Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
PO Box 688
PE29 9LA
Tel: 0300 333 3456
Email: Cambs-pcc@cambs.police.uk
Twitter: @PCCCambs

Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

3 November 2025

Dear Home Secretary

HMICFRS State of Policing report for 2024-2025

In accordance with Section 55 of the Police Act 1996, I submit my response to HMICFRS's State of Policing report for 2024-2025. I welcome the report's insights and recognise many of the challenges it identifies as reflected locally in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

1. Workforce and Resources

The report highlights continued pressures on capacity, skills and retention despite the uplift in officer numbers. Locally, demand growth, particularly in safeguarding, serious violence and digital crime continues to stretch resources.

I support the call for greater flexibility in how ring-fenced grants are used however I must take this opportunity to press for a fairer national funding formula that properly reflects the needs of communities across Cambridgeshire.

It is fair to say that this is not the first time I have raised this issue. In my letter of 11th November last year to your predecessor, (and to other Home Secretaries before that), I called for a review of the current, totally inadequate funding formula which uses outdated information and does not reflect the actual demands faced by individual policing areas.

Since the formula was set, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's population has grown by 11% and is forecast to grow much faster than the national average. At the same time, there are areas of the country which have maintained the same level of population and some areas who have seen their population reduce. Yet the way funding is allocated using the existing formula has not changed. As such, Cambridgeshire remains the fourth lowest funded force in the country.

Our scant funding position can be put into context by considering the additional officers available to deliver policing in Cambridgeshire if we were simply funded at the average of our seven comparator forces (the majority of which are themselves in the bottom quartile of funding nationally). The result would be additional funding of circa £8m which would enable the recruitment of approximately 140 officers. Consequently, policing across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has become ever more reliant upon local people, through the policing precept element of their council tax, to fill the funding gap.

I implore you to reconsider revising the funding model so that forces like ours can meet increasing demands, sustain visible policing and invest in specialist capabilities. At the very least, as a matter of urgency, the existing grant allocation formula should use the most up-to-date population data.

2. Wellbeing and Morale

I note HMICFRS's concern over morale and wellbeing across the service. In Cambridgeshire, I expect the Constabulary to prioritise support for officers and staff through effective leadership, fair workloads and access to wellbeing services. Regular updates on these measures are provided to me through my current governance arrangements. Furthermore, I test this through regularly meetings with

Staff Associations during which I am keen to listen to their concerns and use the feedback in my conversations with the Chief Constable.

3. Managing Demand and Public Confidence

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough face rapidly increasing and complex demand. Population growth in new developments including Northstowe, Cambourne and Waterbeach combined with a busy road network and vibrant night-time economies in Cambridge and Peterborough continues to increase calls for service.

Online crime and fraud are rising whilst safeguarding and domestic abuse cases now make up a significant proportion of investigative workload. Rural communities face persistent challenges with farm theft and hare coursing, requiring tailored local approaches.

The continued rollout of neighbourhood policing teams, the use of information and intelligence combined with a data driven deployment model must ensure that visibility and responsiveness remain strong across urban and rural areas. Often the pull is towards the urban. It is essential that we maintain public confidence across all the communities we serve.

4. Accountability and Governance

Strong governance and transparency remain central to public trust. Through my Police and Crime Plan, my Annual Report, and the governance arrangements I have developed over time I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account for delivering efficient, effective and ethical policing which is aligned with both local and national priorities.

5. Next Steps

In response to the national findings, I will:

- Align local performance monitoring with HMICFRS themes.
- Ensure the next Force Management Statement addresses workforce resilience and demand.
- Continue to advocate nationally for sustainable funding and local flexibility.

Conclusion

The State of Policing provides an important national overview, and I am committed to translating the areas outlined within this report into local improvements.

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough face the same pressures as other forces across England and Wales but do so against a backdrop of totally inadequate funding. However, the Chief Constable and I remain focused on delivering high-quality, trusted policing for our communities.

Yours sincerely



Darryl Preston

Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough