



Governance and Scrutiny Board Agenda – 10 February 2026 11:00-12:30 and 13:00-14:30

Venue: Conference Room, Police HQ and Microsoft Teams

Chair: Paul Butler, part 1; Sally Fox, part 2

Attendees:

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

Partial meeting attendance:

Paul Butler, OPCC Chief Finance Officer (CFO)
Nick Adams, Chief Officer – Finance, Resources and Innovation
Steph McKenna, Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (NPG) Implementation Delivery Lead
Jen Grannan, Head of Digital and Projects
Dave Wilson, Project Manager
Ed Yaxley, Detective Superintendent, Criminal Investigations Department
Nick Lilley, Director of Information Technology
Richard Marsh, Detective Superintendent – Planning and Change (*online*)
Joanne Hall, Assistant Chief Constable

1 Apologies

2 Minutes and Action Updates

The Minutes of the January Board were confirmed as an accurate record for publication.

An extension to the due date for the action in relation to injury pensions was requested as the data from the national review being undertaken by West Mercia was not yet available. This would be shared with Board members when it was available, and the due date was extended to the next Board meeting.

The action in relation to understanding best practice around the use of Live Facial Recognition (LFR) was kept open for a further update at the next Board meeting. ASP had undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment and a Data Protection Impact Assessment for the use of LFR and had booked the LFR van for use in April; the location of the deployment has not yet been decided. ASP were due to meet with the national lead for LFR later in February and would undertake consultation with partners and stakeholders ahead of deployment of LFR.

The remaining actions had received sufficient updates to close them.

3 Finance

a) Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

The Board noted that the MTFP had been presented to the Police and Crime Panel at their meeting the previous week and had not been amended. It would be updated in light of the final settlement figures that had been received late January which showed ASP would have £1.1m more funding than had been forecast but with an expectation of recruiting an additional 40 Neighbourhood Policing officers. There had been no confirmation on the conditions that would be applied to the policing grant, but it was hoped this would be received in the next couple of weeks.

The Board discussed the assumptions that the Finance team had worked to when creating the MTFP, noting all details were yet to be confirmed but only the grant for Neighbourhood Policing would be conditional. The expected conditions were discussed but the Home Office had not yet confirmed the target numbers of officers and PCSO for ASP. It was not expected that current planned PCSO recruitment would enable ASP to reach their establishment and there would likely be a need to increase this by one or two more intakes of PCSOs through the year. While there were some challenges with recruiting PCSOs it was recognised that their role is valuable to the community.

The PCC approved the Net Revenue Expenditure budget for 2026/27 as £454,734,000, noting the plan to sit behind it for Neighbourhood Policing could not be confirmed currently.

b) Q3 Financial Performance Report

The Chief Officer – Finance, Resources and Innovation provided a brief oral update on the headlines from the Q3 Financial Performance Report, noting the position was largely as had been reported throughout the year. The pressures on overtime continued, with a forecast overspend of £1.4m, noting £0.3m related to chargeable operations. £0.4m is non-chargeable and mostly related to protests. Of the remainder, £0.5m was abstraction pressures. The overspends on overtime and the challenges created by the pay award were offset by underspends in other areas, including PCSOs, premises costs (successful appeals on business rates and low energy costs) and over achievement on savings, income exceeding the budget and some other over achievement on e.g. income on investments.

Capital spend to date is £13.6m, with a further £10.4m forecast by year end, resulting in a projected £8.6m underspend. This is primarily due to delays in starting the Yeovil construction project and the HQ chiller works, both of which will now slip into the spend for next year.

The PCC noted the ongoing overspend on overtime, seeking assurance ASP understood the causes. ASP noted it was partly due to the increase in protest activity, as well as the continued need for abstraction management to cover student officers when they were out for training. ASP had increased the overtime budget to account for some of the known abstractions but noted the welfare concerns on increasing levels of overtime and would continue to work to understand it and reduce it where possible. The Board discussed the challenge of meeting the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee when ASP would prefer to increase the numbers of response officers to address these pressures.

The PCC requested sight of the neighbourhood policing numbers that had been discussed and a detailed breakdown of the overtime figures. The DCC confirmed that the overtime figures were reviewed each month at the Constabulary Management Board.

The PCC queried how the speed enforcement unit's budget had been affected by the smart motorway variable speed cameras being turned off. ASP estimated this was impacting by around £100k a month, noting that there would be some lag to the details due to the time between drivers being sent their notice and accepting either the fine or training. The Department for Transport were taking the lead responsibility for refunds to drivers for any inappropriate speeding fines that had been issued. The Met were leading the national gold group regarding the recalibration and switch on of cameras.

4 Decisions/Business Cases

a) Final Business Case – SATEON

The Head of Digital and Projects noted this was a required change, the cost had been built in to the MTFP, there was a small saving compared to original estimates and while the work would be disruptive during installation, it would future proof the access arrangements for the estate.

The Board discussed the project logistics, including security arrangements and contractor vetting requirements. The project team would provide guidance to the workforce for managing access during the fitting and would minimise disruption as much as possible by having the units built and programmed in the lab ahead of deployment.

The PCC confirmed her agreement to the business case.

b) Final Business Case – SOZE

The DPCC thanked the ASP team for the work undertaken and the conversations outside of the Board to assist the PCC with the decision making for this project. He noted discussions had included the proof of value (POV) report and the difficulty associated with identifying cashable savings, as well as efficiency savings and confirmed the PCC's desire to work through that. The PCC and her team had received a demonstration of the tool in use and could see the value of what it does but there remained questions relating to the measurable benefits and efficiencies.

The Detective Superintendent leading the project outlined the five part benefits framework that had been developed, which outlined efficiencies expected in investigations. These had been demonstrated by some of the trial users through the POV project. The benefits framework also outlined enhanced investigative capabilities and welfare and timeliness improvements, improved outcomes and greater opportunities to pursue offenders. He confirmed a set of measures would be routinely reported on to track these improvements.

The Board sought clarity on how and when these outcomes would be visible in practice, and the proposal to expand the rollout to approximately 800 officers across Criminal Investigation Directorate, the Public Protection Unit and Detainee Investigation Team, was outlined, supported by clear leadership and line-management engagement to ensure strong take-up.

The Board discussed the risks and governance arrangements associated with the project, and assurance was provided that financial visibility was strong and appropriate decision gateways, including review points through GSB, would allow progress, uptake and outcomes to be monitored and, if necessary, paused.

Updates were given on the potential need for accreditation, which was thought to be a low risk and would not adversely impact the project. The AI used in the programme was rooted in Microsoft algorithms and language so mitigations were already in place. The project would be submitted to the Ethics Committee ahead of final sign off and ASP would publish a statement outlining the use of AI.

The PCC approved the recommended option (2a) with the following requirements:

- The AI validation exercise would be complete before contract sign off
- Decision gateways would be built in
- Reports would be provided on a 6 monthly basis to GSB on the use and take up

5 Constabulary Change Portfolio

a) ERP

The Board received an oral update on the progress of the project since the report submitted with the papers. The User Acceptance Testing (UAT) was progressing as planned and issued identified were traceable to configuration or data migration so could be addressed. UAT was expected to conclude mid-March, when the project would proceed to transition planning.

An issue that had been referenced around misalignment between Total Mobile and GRS had been addressed and issues with GRS and Oracle had mitigating actions in place to resolve.

There was confidence in the project and in the timetable and any significant risks or issues would be flagged to the Board for awareness.

b) Operating Model

The PCC sought an update on the timelines for Phase 2 of the Operating Model. The team had provided a presentation at the leadership time events to ensure leaders were aware of the plans. The internal resources that had been agreed at the Portfolio Steering Board (PSB) would be in place in time for onboarding and business analysis was in place.

The next milestones would be an update on design at the June PSB when more detailed timelines could be established, with different aspects having their own timelines, noting major people changes would be likely to occur in February or March next year.

The PCC requested separate check ins on this work, in addition to the standing invitation for her team to join the team meetings.

c) Portfolio Highlight Report

The PCC's Chief Finance Officer raised the challenges of using the Verto project management system to provide sufficient updates to discharge their governance function. It was agreed a separate discussion would be arranged to discuss requirements and agree an improved approach.

The Board discussed planned procurement of a customer experience platform, including the uncertainty around funding from the Home Office, and options for a regional procurement process. A business case would be presented when it was complete.

6 Chief Constable's Update (Oral)

The Chief Constable shared her concerns, noting the wider context of the 'Police Reform White Paper', while many elements were outside of local control, there remained scope to influence aspects of its development. The focus locally remains on delivering the existing plan and priorities, ensuring alignment with the expected direction of reform. The Chief highlighted two areas as particularly significant: the ongoing work to address disproportionality, including a planned workshop, and the current levels of morale and motivation across the workforce.

Two recent high-profile cases involving officers had highlighted concerns about the timeliness and robustness of misconduct and criminal justice processes. The Chief recognised that these matters have had a notable impact on staff morale and may influence officer confidence in decision-making. A listening circle was scheduled to allow space for staff to reflect and share their concerns.

It was noted that further public commentary would only be appropriate following the conclusion of related legal proceedings, but that broader conversations with partners such as the CPS and IOPC would be important. The Chief Constable referenced her recent blog as an effort to acknowledge these issues for staff, and the Board recognised the importance of understanding and addressing the impact of such cases on officers, particularly where matters have taken several years and have resulted in life-changing consequences.

While recognising the need for appropriate accountability, the Board observed that significant delays undermine public confidence and contribute to anxiety among officers about potential personal consequences, even though loss of pension or similar sanctions are rare in cases involving mistakes rather than proven misconduct. The Board agreed that the system must feel fair and timely to both the public and the workforce.

The Board further discussed the prosecution approach in one of the cases and the wider learning that may be required. It was noted that, as with other criminal cases, an adverse outcomes report would ordinarily be produced by prosecuting counsel for CPS review, but further clarity would be needed on whether a broader debrief would take place. The Board reflected on the role of both the IOPC and the CPS in the progression of the case, including periods of inactivity, and highlighted the need for discussions with partners on how such situations can be better managed.

The Board also reflected on wider workforce morale. While some recent leadership events had suggested high levels of engagement, there remained concerns about reluctance among officers to take on certain types of cases due to perceived risks and the emotional and professional jeopardy involved. Observations were made that investigations may not always be allocated in the most appropriate way, and that capability may not always sit where needed. The Board noted the importance of continued dialogue with the IOPC, including at senior levels, to ensure awareness of the operational and cultural impact of these issues, and acknowledged the ongoing challenge of understanding where accountability lies within a complex system.

7 Police and Crime Plan

The Deferred Prosecution Model (DPS)

The PCC noted that the project had been formally closed at PSB with a Post Implementation Review set for 12 months' time. The project had not been as successful as hoped due to lower numbers of usage than planned and a smaller proportion of Black and ethnic minority suspects

being referred than it had been designed for. The PCC sought to understand how ASP intended to increase usage of the product.

The DCC noted that this was being highlighted at the leadership events and they had seen an increase in usage of the Out of Court Resolutions App which will help direct investigators to the use of the DPS. The lack of use particularly in diverse communities was disappointing as these were the communities where it would have the most positive impact. Senior leaders continued to closely monitor the use and impact, and ensuring officers understood why it was a better approach.

Use of AI in intel

The Board discussed the current and potential use of AI in intelligence and casework, in light of the recent high-profile case, which had raised the awareness of the risks and potential downfalls of AI use.

ASP confirmed they have a clear policy on the use of AI, which could not be used without any human intervention but acknowledged there was further work to be done. There was a communications plan over next couple of weeks to provide additional training and guidance to staff.

The Chief Constable acknowledged that she was accountable for the use of AI within ASP and was ensuring the necessary policies and safeguards were in place and confirmed it was mostly used to support administrative processes.

Police and Crime Plan

The Deputy PCC raised the challenge of disseminating strategic objectives and values across the workforce and ensuring awareness of the Police and Crime Plan. A conversation was needed to explore ways of making these more accessible to the workforce.

The Board briefly touched on the ongoing engagement with the 'Police Reform White Paper' and the Police Leadership Commission, including upcoming visits from the Commission. and the challenge of disseminating strategic objectives and values across the workforce.

8 Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (*inc Winter of Action*)

An oral update was provided by the ASB and NPG lead and a summary is provided here:

- The Winter of Action had concluded successfully. The Home Office had expressed positive feedback on ASP's performance following a recent visit and were impressed by operational delivery, while noting that some activity would not be reflected in recorded statistics.
- The draft ASB plan had been shared with the Home Office, and the feedback was that ASP's plan was one of the best three nationally. A meeting with the PCC was scheduled to review the plan ahead of formal submission.
- The force had been allocated £800k from the Knife Crime Fund. For Bristol, hotspot policing would be treated as business-as-usual (BAU), and the funding could be used to maintain these activities. Delivery plans were required by the end of April. Clarification was sought on whether the funding was Bristol-specific or could be used more broadly. It was confirmed that it related to knife-crime hotspot areas and required evidence to support allocation.
- Hundreds of arrests had been made during the Winter of Action. The Neighbourhood Policing and visibility approach had been extended into rural areas. Teams had been asked not to embed unsustainable approaches. Local authority and partner relationships remained positive, with good feedback on visibility and partnership working.

- On business crime, meetings with Business Improvement Districts were planned to establish their needs and to discuss visibility and neighbourhood tasking teams. Work was underway to balance risk and community confidence.
- Quarterly meetings with retail leads were being established outside the Business Crime Forum (BCF) to improve accountability, with a view to inviting them to the BCF annually. Business crime was highlighted as a notable area of success in terms of building trust and confidence in policing.
- ASB levels had shown a steep rise; however, this coincided with changes to call-handling scripts and crime data integrity processes implemented in April of the previous year. This had artificially inflated ASB reporting. A review of call scripts was underway to ensure accurate recording.
- Work continued to develop tangible methods to engage seldom heard communities, supported by strong contributions from the Neighbourhood Policing Group. BAU processes within Neighbourhood Policing teams were operating effectively.
- Compliance with the 72-hour standard, monitored via Qlik, stood at 89%.
- It was noted that clear delivery objectives within the plan would produce wider community benefits if achieved.

9 Monthly PEEL Question - How good is the force at managing fraud? How good is the force at disrupting serious and organised crime?

Police & Crime Plan Priorities 2 and 3

Fraud

ASP provided an update on fraud investigations and the implementation of Report Fraud in response to questions from the PCC and her team:

- Further developments were expected, and the matter remained recorded on the DLM risk register. ASP was no longer receiving incidents with viable lines of enquiry, which limited the ability to provide advice or put prevention measures in place.
- The Report Fraud process flow was still developing and remained inefficient. ASP continued to receive a high volume of data that should have been directed to other forces. The issue had been raised with a Superintendent in the City of London Police, and recommendations were awaited. A contingency plan would be developed should no further guidance be received.
- It was noted that Report Fraud remained in its infancy. Although the model was designed to centralise some functions and create local capacity, this benefit was not yet being realised. Early operational issues were expected as the model bedded in.
- The departure of the previous lead for cyber-related prevention work had prompted consideration of how these functions would continue. A new lead had taken on the role, bringing fresh perspective, strong operational grip, and evident commitment. The Fraud Protect Officer within the team continued to be recognised nationally as one of the strongest performers, with 70% of disruptions within ASP were attributed to his team.
- Confidence in fraud-related data still required improvement, and work was underway to address inconsistencies in force-wide reporting.
- Approximately 50% of fraud cases sat with Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Patrol. HMICFRS would consider the force's whole-system response to fraud rather than specialist teams alone. Work was being undertaken to understand the criteria likely to be assessed.
- The force had reviewed the approaches taken in Wiltshire and South Wales and was seeking to adopt elements of best practice. There was an aspiration to consolidate fraud investigations within a single team, which would require additional resourcing and careful implementation sequencing. Options to expand the current team were being explored.
- Governance routes, including SPM and other oversight mechanisms, would support the introduction of improved practice.

- ASP acknowledged that the fraud report presented was complex and required restructuring using the four Ps framework to provide clarity. There was agreement that response officers should not be expected to manage fraud investigations due to limited specialist skills and capacity. Clarity was required on the initial advice provided to callers reporting fraud.
- Concerns were noted about the potential loss of prevent and protect functions within the evolving Report Fraud model.

Serious Organised Crime

The number of live Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) within ASP have decreased and are significantly lower than HMICFRS would expect for a force the size of ASP. It was felt this reflected poor performance in identifying and recording OCGs, not that OCGs are reducing. This has been the subject of one of the Areas for Improvement (AFI) within the HMICFRS report.

It was noted the other AFI related to the resource allocated to Serious Organised Crime (SOC). While the Remedy team had played an important role at the time, that resource had been repurposed, and it was not clear if the resource allocated to SOC had reduced as a result.

The Assistant Chief Constable provided an update on the two AFIs, noting both now had closure letters submitted, which would be tested and checked to ensure sufficient evidence of closure. ASP had not been able to find a local or national reason for the reduction – no flags or warning signs. The repurposing of posts within SOC meant there was a Detective Inspector (DI) with dedicated responsibility for OCG management, oversight and training who would have a consistent view across the force. It had not always been as clear with Remedy whether the tasking had been centrally managed or whether they had been self-tasking. The DI would be delivering training across the neighbourhood teams to recognise lower tier OCGs which would ensure proper tasking, with a consistent approach to tackle the priority force issues.

Date of the next Governance and Scrutiny Board: 17 March 2026 11:00 - 12:30 and 13:00 - 14:30