



Governance and Scrutiny Board Minutes – 11 November 2025 12:00-13:30 and 14:00-15:30

Venue: Alan Salmon Meeting Room, Police HQ

Chair: Part 1 - Paul Butler; Part 2 - Sally Fox

Attendees:

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

Partial meeting attendance:

Nick Adams, Chief Officer – Finance, Resources and Innovation
Louise Hutchison, Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development
Paul Butler, OPCC Chief Finance Officer (CFO)
Steph McKenna, ASB and NPG Implementation Delivery Lead

1 Apologies

Sarah Crew, Chief Constable (CC)
George Headley, Head of Strategic Planning and Change

2 Minutes and Action Updates

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

Updates had been received in advance of the meeting that closed one of the actions. Two still required further discussion around how to take forward and would be followed up at the next meeting.

A late update had been received in relation to the action to review the ASP position regarding Injury on Duty pensions. ASP were continuing work to understand the reasons behind increase in Ill Health Retirement and Injury on Duty awards in 2024. This had been in part due to a backlog of cases, and it was expected to decrease for 2025 as the backlog had been cleared. ASP would share any further findings with the PCC when they were available. The action was carried over for a future update.

3 Finance

a) Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update

An oral update was provided to the Board advising work was on track to provide the draft MTFP on time. The council tax position to reflect the responses received from all 5 local authorities. It was noted the overall position was not as positive as hoped, with the aggregate increase reported as 0.7%, which would have an impact on the forecast figures.

ASP continued to progress with the work around the Neighbourhood Guarantee, modelling an additional 70 officers staggered over the next two years, with 35 recruited by March 2027 and further 35 by March 2028.

There continued to be no news on the Local Government Pension Scheme and any plans to reset the employer contribution.

It was noted that last year there had been late adjustments to the budget, and it was anticipated this would happen again this year.

The Board discussed any potential savings from the national efficiency programme, noting for ASP these were anticipated to be minimal due to strong savings already made in procurement contracts.

The Board discussed the challenges with effective use of capacity across the estate as the new officers were recruited and ASP would be refreshing their Estates Strategy to address this.

b) Q2 Financial Performance Report

The Board reviewed the Q2 2025/26 Financial Performance Report, which noted an overall revenue underspend of £0.2% (£0.8m) forecast by year-end. At 30 September, ASP reported a £1m underspend, primarily driven by savings in premises and central costs, partially offset by overspends on overtime. The report highlighted that savings targets have been exceeded by £636k through budget adjustments and operational efficiencies, with £1.7m identified as permanent savings.

The report also noted an increase of £1.4m in forecasted revenue costs from Q1 to Q2 and ongoing monitoring of police officer headcount to meet grant conditions. Overall, financial performance was stable, with continued focus on managing overtime pressures and delivering planned savings.

The PCC sought to understand ASP's confidence in meeting the officer numbers for the year and received assurance that this was on track for March 2026. ASP were awaiting the additional detail from year two of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee to understand any new requirements.

It was noted that Detention Officer (DO) staffing remained a challenge; ASP would review the approach and provide clarity on future plans following the agreed 12-month increase in DO staffing that had been funded by Op Safeguard. It was anticipated this would have implications for the MTFP.

c) OPCC Forecast Outturn Report 2025-26 and OPCC Budget 2026-27 Proposal

The Board reviewed the OPCC Forecast Outturn for 2025/26, which showed a spend of £2.6m against a £2.7m budget, with minor overspends on staffing and legal costs offset by underspends and reserve transfers. The proposed 2026/27 budget is £2.8m for the OPCC

and £2.7m for commissioning, reflecting inflationary uplifts in pay and continued support for victim services and community safety initiatives.

The Director of Performance and Accountability highlighted the ongoing uncertainty around misconduct hearings, noting the national work that was underway to bring some clarity and the potential for significant increases in costs under the new model.

d) 2025-26 Mid-Year Treasury Management Report

The Board noted the PCC's mid-year Treasury Management report for 2025/26, confirming all activity complied with CIPFA Code requirements and prudential indicators, with a risk-averse approach prioritising security and liquidity. Investment returns averaged 4.42%, generating £1.97m income, while borrowing remained passive with capital spending funded internally and overall debt reduced by £0.6m.

The Board discussed the lending to Local Authorities, which was seen to bring additional income at low risk.

e) Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) Report

The Board received an oral update on the Financial Investigation Unit (FIU), noting a written report would be presented at the December Board. The FIU had maintained continuity despite recent leadership changes. The unit operates under national standards set by the National Crime Agency and UKFIU, with a regulated accreditation pathway for Financial Investigators and strict controls on sensitive financial data. It supports force-wide investigations, especially where cash is seized, manages a high volume of Suspicious Activity Reports, assists with missing persons and collaborates with specialist teams on complex areas such as cryptocurrency and confiscation. All POCA orders are processed through JARD, the Home Office system, and are subject to judicial scrutiny, ensuring compliance and transparency.

Performance remains high, with over 400 active investigations (a 25% year-on-year increase) and £1.88m recovered across 96 orders, including confiscation, civil recovery, account freezing, and crypto seizures. The ASP FIU continues to rank among the strongest regionally, delivering effective outcomes and supporting operational priorities.

Ahead of the report due to be presented at the next meeting the PCC and her team identified a few areas of interest that the report would be expected to cover, including:

- Governance of the use of POCA funds
- Reinstatement of regular reporting to the Board
- Explanation of the different methods of recovery and what can be retained to be used by ASP

4 Constabulary Change Portfolio

a) Portfolio Highlight Report

The PCC and her team had highlighted areas of interest from the report with ASP ahead of the meeting and received an update on these:

- Phase 2 of the Operating Model changes would provide more clarity about any changes that might affect the Police Staff Investigator roles. ASP had undertaken engagement with staff and Unison and were confident the workforce were well informed on plans.

- In regard to the development of the police station at Trinity Road, there were monthly project boards, a community newsletter in the local area and a stakeholder event with MPs had been scheduled to ensure stakeholders were kept informed of progress.
- There were no outstanding planning issues at the Yeovil site and the project was proceeding as expected.

The Delivery Manager – Portfolio highlighted the projects within the report which had moved through delivery gates, noting the 3 that had been archived. The Trust Vault project had been paused due to some commercial concerns and ASP were looking to other forces for any learning before taking it forward.

The PCC and her team thanked ASP for the time taken providing a separate and detailed demonstration of the SOZE product earlier in the month.

b) ERP

The Chief Officer – Finance, Resources and Innovation noted the project was progressing well and was on target to complete the first stage of the processes and move on to the second stage. Checks were being undertaken to ensure resourcing requests were accurate and would be in place to cope with the busy Q4 whilst also managing User Acceptance Testing. Robotics would be deployed where possible to provide support and create capacity for the teams.

Work continued to develop the integration between the two systems that would be implemented and this was also on track to develop a sustainable model in December. It was noted there would be learning from other forces available to inform the ASP approach.

The Joint Audit Committee had requested a briefing on ERP at their January meeting and preparation for this was underway. The MTFP would reflect the business case and the approved finances.

The Phase 1 Operating Model changes had been managed and delivered within timescales without issue. The process for any future structural changes was under consideration.

c) Operating Model

The Board received an oral update on the successful implementation of Phase 1 of the Operating Model, which introduced geographical alignment of Patrol and Neighbourhood Policing under the new BCU structure on 3 November. Command and Control changes were delivered smoothly, and early operational tests confirmed the model is functioning effectively. Minor issues, such as call sign duplication, PCSO supervisor identification, and IT equipment limitations for joint briefings, had been addressed or were being managed, with positive feedback received on integrated briefings and visible leadership presence. A lessons learned workshop was scheduled for early December as the project moved into closure.

Planning for Phase 2 was underway, with a feasibility report due later in the month. The report would outline the portfolio structure, resources, and specific projects required for the next stage and the PCC and team would receive a briefing on the details.

The Board noted the benefits would continue to be tracked for 12 months, with further scrutiny of the project in 2026.

The PCC expressed interest in the communication out to communities from the new structure as well as feedback from officers on the new joint briefings for Neighbourhood and Patrol officers.

5 Chief Constable's Update

The Deputy Chief Constable provided an update on behalf of the Chief Constable, focusing on progress in improving trust and confidence through three areas of competence, standards, and engagement.

Competence: The disappointing results of the most recent PEEL Inspection were noted. However, significant progress was reported against the sixteen Areas for Improvement with seven of those now permanently closed, including those relating to Management of Sex Offenders and Violent Offenders and Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, with further closures anticipated in December. Work continued to address victim-based outcome rates, which had declined in national rankings despite maintaining the overall number of outcomes. Initiatives under Operation Justice were aimed at improving performance in areas such as shop theft and disposals, with the goal of achieving top-quartile national performance. Efforts to strengthen Out of Court Disposals were ongoing, supported by improved communication with frontline officers.

Preparations for the next PEEL inspection were underway, with a focus on understanding HMICFRS requirements, learning from other forces, and ensuring delivery of high-quality public service.

Standards: Measures to increase capacity in vetting and professional standards, improve investigation timeliness, and enhance capability in fraud and misconduct investigations were underway. Additional resources had been allocated to Professional Standards and vetting functions, and uniform standards would be reaffirmed, alongside a policy requiring police officers to work from police premises to improve resilience and productivity.

The report from the Met entitled 30 Patterns of Harm was referenced and ASP would be reading it and applying any learning identified.

Engagement: It was noted that while significant work had been undertaken around engagement, consistency remained a challenge. The new geographic leadership model was expected to strengthen local relationships and improve cultural alignment, with emphasis on visible and engaged leadership to drive performance and staff wellbeing.

Broader work on disproportionality and fraud was ongoing, and feedback on initiatives to return officers to police premises was reported as positive. The Board noted these developments as part of the continuing effort to improve policing standards and public confidence.

It was also noted the results of the ASP People Survey were being reviewed and would be shared with the Board when available.

6 Police and Crime Plan

a) Engagement and Communication Strategy

The Board discussed the draft strategy, and it was agreed that a number of revisions were required ahead of finalisation, including:

- Engagement plans
- How ASP will tackle disinformation and social media issues
- How ASP will work with communities to co-design engagement that works for them
- Consistency across the different teams on the approach to engagement

The Board discussed models that were used by other forces and companies to draw on best practice to inform the development of the strategy.

b) AOB

Crime recording

The PCC and her team raised concerns around the use of a Robotic Process Automation for crime recording which had not worked well, seeking to understand how ASP would cope with the demand given the RPA had been implanted to address the demand levels.

It was agreed the Director of Performance and Accountability would meet with ASP colleagues for further details.

PCSOs

The PCC noted the significantly reduced PCSO establishment, and the 7% vacancy rate and sought to understand the reasons for leaving.

ASP advised several PCSO's had been recruited as Police Officers, so experience had not been lost from the organisation. The lack of opportunity for progression in the role was also noted and a 7 or 8 year lifespan for the role was considered natural.

7 Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee

The Board received an oral update from the ASB and NPG Implementation Delivery Lead, a summary is provided:

- The new ASB Manager was embedded in the team and would manage all the ASB teams across ASP.
- Monthly meetings with partners were underway to establish ways of working together.
- Information sharing agreements had been signed and partner agencies now had direct access to Niche, the ASP case system.
- A Business Analyst to support work on risk assessment was due to join the team and would work on aligning priorities and risks across the partner agencies.
- NPP2 training had launched, and positive feedback had been received.
- The ASB Action Plan was progressing and regular meetings were booked with the PCC for her to review it.
- The Winter of Action initiatives would commence on 1 December and would include a focus on Nighttime Economy, VAWG, Vulnerable Victims and Drug Abuse as well as business crime.
- The drug strategy was being reviewed and would focus more on disruption than enforcement.
- Work was underway to mandate the use of the Out of Court Disposals app for all officers.

The Board discussed the concerns raised by the communities to the PCC around the use of e-scooters and e-bikes, as well as open drug use and the need to see more action from police to tackle these issues. ASP shared some of the work they were doing in these areas.

8 Monthly PEEL Question – How good is the force at crime prevention and deterrence?
Police & Crime Plan Priorities 1, 2 and 3

The PCC and her team raised concerns about the limited use of Problem Solving Plans (PSPs) across ASP, querying how ASP intended to increase the use of them, understand the effectiveness of them and share learning.

The ASB and NPG Implementation Delivery Lead provided an update, noting that the Problem Solving Team had been under resourced but was now at full strength. A review of all live PSPs found many to be below standard, lacking baseline data and clear objectives. Fifty PSPs were now in place, with 14 having been reopened to meet Home Office criteria.

Work was underway to improve consistency and quality through revised processes, mandatory supervisory review before ASB team involvement, and enhanced training supported by best practice examples. A Qlik page and step-by-step guidance are being developed to share learning, and additional analytical support had been requested to strengthen monitoring. The number of PSPs was expected to increase significantly as these improvements were implemented, and progress would be revisited in three months.

All victims of open PSPs were being called by the team and the PCC welcomed this.

A.O.B

The PCC's team noted the need to strengthen oversight of HMICFRS recommendations and AFIs, seeking to take a more proactive role in the Recommendations Steering Forum and closure process. ASP agreed and requested a member of staff with knowledge of this area be nominated to join.

Date of the next Governance and Scrutiny Board: 17 December 2025 11:00 - 12:30 and 13:00 - 14:30