimacy and professional behaviour are maintained and upheld across the Constabulary during the reporting year. Rather than providing an exhaustive description of all controls and governance processes, it summarises the key mechanisms, evidence, outcomes, learning and assurance activity.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Panel is recommended to review the contents of this report, scrutinise the Commissioner on its contents and provide support to the Commissioner on the effective exercise of his statutory functions.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3.1 To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the Commissioner in connection with the discharge of their functions (Item 6), and to support the effective exercise of those functions of the Commissioner (Item 8) of the Police and Crime Panel Terms of Reference.

4. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

- 4.1 Effective policing relies on maintaining public trust and confidence. It is dependent upon a policing profession that is ethical and professional in the way that it respects, listens, responds, improves and serves the public.
- 4.2 Integrity in policing refers to the consistent demonstration of honesty, professionalism, transparency and accountability by officers, staff, volunteers and the organisations that support them. It encompasses both individual behaviour and the systems and safeguards that ensure policing is carried out lawfully, ethically and without discrimination, exploitation or misuse of power. Integrity is fundamental to policing legitimacy and underpins public trust and confidence.
- 4.3 The “Building Trust and Confidence” theme of the Plan sets out the Commissioners commitment to holding the Chief Constable to account for ensuring that police officers and staff always carry out their duties with integrity, social responsibility and in line with expected professional standards. It seeks to strengthen public trust and confidence through independent scrutiny of police powers. It sets out how the Commissioner, and his Office will support the Chief Constable and his senior leadership team to continue to promote a culture that is inclusive, diverse and reflects the communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- 4.4 The statutory responsibility of the Commissioner is primarily set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Of relevance to integrity assurance these responsibilities include securing an efficient and effective Constabulary, holding the Chief Constable to account, overseeing complaints and conduct arrangements, and having regard to equality, diversity and safeguarding duties.
- 4.5 In exercising these responsibilities, both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable are required to have regard to the College of Policing [Code of Ethics](#) and the statutory [Code of Practice for Ethical Policing](#). These Codes set the behavioural and organisational standards expected within policing and reinforce that public trust depends on ethical conduct, transparency and accountability.
- 4.6 To ensure these statutory responsibilities are met, the Commissioner has a governance framework and a broad range of oversight arrangements across policing and the criminal justice system. These include a range of forums,

processes and activities (controls) that support oversight of integrity and ethical standards.

- 4.7 The report is organised across five key themes: ethical decision-making and culture; transparency and accountability; workforce integrity; safeguarding; and performance, risk and learning. It identifies those controls which are led by the Constabulary, those led by Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), on behalf of the Commissioner, and those which are provided through independent external scrutiny. The OPCC has direct visibility of these through regular attendance at key meetings, review of reports and performance information, and through its scrutiny and holding-to-account role. By bringing together information from these different sources¹, the Commissioner can assess, challenge and gain assurance on how effectively policing activity is operating.

5 OVERALL ASSURANCE POSITION

- 5.1 The Commissioner is assured that the Constabulary maintained appropriate systems, behaviours and governance arrangements to support ethical, transparent and accountable policing during 2025–26. This assurance has been provided from scrutiny activity, independent inspection and complaints data indicates that policing is operating lawfully and proportionately, with continued progress in areas such as transparency, safeguarding and the ethical use of police powers.
- 5.2 Collectively, these arrangements demonstrate that integrity is embedded throughout both governance and operational practice, rather than treated as a standalone function. Assurance evidence highlights strong performance in key areas, including high public confidence, effective scrutiny of police powers, robust professional standards processes, mature safeguarding arrangements and an established approach to performance management and risk. Independent inspection, national data and community scrutiny reinforce that policing is delivered transparently, proportionately and in line with ethical expectations, with learning actively used to support improvement.

¹ Where possible, the information presented in this report relates to the reporting period April 2025 to March 2026. In some cases, it is necessary to reference data or inspection findings from outside this period, where these represent the most recent available information due to publication timelines. Where this applies, the relevant date or reporting period is clearly stated.

5.3 Overall, the Commissioner can be assured that robust systems are in place to monitor, challenge and improve organisational performance and integrity. The framework demonstrates increasing maturity, with stronger integration between risk, performance and learning and an increasing focus on outcomes and impact. The Constabulary continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to ethical policing, continuous improvement and maintaining public trust and confidence. As a result, the Commissioner remains confident that ethics and integrity are effectively monitored and embedded across both the OPCC and the Constabulary.

5.4 While the overall assurance position remains strong, the Commissioner recognises opportunities to build on this further by enhancing consistency and strengthening the visibility of outcomes. These areas are understood and are being actively managed through ongoing oversight and partnership working between the OPCC and the Constabulary.

5.5 **What is working well**

5.5.1. Overall, the following areas provide assurance that policing is operating effectively and in line with expected standards:

- Independent assurance from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) national survey data, confirming policing is lawful, proportionate and trusted.
- Effective scrutiny and transparency, with robust internal and external arrangements providing clear visibility, challenge and accountability.
- Mature safeguarding arrangements, supported by strong multi-agency working to protect vulnerable people.
- A positive ethical culture, with leadership, supervision and workforce standards promoting fair and professional policing.
- Proportionate use of police powers, with evidence showing powers are used lawfully and with appropriate safeguards.
- Established learning and improvement processes, enabling inspection findings and operational learning to be translated into change.

5.6 **Opportunities for continued development**

5.6.1. Building on the assurance position outlined above, the Commissioner has identified opportunities to further strengthen how integrity and ethical standards are

consistently evidenced, understood and experienced. This includes continuing to strengthen the consistency with which ethical standards are applied across different operational contexts, building on strong public confidence to further enhance communication and responsiveness, and further developing how data and insight are brought together to support a clear and integrated understanding of integrity, risk and performance.

- 5.6.2. These reflect the continued maturity of an already well-established framework, with a focus on enhancing how impact is demonstrated, how governance and oversight arrangements align, and how organisational learning is more clearly translated into sustained improvement.

6. ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

- 6.1 This section provides assurance on how ethical expectations, values and leadership behaviours are embedded across the Constabulary. It focuses on the internal culture, decision-making foundations and organisational systems that support fairness, respect, professionalism and integrity in everyday policing. The Constabulary's approach is grounded in national requirements including the Code of Ethics, the Code of Practice on Ethical Policing, the [National Decision Model](#), and HMICFRS legitimacy standards, and supports the Commissioner's duty to ensure the Constabulary consistently models ethical behaviour, promotes equality and diversity, addresses disproportionality and maintains a professional culture. It provides assurance on:
- Ethical leadership, values and organisational culture – how expectations are set, modelled and reinforced.
 - Equality, diversity, inclusion and disproportionality – how fairness and inclusion shape policing and workforce practice.
 - Ethical decision making and dilemma resolution – how officers and staff are supported to apply ethical principles in practice.

6.2 Key controls and areas of progress

- 6.2.1. Strategic oversight is through established governance forums that provide oversight of workforce experience, representation and organisational culture, supported by workforce data and staff feedback, and include:

- The Ethics, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (EDEI) Strategic Group, led by the Constabulary, sets direction and monitors delivery of ethical and inclusion frameworks, embedding the Code of Ethics across the organisation.
- The Race and Inclusion Board, led by the Constabulary, leads oversight of the Race Action Plan and provides focused challenge on issues relating to race, fairness and disproportionality.
- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Board (BCH), led by the Constabulary, oversees EDI strategy, workforce representation and compliance with equality duties.

6.2.2. Senior leadership accountability and organisational culture are reinforced through governance and scrutiny arrangements that provide independent observation, structured challenge and escalation routes for emerging ethical and EDI-related issues, ensuring that ethical expectations, values and professional behaviours are consistently reinforced. These include:

- The Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel, brings community insight into the review of concluded cases, focusing on proportionality, decision making and victim experience.
- Direct OPCC oversight and participation in Constabulary-led forums, providing independent observation, challenge and escalation of emerging ethical and EDI-related issues.
- The Police Accountability Board, which provides a senior forum for scrutinising leadership, performance and decision-making, ensuring that ethical standards, values and professional behaviours are consistently applied and challenged.

6.2.3. Ethical decision-making in practice is provided through internal Constabulary mechanisms, including Ethicards which support officers and staff in resolving ethical dilemmas in practice, through accessible, scenario-based guidance aligned to the Code of Ethics. This helps ensure that ethical principles are actively applied in day-to-day decision making, alongside governance oversight.

6.2.4. Independent and external assurance is provided through:

- [HMICFRS PEEL 2023–25](#) inspection findings, which assess ethical leadership, workforce culture, legitimacy and the application of the National Decision Model.

- [Crime Survey for England and Wales](#) (CSEW) perception and experience of police and criminal justice system data, including measures of fairness and respect, which provide national insight into public perceptions of legitimacy and ethical treatment.

6.3 Impact and outcomes

- 6.3.1. Drawing on the governance, scrutiny and assurance controls set out above, there is evidence that ethical expectations are consistently understood and applied across the organisation. This is supported by independent public confidence data from the CSEW (for year ending December 2025), with the latest 12-month survey showing the Constabulary ranked 1st nationally for trust, 4th for overall confidence, 4th for respect and 8th for fairness (out of 43 forces). These findings provide strong external assurance that key principles of the Code of Ethics, particularly respect, fairness and integrity, are not only understood internally but are experienced positively by the public.
- 6.3.2. Independent inspection further reinforces this position, with the most recent [HMICFRS PEEL](#) 2023-25 findings identifying a positive organisational culture, with visible leadership committed to lawful, ethical and victim-focused policing, demonstrated through active engagement with personnel in shaping priorities and culture, and an openness to challenge and learning. Inspection evidence also indicates that officers and staff are generally supported to make proportionate and consistent decisions in complex situations, such as through the threat, harm, risk, investigation vulnerability and engagement (THRIVE) model, alongside leadership support and supervisory processes in place, alongside leadership support and supervisory and audit processes that promote consistency in decision-making.
- 6.3.3. There is evidence of organisational focus on equality, inclusion and disproportionality through governance arrangements. Governance structures, including oversight through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board and the Race and Inclusion Board, provide visibility of workforce and operational data, supporting informed challenge and the identification of disproportionality risks. This supports organisational awareness and transparency, ensuring that fairness, proportionality and ethical considerations are routinely reflected in governance, scrutiny and performance discussions.

7. TRANSPARENCY, OPENNESS AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

7.1 This section provides assurance on how policing activity is made visible, understandable and open to public and independent scrutiny. It focuses on arrangements that ensure the use of police powers, complaint and conduct handling, public information, digital capability and community engagement are accessible, transparent and accountable. Rooted in the Code of Ethics and the Code of Practice on Ethical Policing, it demonstrates how decisions with public impact are scrutinised fairly, independently and consistently. Specifically, it provides assurance on:

- Transparency of police powers – how stop and search, use of force, hate crime handling and custody practices are made visible and subject to independent review.
- Complaints and conduct transparency – how dissatisfaction and conduct matters are made visible, understood and subject to independent oversight.
- Digital ethics, transparency and innovation – how emerging technologies and digital tools are governed ethically, proportionately and transparently.
- Public accountability and legitimacy – how police decision making, performance and outcomes are scrutinised, reported and externally validated.

7.2 Key controls and areas of progress

7.2.1. Transparency and public accountability across the Constabulary are demonstrated through a range of scrutiny, governance, independent oversight, and community review of police interactions. The use of police powers is supported by multiple scrutiny mechanisms, providing both internal and independent challenge, and enhancing transparency and public confidence. These include:

- Vehicle Stops Scrutiny Panel, led by the Constabulary, enables independent scrutiny of Section 163 stops to ensure they are proportionate and justified.
- Stop and Search Community Scrutiny Panel, led by the OPCC, reviews grounds, outcomes and disproportionality to ensure powers are used fairly and lawfully.
- Use of Force Community Scrutiny Panel, led by the OPCC, provides independent community review of police use of force to improve transparency, legitimacy and learning.

- Youth Scrutiny Panel, led by the OPCC, provides a youth perspective on police interactions, the use of police powers and fair policing practice from the perspective of young people.

7.2.2. These are complemented by oversight where appropriate through the Police Accountability Board, alongside OPCC participation in Constabulary-led forums, ensuring that police powers are subject to consistent scrutiny, challenge and escalation. The Race and Inclusion Board further strengthen this by providing oversight of disproportionality and fairness in the use of powers, aligned to the NPCC Race Action Plan.

7.2.3. Transparency in the complaints system is provided through a framework that provides both internal oversight and independent validation, including:

- The Constabulary Complaint Review Team provides initial handling of dissatisfaction, ongoing early assessment and communication with complainants to support a timely and proportionate resolution.
- The Professional Standards Department (PSD) Strategic Scrutiny Panel and discrimination sub-panel, led by the Constabulary, provide multi-stakeholder review of conduct, complaints handling and disproportionality.
- OPCC led statutory complaint reviews (Schedule 3), including independent review by [Sancus Solutions](#), ensures complaints are handled fairly and transparently.
- OPCC complaint dip-sampling and timeliness oversight, provides ongoing independent scrutiny of case handling, identifies themes and challenges delays.
- OPCC oversight of complaints against the Chief Constable, ensures senior officer conduct is subject to transparent and independent review.
- The Police Accountability Board scrutinises complaints performance and outcomes if escalation is necessary.

7.2.4. Transparency in custody is supported through an established framework of independent scrutiny and governance, including:

- The Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme, managed by the OPCC, provides unannounced visits by community volunteers to safeguard detainee welfare and rights. The scheme manager reviews findings and identifies themes to support improvement. These are shared with the Constabulary.

- The Custody Community Scrutiny Panel, led by the OPCC, enables independent review of the use of powers in custody.
- Custody Review Meetings, led by the OPCC, escalate issues to senior officers and ensures timely action.
- National oversight is through the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) and HMICFRS custody inspections, providing external assurance on custody standards and safeguarding.

7.2.5. Transparency and ethical oversight of digital and data-driven policing are supported through governance arrangements including:

- The Change and Evidence Based Policing Board, led by the Constabulary, oversees organisational change and assesses ethical and operational risks of new technologies.
- The Information Management (SIRO) Board, led by the Director of Information, ensures data is managed ethically, lawfully, securely and proportionately. Oversight is provided through BCH governance arrangements
- The Resource Group, led by the Constabulary, provides strategic oversight of digital, data and technology resourcing to support transparency, innovation and effective organisational governance.
- OPCC oversight of emerging risks through governance of surveillance technologies, AI and biometrics, to ensure fairness, privacy and proportionality are considered.
- Further assurance is provided through Commissioner engagement with national bodies, including: the Police Digital Service Board and APCC Data, Digital and Technology forums, which support national governance and consistency; and Home Office led forensic governance boards, which provide oversight of forensic standards and biometrics

7.2.6. Public accountability is further strengthened through inclusive community engagement and formal accountability mechanisms, including:

- New, dedicated scrutiny panels for Deaf, autistic and neurodiverse communities, led by the OPCC, which provided direct feedback on accessibility, communication and lived experience.
- The Police Accountability Board, as the primary forum for transparent scrutiny of police performance, decision-making and risk.

- The OPCC Annual Report, which provides public transparency on how statutory duties have been exercised and how the Chief Constable has been held to account.

7.2.7. These are supported by independent public confidence measures, including the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and HMICFRS assessments of public confidence and legitimacy, providing external insight into how policing is experienced by the public.

7.3 **Impact and outcomes**

7.3.1. Drawing on the governance, scrutiny and assurance controls set out above, there is good evidence that policing activity is transparent, accountable and open to both public and independent scrutiny. Scrutiny of police powers is well established and effective, with panel activity during 2025–26 including review of 20 stop and search encounters (all supported by body worn video) and 14 use of force incidents, with outcomes assessed as 11 green, 2 amber and 1 split. These findings, alongside [HMICFRS PEEL](#) 2023–25 inspection outcomes (graded as ‘outstanding’ for treating people fairly and respectfully), confirm that police powers are generally exercised lawfully, proportionately and with appropriate oversight.

7.3.2. There is evidence that transparency arrangements are driving tangible improvements in operational practice. Scrutiny feedback has contributed to increased availability and quality of body worn video, with most encounters now recorded in full, alongside improvements in how officers communicate legal powers and engage with the public. [HMICFRS PEEL](#) findings that inviting feedback from independent scrutiny processes is being used to improve policing practice and inform ongoing organisational learning, problem-solving and evaluation.

7.3.3. The OPCC provides independent oversight of complaint handling through the statutory review function under Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act 2002. This enables complainants to request a review of how their complaint has been handled by the Constabulary, providing an important mechanism to support transparency, accountability and public confidence. Between 2025-26, a total of 67 complaint review requests were received. Of these, 41 reviews were completed during the reporting period. Several cases remain at earlier stages, including those awaiting

validation, assessed as not valid, or where complainants chose not to proceed. Others are progressing through information gathering and assessment.

- 7.3.4. Of the compliant reviews completed during 2025-26, six were upheld and 35 were not upheld. This indicates that most complaint handling decisions taken by the Constabulary were appropriate, while also demonstrating that the review process is effective in identifying occasions where improvements are required. Complaint review timeliness has improved significantly over the past three years. The average time to complete a review has reduced from 56 days in 2023–24 to 35 days for April 2025–March 2026.
- 7.3.5. Transparency and accountability in complaints and conduct are also strong, with complaint volumes stable and not identified as an outlier nationally, and performance aligned with national comparators for timeliness and outcomes. Professional Standards Department (PSD) complaint dip sampling by the OPCC (20 cases reviewed) and PSD Strategic Scrutiny Panel confirm that communication is generally clear and proportionate, with learning used to improve consistency and quality of responses.
- 7.3.6. Consistent themes across scrutiny and complaints data highlight that where concerns arise, they most commonly relate to communication and explanation rather than misuse of powers. This is reinforced by the most recent [IOPC validated police complaints statistics](#) (2024/25), which shows that complaints relating to police powers remain a minority of overall complaints, with upheld rates low and within expected national and Most Similar Force ranges, and resolution often achieved through explanation, apology or reflective practice.
- 7.3.7. Custody scrutiny arrangements provide good evidence of transparency in practice. The [Independent Custody Visiting Scheme](#) conducted 79 unannounced visits involving 428 detainees and has achieved ICVA Platinum status, representing the highest level of national accreditation. Scrutiny activity has directly contributed to improvements in detainee welfare, including better communication of rights, improved management of delays and more consistent application of welfare checks. These outcomes demonstrate a mature system where independent feedback is actively used to drive improvement and reinforce public confidence.

- 7.3.8. Wider public accountability arrangements are important for supporting public confidence. Community scrutiny panels, including the first of those with targeted engagement of Deaf, autistic and neurodiverse participants, are improving understanding of lived experience and driving practical changes such as increased use of accessibility tools and wider awareness of schemes such as Pegasus.
- 7.3.9. At a strategic level, strong public confidence data supports these findings, with Cambridgeshire performing highly in national surveys, including ranking 4th nationally for overall confidence (CSEW, year ending December 2025).
- 7.3.10. Overall, the combination of scrutiny mechanisms, independent validation and performance data indicates a transparent and accountable policing environment. Decisions, powers and performance are becoming more visible and better understood, with some evidence that feedback and learning are contributing to improvements in practice, legitimacy and public confidence.

8. WORKFORCE INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- 8.1 This section provides assurance on how the Constabulary maintains a professional, trusted and ethically appropriate workforce. It focuses on the systems that ensure individuals are appropriately vetted, supported and held to expected standards throughout their service, including conduct, complaints handling, professional standards and organisational learning. It is grounded in national requirements such as the Police Conduct Regulations 2020, Code of Ethics, IOPC framework and Vetting Authorised Professional Practice, it supports the Commissioner's duty to hold the Chief Constable to account for workforce integrity, ensuring policing is delivered lawfully, ethically and without discrimination. Specifically, it provides assurance on:
- Vetting, suitability and workforce risk – maintaining vetting clearance, identifying integrity risks and managing workforce vulnerabilities at an early stage.
 - Complaints and conduct management – how misconduct, complaints and related statutory processes are managed lawfully, fairly and transparently.
 - Professional standards and organisational learning – how behaviour expectations are reinforced and how learning from complaints, inspections and operational activity is embedded to strengthen standards and performance.

8.2 Key controls and areas of progress

8.2.1 Arrangements are in place to ensure workforce integrity, suitability and professional standards are maintained through a combination of vetting, governance oversight and independent scrutiny. Workforce integrity is actively managed through:

- The annual Integrity Health Check and Vetting Review, led by the Constabulary, provides a regular force-wide assessment of personal circumstances, risks and vetting compliance.
- The Vetting Scrutiny Panel, led by the Constabulary, enables independent scrutiny of vetting decisions to ensure fairness, proportionality and consistency.
- Direct OPCC participation in Constabulary-led forums, providing independent oversight, challenge and visibility of emerging workforce integrity risks.
- The Police Accountability Board provides oversight and challenge on workforce suitability, vetting compliance and emerging vulnerabilities if escalated.
- HMICFRS PEEL 2023–25 findings, offers independent assessment of leadership, workforce integrity and vetting arrangements.
- IOPC police complaints data, provides externally validated insight into complaints and conduct outcomes to support assurance on fairness and consistency.

8.2.2 An independently assured misconduct framework is in place, ensuring disciplinary processes are fair, transparent and compliant. This includes:

- The Constabulary Complaints and Misconduct Teams manage public dissatisfaction, misconduct processes and identify emerging issues impacting professional standards.
- OPCC led gross misconduct arrangements and coordination, including the appointment of Legally Qualified Chairs and Independent Panel Members, ensure hearings are impartial and compliant with regulations.
- The OPCC management of Police Appeal Tribunals, ensure appeals against dismissal are handled lawfully, transparently and in line with statutory requirements.
- The Misconduct Members Oversight Panel (MMOP), led by the OPCC, provides regional scrutiny of misconduct arrangements and panel processes.
- The Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) is where the OPCC independently reviews pension-related disputes to ensure fairness and compliance.

- The IOPC Oversight Meeting, led by the IOPC, supports escalation, independent review and alignment with national standards.

8.2.3 Police pension forfeiture is governed by statutory regulations and Home Office guidance, which set out the circumstances in which a pension may be forfeited, typically in cases of serious criminal conduct connected to an individual's policing role. The process is intended to protect the integrity of policing and maintain public trust and confidence. The Commissioner acts as the Pension Supervising Authority, with the OPCC managing the process on their behalf. This includes working closely with the Constabulary and the Home Office to identify potential cases where it may be appropriate to forfeit a pension scheme member's pension. Strategic oversight is maintained through the Police Accountability Board.

8.2.4 Organisational learning supports continuous improvement in workforce behaviour and professional standards through:

- The Organisational Learning Group (OLG), led by the Constabulary, identifies, analyses and tracks learning from complaints, inspections and operational activity.
- Direct OPCC participation in Constabulary-led forums provides independent challenge and visibility of how learning is embedded; and ensure themes and recommendations from complaints-related learning processes are captured, tracked and translated into organisational improvement.
- The Police Accountability Board, which reviews misconduct trends, inspection findings and learning themes at a strategic level if escalated.
- IOPC police complaints statistics and complaint reviews, providing independent insight into trends and supporting evidence-based improvement in professional standards.

8.3 Impact and outcomes

8.3.1 Drawing on the controls and assurance mechanisms set out above, there is evidence of a proactive and well-managed approach to workforce integrity, with risks identified early and managed effectively. According to Constabulary provided statistics, the Integrity Health Check achieved a 91.2% completion rate (31 May 2026), comparing favourably to Bedfordshire (70.5%) and Hertfordshire (85.2%), demonstrating good organisational compliance and data quality. There were no significant concerns identified through the review process, providing confidence that

integrity and vetting arrangements are operating as intended. HMICFRS PEEL 2023–25 findings indicate that workforce standards are maintained through effective leadership, supervision and governance arrangements, with risks identified and managed as an ongoing audit, training and improvement responsibility rather than a point-in-time assessment.

- 8.3.2 Independent data support a stable and proportionate conduct environment. The latest IOPC complaints data (2024/25) published 27 November 2025, shows 406 complaints per 1,000 employees, which is consistent with Most Similar Force and national comparators. Levels of serious misconduct, abuse of position and corruption remain low, and allegation types are primarily linked to service delivery and behaviour rather than systemic integrity failure.
- 8.3.3 This indicates that workforce integrity risks are not driven by recruitment or vetting concerns but are more typically associated with behavioural standards and workplace culture, consistent with national patterns. The low volume of cases progressing to special procedures or serious misconduct further supports this position. This is reinforced by the low volume of cases reaching the threshold for pension forfeiture, with no new cases identified in 2025–26, demonstrating that serious misconduct remains rare and is appropriately managed within a robust statutory and governance framework.
- 8.3.4 Disciplinary arrangements provide evidence of fairness, independence and procedural integrity. During this year, 9 gross misconduct hearings were supported by the OPCC through timely and impartial appointment of Legally Qualified Persons and Independent Panel Members, ensuring that proceedings were conducted in accordance with statutory requirements and with appropriate independence.
- 8.3.5 A total of 5 Police Appeal Tribunal (PAT) cases were managed by the OPCC, although progression to hearings has been impacted by national delays relating to judicial chair availability. Notwithstanding these delays, arrangements remain compliant with statutory processes, and governance mechanisms continue to ensure transparency and fairness in disciplinary appeals.
- 8.3.6 A review of two Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) cases confirmed that decisions were evidence-based, proportionate and compliant with relevant

regulations, with no escalation required. Regional collaboration through the Misconduct Members Oversight Panel (MMOP) continues to strengthen consistency, share learning and support alignment of approach across forces, while IOPC oversight and appeal mechanisms provide an additional layer of independent scrutiny and assurance.

8.3.7 There is evidence of a developing and increasingly structured organisational learning culture. The Organisational Learning Group provides oversight of learning arising from complaints, inspections and operational practice, with 6 upheld complaint review cases generating recommendations, the majority of which were accepted and progressed. Learning has contributed to a range of improvements, including strengthened data protection practices, clearer use of ethical terminology and enhanced operational capability in specific areas. Complaint-based insight consistently highlights themes relating to communication, service delivery and professionalism, enabling targeted improvement activity and reinforcing expectations of ethical behaviour. While individual and case-level learning is strong and well evidenced, ongoing work is focused on strengthening how organisational-level learning is consistently captured, demonstrated and communicated, ensuring that the impact of learning is clearly visible across the organisation.

8.3.8 Overall, the combination of structured vetting processes, robust misconduct arrangements, independent scrutiny and embedded organisational learning demonstrates an effective professional standards framework. Workforce integrity is actively managed, with no evidence of systemic risk; disciplinary processes appear transparent, fair and compliant; and independent data confirms that integrity risks remain proportionate and comparable with national expectations.

9 **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE**

9.1 This section provides assurance on how the Constabulary safeguards children and vulnerable people through the lawful, ethical and proportionate use of police powers. Its scope is intentionally focused on key statutory oversight mechanisms that provide direct insight into policing practice. Grounded in relevant legislation, the Code of Ethics and HMICFRS inspection standards, it ensures that decisions affecting vulnerable individuals prioritise welfare, with safeguarding risks properly identified, scrutinised and managed. Specifically, this provides assurance on:

- Safeguarding arrangements and welfare-focused policing – how statutory duties are delivered, and how vulnerability and welfare considerations inform policing activity.
- Youth Justice governance and scrutiny of police powers involving children – how youth justice governance arrangements oversee the use of policing powers affecting children, ensuring practice is fair, proportionate and welfare-focused.

9.2 Key controls and areas of progress

9.2.1 Arrangements are in place to ensure safeguarding and welfare considerations are embedded within policing practice, particularly through the management of high-risk offenders and public protection activity. This is supported through:

- The Constabulary Management of Sexual Offenders and Violent Offenders (MOSOVO) team, assesses, manages and monitors high-risk offenders in partnership with other agencies to prevent harm and protect the public.
- OPCC oversight of safeguarding practice, providing visibility of how welfare considerations and safeguarding responsibilities are applied in operational policing.
- The OPCC review of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Annual Report provides assurance on how high-risk offenders are managed across agencies.
- The Police Accountability Board provides strategic oversight and scrutiny of safeguarding risk and public protection outcomes.

9.2.2 Multi-agency safeguarding is strengthened through established partnership arrangements including:

- The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), led by the Constabulary, enables joint working, information sharing and risk management across safeguarding partners.
- The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) Strategic Board is a partnership led forum and oversees responses to domestic abuse and the coordination of Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs).
- DARDRs provide independent multi-agency review of domestic abuse related deaths to identify learning and drive systemic improvement.
- The Police Accountability Board ensures that partnership activity, safeguarding risks and learning are scrutinised and translated into improved protection for vulnerable people.

- Wider assurance is provided through statutory safeguarding frameworks and national inspection standards, which set expectations for multi-agency safeguarding accountability.

9.2.3 Safeguarding in custody and policing activity involving children is supported through structured oversight and governance, including:

- Custody Policy and Performance arrangements, which ensure children and vulnerable individuals are managed lawfully, proportionately and with appropriate regard to welfare.
- Strip-search and detention oversight, includes youth justice planning and performance monitoring, ensuring the use of police powers involving children is appropriate and subject to scrutiny.
- The Youth Justice Management Boards (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) led by the Constabulary, provide multi-agency oversight of youth justice performance, safeguarding and outcomes.
- The Police Accountability Board provides oversight of custody practices and safeguarding considerations if escalated.
- Independent assurance is provided through HMICFRS Child Protection and Custody Inspections, assessing how vulnerable people and children are protected; and HM Inspectorate of Probation inspections, including Youth Justice Service and Public Protection inspections, which assess how effectively agencies work together to manage risk, safeguard children and prevent harm.

9.3 Impact and outcomes

9.3.1 Drawing on these arrangements, there is evidence of a mature, integrated safeguarding system where risk is effectively identified and managed across agencies. Multi-agency governance supports coordinated decision making and early intervention, with the DASV Strategic Board using insight from DARDs, audits and performance data to embed learning and strengthen prevention. Revised review protocols, improved referral decision making and targeted training demonstrate how safeguarding learning is translated into practice, alongside the active identification and management of systemic risks, including capacity pressures, delays and data fragmentation. Independent inspection evidence further reinforces the importance of maintaining consistency in risk assessment, escalation and partnership working, particularly in complex cases involving children and vulnerable individuals.

- 9.3.2 Safeguarding practice in custody shows a consistent and welfare-focused approach. Oversight and case review confirm that decisions are informed by vulnerability and best interests, with learning leading to improvements in bail decision making, oversight of accommodation decisions and safeguarding processes. The use of intrusive powers remains low and proportionate, with strip search rates consistently below 4% (ranging from approximately 3.5% to 3.7% across 2025), all justified and conducted within custody safeguards, with no evidence of routine use and all decisions supported by clear safeguarding or evidential rationale. This demonstrates appropriate and controlled use of powers affecting children.
- 9.3.3 Youth justice arrangements further reinforce a preventative and child-focused system. Cambridgeshire maintains low first-time entrant rates, while in Peterborough over 90% of children supported through diversion did not enter the formal justice system, demonstrating effective early intervention. Scrutiny confirms that police powers are used sparingly and proportionately, with reduced reliance on custody and remand, aligning operational practice with safeguarding principles, while recognising that outcomes for a smaller cohort of children with more complex and entrenched needs remain an ongoing focus for partnership working.
- 9.3.4 Overall, the combination of offender management, multi-agency safeguarding, custody oversight and youth justice governance demonstrates an adequate and established safeguarding framework. Risks are actively monitored, decisions are informed by welfare considerations, and learning from reviews and inspections is increasingly embedded. Structured escalation through multi-agency public protection arrangements ensure that high-risk individuals are managed appropriately, while independent inspection and partnership oversight reinforce that safeguarding arrangements are subject to continuous challenge, learning and improvement. Together, this supports improved outcomes for vulnerable individuals and strengthens public confidence in local safeguarding arrangements.

10 PERFORMANCE, RISK MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

- 10.1 This section provides assurance on how the Constabulary assesses effectiveness, manages organisational risk and drives continuous improvement across policing. It brings together the structures that monitor performance, manage risk and translate

learning from inspection, audit and scrutiny into sustained improvement. Grounded in national standards and the Commissioner's duty to secure an efficient and effective police force, it provides assurance that the Constabulary not only responds to scrutiny but uses insight and learning to strengthen effectiveness, resilience and public trust. Specifically, it provides assurance on:

- Performance and improvement governance – how effectiveness is assessed, recommendations are tracked and improvement activity is prioritised and delivered.
- Risk management and organisational resilience – how strategic risks, capacity, and future challenges are identified, monitored and addressed to maintain organisational stability and readiness.
- Organisational learning and inspection readiness – how insight from inspection, audit, complaints and operational practice is embedded to support continuous improvement and readiness.

10.2 Key controls and areas of progress

10.2.1 A comprehensive governance framework supports performance monitoring, improvement delivery and organisational oversight. This is achieved through:

- The Quality, Testing and Tracking (QTT) Meeting tracks delivery of HMICFRS Areas for Improvement, audit recommendations and Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment (CamSTRA) actions to ensure progress is monitored and sustained.
- The Change and Evidence Based Policing Board oversees improvement, innovation and organisational change, ensuring learning is translated into prioritised and deliverable actions.
- The Resource Group provides strategic oversight of demand, resourcing and financial sustainability to ensure capacity aligns with policing priorities.
- Direct OPCC participation in Constabulary-led forums, providing independent oversight, challenge and assurance on delivery and performance.
- These are further supported through the Police Accountability Board, provides strategic scrutiny of performance, inspection outcomes and improvement activity.

10.2.2 External scrutiny and accountability are strengthened through structured inspection and improvement processes, including:

- HMICFRS Section 55 responses, which set out transparent and accountable improvement plans in response to inspection findings.
- HMICFRS Areas for Improvement (AFI) monitoring, which tracks delivery against actions to ensure weaknesses are addressed and learning is embedded.
- Accelerated Causes of Concern (ACoC) and thematic inspection monitoring, provide enhanced oversight where significant risks are identified, ensuring timely recovery and sustained improvement.
- The HMICFRS Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspection Programme, provides independent assessment of policing effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and organisational improvement.

10.2.3 Risk management and organisational resilience are supported through structured governance and independent assurance, including:

- The Risk Review Board, led by the Constabulary, identifies, assesses and monitors corporate risks, ensuring emerging threats are escalated and managed effectively,
- The OPCC applies its formal risk management framework to oversee the Constabulary's approach to risk, using structured processes for identification, assessment and review of strategic risks, and providing independent challenge and assurance that arrangements remain effective, support statutory responsibilities, and help maintain public confidence in policing.
- The OPCC maintains oversight of shared strategic risks with the Constabulary relating to financial sustainability, governance, collaboration and emerging areas to ensure they are monitored through joint governance where they affect delivery of policing and the Police and Crime Plan.
- Internal and external audit, which provide independent assurance on governance, risk management, financial controls and organisational resilience.
- The Joint Audit Committee independently scrutinises audit findings and the overall control environment, strengthening accountability and transparency.
- Strategic oversight is maintained through the Police Accountability Board, ensuring risks, organisational capacity and future planning are subject to consistent governance.

10.2.4 Organisational learning and continuous improvement are supported through:

- The Organisational Learning Group (OLG) identifies, analyses and tracks learning from complaints, inspections and operational activity to ensure lessons are embedded.
- Direct OPCC attendance at Constabulary led forums provides independent oversight, challenge and visibility of how learning is implemented.
- The Police Accountability Board reviews learning themes, inspection findings and performance insight to ensure improvement is sustained and supports operational readiness.
- HMICFRS PEEL findings on organisational improvement, which provide independent assessment of how effectively the Constabulary responds to inspection findings and embeds learning.

10.2.5 Additional animal welfare assurance is provided through specialist oversight arrangements, including:

- The Joint Protective Services (JPS) Dog Unit provides specialist operational capability while supporting the management of vulnerable and high-risk incidents.
- The Animal Welfare Scheme, led by the OPCC, enables independent volunteer oversight of police dog welfare, ensuring ethical treatment and transparency.
- Animal Welfare Scheme Manager Meeting, led by the OPCC, provides governance oversight and enables issues, standards and learning to be reviewed across the tri force.
- The Dogs Trust Certificate of Compliance, which provides independent external validation that police dog welfare meets recognised national standards.

10.3. Impact and outcomes

10.3.1. The arrangements outlined within this report demonstrate a coherent and well-embedded approach to performance management and continuous improvement, with clear evidence that inspection findings and audit recommendations are translated into action. During 2025–26, nine [Section 55 responses](#) were completed and all within the statutory 56-day timeframe, demonstrating timely and transparent oversight of HMICFRS findings and reinforcing the Commissioner’s role in holding the Chief Constable to account.

10.3.2 Internal audit activity reported 77% of actions fully implemented (20 of 26), including all high-priority actions with no overdue recommendations, demonstrating strong

organisational responsiveness and consistent follow-through on areas identified for improvement. Progress monitored through the Business Assurance Meeting shows sustained improvement in key areas including public contact, supervision and risk management, supporting ethical service delivery and reinforcing public confidence.

- 10.3.3 There is evidence of an effective and mature risk management framework. The Risk Review Board ensures that strategic risks, including workforce capacity, data quality and emerging technology risks, are identified, discussed and managed, with evidence of risks being reviewed, re-scoped and escalated where required. This approach to identifying and managing risk strengthens organisational accountability and supports ethical decision-making by ensuring that emerging issues with potential impact on the public or workforce are addressed proactively. Independent audit further reinforces this position, providing assurance that controls are operating effectively with no significant weaknesses identified.
- 10.3.4. Organisational learning is increasingly embedded and aligned to improvement priorities. The Organisational Learning Group has strengthened the integration of insight from inspections, complaints and operational activity, enabling the Constabulary to respond constructively to scrutiny and apply learning in practice. This is reinforced by HMICFRS findings, which highlight the Constabulary's openness to external challenge and the use of feedback, scrutiny and internal review processes to support organisational willingness to learn and improve. While individual and operational learning is well established, ongoing work is strengthening how learning is consistently recorded and demonstrated at an organisational level, to enable clearer public accountability for how improvement is achieved.
- 10.3.5. Ethical and operational assurance is also evident in specialist areas, including animal welfare, where 14 independent visits reviewed 74 police dogs, with no serious welfare issues identified. Independent accreditation has been achieved this year through the award of the Dogs Trust Certificate of Compliance. This provides assurance that specialist policing activity is conducted ethically, transparently and in line with recognised welfare standards, contributing to public confidence in policing practice.

10.3.6. These arrangements support integrity, transparency and accountability in policing by ensuring that decisions are evidence-based, subject to scrutiny and continuously improved in response to feedback and independent challenge, thereby reinforcing public trust and organisational legitimacy. Overall, the combination of structured governance, independent scrutiny and embedded learning demonstrates a mature and effective system. Performance is actively managed, risks are identified and mitigated, and learning is increasingly translated into sustained improvement, supporting organisational resilience, effectiveness and public confidence.

11 SUMMARY

- 11.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide a comprehensive update on the work progressed since the publication of the 2024-25 Annual Integrity Report, outlining the various mechanisms and governance structures the Commissioner has in place to ensure ethical standards and integrity are upheld within the Constabulary. This report specifically focuses on how the Commissioner exercises oversight and holds the Chief Constable accountable for the ethical conduct of the Constabulary.
- 11.2 The report reviews a wide range of interlinked assurance processes embedded within both the OPCC and the Constabulary. These include formal governance meetings, internal audit functions, performance monitoring and ethical decision-making frameworks. Each mechanism is examined within the context of its contribution to building trust and confidence.
- 11.3 The report provides the assurance that ethics and integrity are not treated as isolated themes but are instead embedded at every level of governance and operational delivery. The Commissioner receives regular and structured updates on areas such as professional standards; complaints handling and conduct investigations. In addition, broader cultural indicators and values-based leadership assessments are taken into consideration to form a holistic view of organisational integrity.