



Governance and Scrutiny Board Minutes – 13 August 2025 11:00-12:30 and 13:00-14:30

Venue: Main Conference Room, Police HQ and Microsoft Teams

Chair: Clare Moody

Attendees:

Clare Moody, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Kevin Slocombe, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC)
Sarah Crew, Chief Constable (CC)
Sally Fox, OPCC Director of Performance and Accountability
Ben Valentine, OPCC Senior Performance and Governance Manager
James Davis, ASP Delivery Manager - Portfolio
Julie Wheeler, PA to CEO, CFO and DPCC
Vicky Ellis, Secretariat Manager (Minutes)

Partial meeting attendance:

Louise Hutchison, Chief Officer - People and Organisational Development
Nick Lilley, Director of Information Technology
George Headley, Head of Strategic Planning and Change
Dan Forster, Superintendent, Directorate of Chief of Staff
Emma Snailham, Corporate Business Partner Financial
Hannah Watts, Head of Business Services
Sarah Parr, Principal Building Surveyor
Jen Grannan, Head of Digital and Projects
Steph McKenna, ASB and NPG Implementation delivery lead
Mark Almond, Change Programme Lead for Investigative Standards
Vicks Hayward-Melen, Head of Operations
Paul Wigginton, Chief Superintendent, Directorate of the Chief of Staff
Jon Dowey, Head of Performance and Insight
Andy Champness, Temporary Chief of Staff

1 Apologies

Paul Butler, OPCC Chief Finance Officer (CFO)
Jon Reilly, Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
Nick Adams, Chief Officer – Finance, Resources and Innovation

2 Minutes and Action Updates

The Minutes of the July Governance and Scrutiny Board were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting for publication.

The Board discussed the outstanding actions, a summary is provided:

- PCC closed the action in relation to the qualitative evaluation for the UWE contract as a draft report on the proposal would be shared with her office once it was complete, along with the tender. The PCC also agreed to the annual

board proposed by ASP which would include representative from the OPCC, ASP and UWE.

- The remaining outstanding action concerning ERP would be picked up as part of the update at the relevant agenda item.

3 Finance

a) Q1 Financial Performance Report

The Corporate Business Partner talked the Board through the slides in the pack, highlighting:

- ASP is forecasting a £2.3m underspend (0.6%) by year-end, primarily due to delayed officer recruitment and an assumed 2.8% pay award.
- ASP expected the funding allocation to cover the pay award costs.
- Pay award for staff was expected to mirror the officer award.
- Actuals to June 2025 show a £398k underspend, close to budget.
- Overtime remains a pressure, with a £390k forecast overspend, though significantly reduced from the previous year.
- Income is forecast to underachieve due to lower investment returns and reduced operational activity.
- Capital expenditure is behind plan, with £2.0m spent against a £32.2m budget; a £4.9m underspend is forecast.
- Savings of £491k have been achieved through budget adjustments and efficiencies.
- Detailed overtime analysis and mitigation plans are in place across departments to manage spend and improve tracking.

The PCC sought clarity on the distinction between the funding formula and headcount and explored the potential implications for ASP if funding were allocated based on headcount instead.

The PCC sought, and received, confirmation that overtime was continuing to reduce across all directorates and there was more accountability for the use of overtime.

The Board discussed the vacancies in police officer posts at Bristol Airport, noting there had been a request for additional officers recently which was in the process of being fulfilled. The Board noted that at some point it was expected to move to 24/7 firearms cover at the airport and it was anticipated this would create challenges, noting the national challenges faced in recruiting trained firearms officers.

ASP were forecast to over achieve on officer recruitment for September and would therefore be eligible for the funding and also expected to make the March target. This was in part due to a reduction in the number of leavers and improvement in retention. There continues to be no improvement in diversity within recruitment, with no meaningful change observed over time despite initiatives implemented.

Overachievement of savings in other areas balanced the £590k savings needed to be found to balance the pay budget.

The PCC sought to understand the impact on the savings plan following the decision to pause on initiating a management of change process and making compulsory redundancies of Police Staff Investigators (PSIs). ASP advised there were a number changes and processes to work through, including the Bright Light findings, the geographic model changes and the challenge to all Directorates to identify £1m a year

in savings that needed to be worked through before deciding if compulsory redundancies would still be required. The PSIs had received a message outlining this.

ASP Finance would reprofile the budgets for the projects that had been delayed, such as ERP, Yeovil Police Station, Plymouth House and other estates projects.

4 Decisions/Business Case

a) Final Business Case for Geographic Alignment Project

The Superintendents leading the project shared a few slides with the Board setting out the main highlights of the project and confirmed the Final Business Case had been agreed at the July Constabulary Management Board and was brought to the Governance and Scrutiny Board for the PCC's oversight.

There would be an uplift of one Superintendent and one Chief Superintendent to meet the new structure, as well as a conversion of a Personal Assistant post to a Directorate Assistant. The new structure was expected to improve collaboration between uniform teams as well as other departments. There would be a realignment of directorate functions such as Detainee Investigation Teams, Command & Control, Citizens in Policing and Crime Prevention based on spans of control. A decision would be required at Phase 2 whether the functions remained central or were devolved.

Sessions were being held with all the people affected by the changes as well as awareness sessions for those indirectly impacted.

The PCC welcomed the direction of travel on behalf of communities, recognising its potential to strengthen community connections and deliver meaningful impact. The approach was also believed to be well understood internally and by partners.

Consultation briefings had been positively received, with involvement from the Federation and attendance at multiple sessions. Feedback had been constructive, though some concerns had been raised.

A five-year dataset was used to map response demand and inform resource rebalancing. Voluntary moves will be prioritised, with minimal changes needed to achieve balance within 12 months. Without intervention, full alignment would take four years.

Officers had queried changes in demand and resource levels; these reflect existing imbalances. No additional officers are being added, it was noted resources are being redistributed to ensure fairness across ASP.

Concerns around acting and temporary promotions were noted. While 10 development posts were currently unbudgeted, opportunities for acting and temporary roles would continue, with efforts to place affected individuals appropriately.

Interactive mapping tools had been developed to support understanding, including street-level detail.

Demand on patrol has increased by 3,000 hours without corresponding growth in officer numbers. Officer abstractions to Enhanced Video Response were being

reviewed, with AI being considered to support this work. Workforce planning was underway, supported by a SAP freeze to enable accurate assessment.

Language around abstractions would be carefully managed to reflect operational gains, such as time saved by EVR and the new skills brought following enhanced driver training. Efforts were ongoing to return officers to frontline roles, including reductions in temporary Sergeant posts.

The PCC sought to understand the commitment to the community about how long the Superintendents would be in post for, noting the value placed by communities in the consistency. ASP would work on the premise it would be 2 or 3 years in post but noted the difficulty in preventing applications for promotions as these became available. ASP also highlighted that the new structure would relieve the reliance on one person and communities would have a team that were accountable for policing in that and for building partner relationships.

The approach to monitoring responsibilities between teams and identifying gaps in delivery had been considered as part of the operational model development. Examples such as changes within EIT and surveillance coverage were used to illustrate the importance of visibility.

Programme 1 of the operational model had played a key role in identifying operational challenges. From a project management perspective, this work was feeding into the feasibility phase, which remained in the discovery stage. Over 280 problem statements had been identified and were being explored through a series of workshops.

The Federation had been consulted, and feedback had been positive. They had commended the team for their active listening and honest engagement during the consultation process.

b) Final Business Case for Yeovil Police Station

The Board were reminded that the Outline Business Case had been approved in July 2024, with a decision to invest in a new building and expand operational capability. A budget envelope had been set, and the specification and tender process had since been completed.

Unlike typical procurement exercises where a preferred bidder emerges, this project had resulted in two viable bids due to its complexity. Both bids were within financial tolerances—one offering a faster completion at a higher cost, and the other a slower timeline at a lower cost.

Further work was ongoing to assess compliance and clarify outstanding points with both bidders. As a result, a final decision could not be made at this meeting.

It was proposed that a separate meeting be convened outside of the Governance and Scrutiny Board, once all necessary information had been received. This would include the PCC.

The delay and complexity were acknowledged, and frustrations were noted. The importance of progressing the project was emphasised, particularly considering public and staff expectations in Yeovil.

5 Constabulary Change Portfolio

a) Portfolio Highlight Report

The Board noted the Project Highlight Report and noted the stage gate moves and main headlines for projects have been highlighted.

The PCC noted that the job evaluation project had moved from feasibility to outline business case but the work would happen in 2027/28, recognising the impact on interlinked systems such as ERP.

b) ERP

The Programme Director provided an oral update:

- The programme had entered its foundational phase in preparation for activity commencing in September. Draft outline plans had been developed and were under consultation, supported by detailed workshops across functions.
- Engagement had taken place with the Metropolitan Police, who were pursuing similar initiatives. Early discussions had focused on shared platforms such as Oracle and Total Mobile, with potential to benefit from their procurement leverage.
- ASP teams had been encouraged to identify additional support requirements as preparations progressed. Contractor resources had been brought in to assist with training delivery.
- Business design authority activity had been strengthened, with exercises undertaken to challenge existing processes and improve understanding to help realise programme benefits.
- From September, reporting would move to a weekly cadence to the Executive Steering Committee, in line with increased programme activity. Timelines remained on track.
- Feedback indicated that the organisation was demonstrating the right behaviours, with a balanced approach to challenge and support. The programme team had been recognised as a strong client.
- In relation to iCase, communications and stakeholder engagement had been reviewed. The root cause of previous issues had been linked to security concerns, with additional briefings and clarifications provided. Lessons learned were being applied, including the use of templates to improve business case costings and stakeholder communications.

c) SOZE

The DPCC noted that CMB had taken decision to move to business case based on proof of value (POV) but did not think the paper had been clear on what savings the system would provide – whether it would be revenue or productivity savings.

ASP believed the report acknowledged the difficulty in identifying cashable savings from digital investment. The strength of the business case was centred on productivity gains, improved wellbeing, enhanced service quality, faster investigations, and better

outcomes. It also addressed future risks associated with increasing volumes of digital data and evolving legislative duties. It was noted that while initial expectations may have included both cashable and productivity benefits, the focus had shifted towards productivity, including wellbeing and public outcomes. The use of AI was highlighted as a means of supporting officers, recognising that no additional officers would be available.

The POV report had reflected both perspectives, though questions remained around how productivity benefits were being evidenced in the business case.

The business case had been brought back for further refinement, with a steer sought to finalise its content. Legal obligations around data handling were noted, and cultural aspects were being explored as part of the process. It was acknowledged that there would be associated costs, particularly around resourcing, which would be incurred regardless due to investigative requirements. The POV also aimed to understand the cost of conducting enquiries. Benefits had been expressed based on known data, with recognition that volume and complexity would continue to increase over time.

It was noted that AI would continue to influence traditional working practices and decision-making processes.

The Final Business case would include information on:

- ISO accreditation
- The ways of working
- Finance - MTFP currently assumes will commit to this
- Data consumption costs
- Product ownership to be factored in
- Cost/benefit analysis

6 Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (inc Safer Streets Summer Initiative)

An oral briefing was provided to the Board highlighting some of the pillar work:

- **Pillars 1 and 2** were reported as on track, with minor non-compliance due to resourcing issues affecting photo uploads to the website. Engagement with NPCC had taken place to clarify delays.
- Priority compliance stood at 90%, with remaining gaps attributed to technical issues in data transfer from Qlik to the Home Office. South Gloucestershire was the only area not at full compliance, due to an IT issue rather than officer performance.
- **Pillar 3 (NPP)** had reached 17% compliance. Completion was expected by September, with training integrated into mandatory sessions. Planning for NPP2 delivery was underway and being actively managed.
- **Pillar 4** had progressed with the creation of a new Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Manager role, with recruitment planned by the end of September. ASP remained the smallest cohort nationally and the only force without dedicated officers in this area. The new role aimed to improve oversight, leadership, and consistency, drawing on best practice from Somerset's legal team. Funding was being sourced from savings within Neighbourhood and CiP.
- Work was ongoing with the Qlik team to identify vulnerable repeat victims and offenders of ASB. In response to PEEL recommendations, a six-hour ASB training module had been developed. The ASB Manager role was intended to act as a consultant function, aligning the force with national standards.

- **Pillar 5** (Neighbourhood Tasking Teams) had previously lacked clear direction but was now focused on shop theft, crime reduction, and drug-related activity. Challenges remained in prioritising NTTs in areas with low arrest rates, and some internal conflicts were noted. Monthly meetings with the Superintendent had improved performance, particularly in August.
- It was acknowledged that achieving Areas for Improvement (AFIs) would not always align with Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (NPG) areas, requiring a balance between AFIs and SSSI priorities. Variations in performance were noted, with Bath performing better due to geographic overlap with hotspots and lower youth violence risk compared to Bristol.
- Efforts were underway to align data with offender arrest locations and improve efficiency in offender management. DBIT was preparing packages to save time for NTTs, while TICs were taking longer due to increased solicitor requests for CCTV. Cultural changes in interview practices were being addressed.
- Although Home Office data appeared low, positive outcomes were expected to be reflected through ADR reporting.

The PCC highlighted the difference to the national position and risk rating and the action on this which was valuable and wondered about being able to pull out patterns and how ASP identify patterns, for example with the shoplifting prolific offenders – rather than incidents are ASP able to identify patterns. ASP noted that whilst they can it is not good enough yet. Whilst they are ahead of other forces for disposals and orders on ASB powers but in terms of patterns – they don't always pick up risk in those or pick up repeat callers or victims as they lack capacity to push all to Niche – can do by building simple programme. They are developing a vulnerability app and will then be able to do that.

The PCC asked about the communication with communities and consistency across different areas, seeking to understand how it was being done, how the work was captured and engagement from the corporate communications team, noting the need for that to be a core part of the work.

The lead confirmed that corporate comms had been very supportive, issuing statements and information as needed, making it clear it was about the SSSI. It has been well publicised, and it formed part of the report on activity to the Home Office. ASP also noted the good work in South Gloucestershire through the Community Safety Partnership with talk points, safer town centres. They were looking at replicating this in other areas.

7 Chief Constable's Update

The Chief Constable provided an oral update considering 3 areas using themes of the weather: the atmosphere within the force, outside the force and what is incoming and a summary follows.

In the Force: The Chief had undertaken visits around the force throughout the summer to get a sense of the different approach taken this year, asking patrol and Neighbourhood officers if it had worked better this year. With reservation, the opinion had been that yes it was better but there were still improvements to be made. The Chief had heard both from colleagues and the NTTs themselves that the new approach was working, they were seeing the difference they were making. They hadn't expected to see the difference immediately but believed it was a better model. The Chief heard questions about the geographic changes planned in November,

people wanted the maps, but there was also excitement for the changes. Other positive changes for staff had been the EVR and increased use of CoPilot, which was being used innovatively and was also helping staff with neuro diverse needs. This had unleashed excitement about other digital tools, which will need to be managed in a non-risk averse way. The Chief believed people were focusing on the priorities and issues that she wanted them to; engagement, ASB, street crime, prevention and deterrence.

Outside the force: ASP are facing several combustible and contested challenges outside the force, such as concerns over illegal immigration and the fear expressed over the weekend and the potential for rapid escalation. Social media exacerbates some of these pressures. The Chief was mindful of not wanting to have similar incidents as experienced last year and were monitoring the situation. The Chief noted the guidance issued that day about when people are charged and what police can say – for example, they can't give immigration status. There have been some concerns expressed over this and these will remain in community who will believe police are withholding information they should have. The Chief also noted the cancelled rest days – real cost of which is the human cost and the impact it has on those who have rest days cancelled. The Chief had spoken to the Federation, who had been complimentary of the consultations underway and clear on the impact of shift changes on the people.

What is incoming: 'The surge' – the Chief noted the Board had talked about this in the context of Soze and the incoming digital systems. Policing was talking about digitalising the way it works, in operational policing but also how the data is used to look at themes and trends. Consideration was also needed for the tech structure and the ability to move in tech space as quickly as possible. ASP were undertaking development of a blueprint, to better understand how they may need to change to be ready for the surge, to be more efficient and to be 'forward facing' for it. This would need to be done with pace but also with care. The Chief intended to bring some idea of the changes needed internally to move this forward through the governance structure. A&S could build a blueprint for other forces to join; they were trying to line up the SW region and were mindful of collaboration opportunities and the influence nationally that could be had. There were different challenges in each force, but the first one was always digital leadership and AI.

The Chief had referenced the human impact and cost – on cancelled rest days and continuing to deliver good performance. Digital would be there to support them and help them to weather the storm. The Chief would continue her focus on wellbeing as she was mindful staff were being asked to step up.

The PCC thanked the Chief for her update and noted a discussion on the NPCC guidance would be required in the future.

The PCC noted that she had received similar feedback on her visits and from partners that generally the feeling is summer has been better managed this year.

Discussions around future technology emphasised the importance of a systemic approach rather than focusing on individual tools. The need for oversight of integration, skills, and ethical considerations was recognised. It was noted that different groups within the force had varying levels of comfort with privacy and ethics, creating tension between innovation and scrutiny.

Concerns were raised about retention, with officers expressing frustration over outdated technology and limited operational engagement. It was acknowledged that while policing is a vocation, the working environment must support staff to retain talent.

8 Police and Crime Plan

a) Update on Deferred Prosecution Model (Chance to Change) (Oral)

An oral update was provided, which outlined current challenges, actions taken, and planned next steps in relation to OOCR. This was followed by a discussion and summary of both is provided below.

It was noted that OOCR usage varied across the force, with some areas adopting it well and others less so. Officers were being encouraged to use the My Gateway app, particularly in Bristol, where awareness remained low. Cultural factors were also influencing uptake, with some officers preferring to charge rather than use the app, or not seeing it as necessary for decision-making.

The app was a mandatory tool, but some officers felt it was not suitable for certain offences, such as Class A drug dealing. Data from the Qlik app showed that Somerset, South Gloucestershire, and Bristol were using the app effectively, with Bristol East identified as a key outlier, using it 50% less than other areas.

Disproportionality data was under review. The current Relative Rate Index (RRI) was not considered an accurate reflection, and a more detailed assessment was scheduled for September/October. It was noted that census data was not a suitable comparator, and future analysis would use arrest rates to provide a more meaningful measure.

Awareness and training efforts had been expanded through multiple channels, including Operation Justice, patrol DLMs, and tasking teams. Engagement with defence solicitors and custody staff was ongoing to increase understanding and uptake. The initiative had also been presented to Race Matters and the Criminal Justice Board.

Next steps included the launch of a youth pathway in September and renewed communications through blogs and line managers. Case studies were being developed to demonstrate the impact on individuals.

In response to early findings, face-to-face briefings had been effective in changing officer attitudes. It was suggested that mandatory use at key decision points, such as custody disposals, could improve consistency. Leadership and cultural change were identified as critical factors, with oversight from the Internal Standards Committee and Scrutiny Board.

It was noted that increased use in Bristol East would bring performance more in line with expectations.

b) Grievance Review

The Board received an oral update further to the report provided in the pack.

Recommendations continued to be managed through the Confidence and Legitimacy Committee, with a focus on improving clarity, consistency, and fairness. The grievance policy was updated to define appropriate submissions, with a new form in development to address formatting issues. Of the cases reviewed, five progressed and two required further work.

HR prioritised early resolution over escalation. A dedicated team was under consideration, subject to demand analysis. Grievance volumes had reduced, and resolution times were expected to improve to 12 weeks.

Grievances following misconduct were not permitted; appeals followed a separate process. This position had been reiterated.

A draft recruitment policy was under review to address lateral moves, supported by a Silver Group and a new medical redeployment group.

Data capture had improved, with updated tracking of grievance types and outcomes.

The decision-making process retained a “clean pair of eyes” approach. Roles had been clarified, barrister training had been delivered, and specialist support for protected characteristics was being explored.

Concerns remained about grievances being used in place of misconduct processes. A gold-level meeting chaired by the DCC was reviewing high-risk cases and closing off inappropriate complaint routes.

The process was under six-monthly review, with further improvements expected in early 2025. Additional guidance had been provided to decision-makers to support staff managing grievances alongside business-as-usual responsibilities.

c) Ammunition and Armoury Audit

The PCC noted the report provided to the Joint Audit Committee (JAC) had not provided the level of assurance needed and therefore this item had been brought to the GSB to allow for additional assurance to be provided.

ASP advised that since the JAC a Superintendent had taken oversight of the armoury. Weekly assurance meetings had been introduced to review audits, resolve issues, and improve processes. These meetings had increased confidence and enabled earlier issue identification.

Armoury records had transitioned from paper-based systems to digital platforms. Some issues remained around ammunition tracking due to system limitations, but no weapons or ammunition were reported missing. Processes were now managed by armourers and signed off by an Inspector.

A cultural audit had been undertaken to identify underlying issues. It was noted that different armouries exhibited varying behaviours, and all were now brought under central oversight to improve compliance. Separate concerns at Black Rock were being addressed through leadership and cultural change.

Learning from the cultural audit would be shared more widely, with a template likely to be developed.

9 Monthly PEEL Question – How good is the force at leading & managing its services to make sure they are efficient, effective & sustainable?

This PEEL question linked in Priority 5 in the Police & Crime Plan. There were three AFIs:

- 14 The constabulary should use relevant data and analysis to make sure it is operating efficiently and effectively
- 15 The constabulary needs to make sure that its senior leaders are more connected to its workforce
- 16 The constabulary needs to make sure its operating model helps its workforce to address priorities and current and future demand

This had been graded as requires improvement a year ago by HMICFRS and all three AFIs remained open.

The PCC wanted to understand how leadership was different now from a year ago.

Leadership development had progressed through the introduction of mid-line leader programmes and the creation of strategic and local leadership groups. These aimed to improve consistency, visibility, and connection across leadership levels. The geographic model had supported greater visibility and accountability.

Supervisors were given increased autonomy through Operation Justice, with over 200 involved in shaping data-led approaches. The focus had shifted from compliance to outcomes. Trauma-informed leadership was also being embedded, with benchmarking planned via the next people survey.

One-to-one meetings were being monitored through pulse surveys, with mixed feedback. Leadership expectations were being reinforced, and November was identified as a key point for accountability. Promotion ceremonies, blogs, and videos were being used to strengthen leadership messaging.

Accountability was being driven through performance structures, including deep dives at committee level and additional support at area meetings. The force was working to ensure clarity of message and consistency in delivery.

AFI16 was scheduled for sign-off in April 2025, following implementation of the geographic model. HMICFRS would expect to see evidence of embedded change.

It was noted that leadership must balance care and challenge, with a shared focus on supporting frontline officers who serve the public. Work continued to ensure the right behaviours, skills, and permissions were in place to enable effective leadership.

Items for Publication

- Q1 Financial Performance Report
- Minutes of July Board

A.O.B

Date of the next Governance and Scrutiny Board: 16 September 2025 11:00 - 12:30 and 13:00 - 14:30