



To: Joint Audit Committee

From: Chief Executive

Date: 28 May 2026

LOCAL POLICE GOVERNANCE TRANSITION TO MAYORAL MODEL

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide assurance to the Joint Audit Committee on the processes and management of the transition.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to note the report.

3. Background

- 3.1 The [English Devolution White Paper](#), published in December 2024, provided an overview of the content expected in the English Devolution Bill. This included an emphasis on “devolution by default”, where geographies allow for the Mayoral model to assume responsibility for police and fire. In this model, the Mayor is formally the Police and Crime Commissioner (“PCC”). In practice, many day-to-day functions are usually undertaken by a Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, appointed by the Mayor.
- 3.2 The [English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026](#) received Royal Assent on 29 April. The Act allows for the Home Secretary to transfer the functions of a PCC to a Combined Authority Mayor, where the areas are coterminous.
- 3.3 On 13th November 2025, the [Policing Minister confirmed](#) the transition to the new model will happen at the end of the next electoral cycle in May 2028, at the

end of their current term. Local police governance functions will be transferred to the Mayors of Strategic Authorities, or where this is not possible, to elected council leaders through new Police and Crime Boards. The Government committed to ensuring there is continuity of support services for victims and witnesses that are currently provided by PCCs. The current working assumption therefore is that this transition is likely to take place in May 2028.

- 3.4 The [Police Reform White Paper](#) was published at the end of January 2026. The White Paper outlines significant changes to the national policing landscape, including a shift to a national policing model and the reduction in the number of police forces. The changes are subject to an Independent Review of Police Force Structures which is due to report in summer 2026. Assuming there is more clarity on impacts of police governance, following the conclusion of the review, more detailed preparations can be undertaken following this.
- 3.5 Alongside these changes, there are many related policy and structural changes taking place in the wider system. This includes recent changes to the ICB footprint, as well as Local Government Reorganisation (“LGR”). Under LGR, new unitary councils are due to go live in parallel on 1 April 2028 (‘vesting day’), following elections for shadow authorities in 2027. The next Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Mayoral election is currently scheduled for May 2029.

4. Phase 1 – Horizon Scanning, Scoping and Mobilisation

- 4.1 While there is still much uncertainty on the **direction of travel and timescales**, exploration of policy options is taking place at pace nationally, ahead of anticipated legislation. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (“OPCC”) is engaged with national groups and other existing mayoral areas into order to influence and to gather information and lessons learned.
- 4.2 Locally, the OPCC has allocated **transition resourcing** through existing staff resources:
- SRO: Chief Executive
 - Strategic Lead: Director for Strategic Partnerships
 - Theme leads: Senior Leadership Team leads identified.

A proportionate approach is being taken at this stage, with **business as usual** remaining the priority to ensure ongoing delivery against the Commissioner's statutory duties. Resourcing and potential cost implications will be kept under review as requirements become clearer. The Senior Leadership Team includes experienced members of staff with detailed and long-term knowledge of the system, as well as change management experience (including two Directors who were part of the previous transition from the Police Authority).

4.3 An initial meeting with the Chief Executive of the **Combined Authority** ("CPCA") has been held, with plans for further engagement with the CPCA team. The **Resources Group** across the OPCC and Constabulary is maintaining an oversight of emerging issues relating to the Mayoral transition, Police Reform and Local Government Reorganisation. Dedicated **transition working groups**, including SPOCs from the OPCC, CPCA, Constabulary and possibly fire are likely to be necessary in due course.

4.4 The **OPCC team and relevant partners** have been informed. The OPCC team has been actively engaged to provide input into identifying transition issues that will need to be addressed and form part of a **transition plan**. These are currently mapped against the following broad themes, remaining adaptable to evolving national guidance and timelines:

- Statutory duties
- Communications & staff engagement
- Transition governance
- Governance
- Finance
- Commissioning
- Partnerships
- CPCA integration
- People
- Infrastructure & technology.

4.5 **Core deliverables** to support a smooth transition and governance within a new organisation include:

- Arrangements for continuing to deliver statutory duties
- Scheme of delegation/consent
- Medium Term Financial Strategy / Financial Regulations
- Staff engagement and transfer arrangements
- Pre/post transition decision schedule
- Data sharing agreements
- Performance framework
- Complaints/conduct handling arrangements
- Communications protocol
- Commissioning strategy, contract standing orders and contract novation
- Partnership arrangements
- Collaboration agreements.

4.6 The transition to the Mayoral model was added to the **OPCC Strategic Risk Register** in December 2025 (SR9) for regular review and escalation as necessary. Overall assurance is currently: Moderate. There are significant interdependencies with:

- Combined Authority structures
- the Police Reform agenda
- Local Government Reorganisation
- fire governance transition
- Other national policy developments.

4.7 Initial contact has been made with HR, ICT and Information Management to ensure that the OPCC can access appropriate **specialist support** through the transition process.

5. Recommendation

5.1 The Committee is recommended to note the report.

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