



## **Governance and Scrutiny Board agenda – 13 January 2026 11:00-12:30 and 13:00-14:30**

**Venue: Conference Room, Police HQ and Microsoft Teams 11:00-12:30 and OPCC Meeting Room, Police HQ and Microsoft Teams 13:00-14:30**

**Chair: Paul Butler**

### **Attendees:**

Clare Moody, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)  
Sarah Crew, Chief Constable (CC)  
Jon Reilly, Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)  
Paul Butler, OPCC Chief Finance Officer (CFO)  
Ben Valentine, OPCC Senior Performance and Governance Manager  
James Davis, ASP Delivery Manager - Portfolio (*online*)  
Vicky Ellis, Secretariat Manager (Minutes)

### **Partial meeting attendance:**

Kevin Slocombe, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC)  
Sally Fox, Director of Performance and Accountability  
Nick Adams, Chief Officer – Finance, Resources and Innovation  
Mark Almond, Change Programme Lead for Investigative Standards  
Nick Lilley, Director of Information Technology  
Steph McKenna, ASB and NPG Implementation Delivery Lead (*online*)  
Robert Simmons, Senior Scrutiny and Assurance Manager  
Dan Ashfield, Head of Custody

## **1 Apologies**

## **2 Minutes and Action Updates**

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

The Board noted some clarification points that had been added to the action which outlined the additional information requested to be included in the next Proceeds of Crime Act report, due in June.

An oral update was provided to the Board in relation to the request for an update on usage of the Evidence-Based Investigative Tool (EBIT):

- Uptake lower than expected; stronger use in Desktop Based Investigation Team than in Response or Neighbourhood Policing.
- Approx. 10 uses per day, applied to 8% of eligible crimes (>1,000 uses since launch).
- Demonstrated benefits include faster solving times (from 12 to 9 days) and DBIT caseload reductions.

- EBIT currently a secondary app; Pronto-embedded forces report better performance.
- Integration with Pronto aimed for April, with benefits expected in the summer.
- Independent academic review of more than 1,000 cases found no evidence of bias: tool likely to reduce subjective decision-making.
- Risks relate to possible bias in question sets; regular review of questions planned.
- Supervisor checks remain in place; panel judged the approach robust.
- Acknowledgement of wider institutional bias; need to ensure EBIT does not amplify societal disproportionality (e.g. CCTV availability).
- Broader issues with Pronto were noted; ASP has limited form coverage and staffing compared to other forces, highlighting need for investment in resources.
- Planning expansion of EBIT through 2026 to include other crime types: criminal damage, harassment, malicious communications.
- Work underway on question sets, efficiency assessments, and future Pronto integration.

The PCC noted the need to have a discussion about Pronto about how this is followed up.

Additional time was requested to respond to two of the open actions, which would report at the following Board and the remaining actions had received sufficient updates to close them.

## **Finance**

### **a) Medium Term Financial Plan**

The Chief Officer – Finance, Resources and Innovation provided a brief presentation on the progress to finalising the MTFP:

- The plan was largely complete, final refinements would be made as the local authorities submitted their information.
- It was based on assumptions due to the absence of a detailed grant settlement.
- Some suggestions on how the government may distribute the funding were discussed, noting the possibility that Avon and Somerset may receive a lower amount than originally anticipated.
- The MTFP modelled a 3% pay award in September which was in line with the models from most forces.
- The draft headlines for the report were summarised as balanced budget for 3 years on the assumption of the delivery of the planned savings that had been identified.
- ASP was in a relatively strong position and would look to take forward the ambition to grow officer numbers into planning cycles.
- Would also look to improve the capacity of existing officers through the use of technology

The PCC noted the risks arising from the assumptions and the unresolved national issues and the implications on the MTFP. The lack of Home Office engagement with Chief Finance Officers through the process so far was noted.

The Board discussed the level of confidence in the savings accounted for in the MTFP, with ASP advising the value of savings would be met but may come from other parts of the business, not just the police staff investigators.

Noting the complexity of the Phase 2 Operating Model work, the PCC emphasised the need for realism when accounting for financial benefits to programmes and ensuring savings are articulated clearly, including any efficiency savings being claimed.

#### **4 Constabulary Change Portfolio**

##### **a) Portfolio Highlight Report**

It was noted there was no update on the sale of Minehead Police Station as yet.

In relation to the update provided on the Regional ICT project, the Board discussed the ongoing efforts to strengthen regional collaboration, particularly around ICT and procurement and the need to formalise governance arrangements and strategic planning across the 5 forces.

##### **b) ERP**

The Director of Information Technology provided a brief oral update on activity since the report had been received by the Board, outlining the system integration testing was almost a week ahead of schedule. Defects and issues were being identified and quickly resolved. Planning for Phase 2 (84 calendar days until go live) and Phase 3 (293 days from go live) was mapped out. It was noted that a detailed session was planned with the Joint Audit Committee on Friday and work was underway for that.

The Board discussed the resilience of current resources to deliver both the project and business as usual. IT resources had been refocused on transition planning and requested resources from finance and HR for additional support were largely secured. Phase 2 resourcing was considered comfortable, though more was needed for phase 3, with critical paths mapped out. Any additional changes arising from the geographic/operating model work would be assessed when further detail was available, after which a change impact assessment would be completed.

##### **c) Operating Model (Oral)**

The Board clarified the status and governance of Phase 2 of the Operating Model, addressing recent confusion, the process for prioritising activities, and the alignment of strategic planning and continuous improvement.

#### **5 Chief Constable's Update (Oral)**

The Chief Constable provided a strategic stocktake of progress in 2025 and priorities for 2026, highlighting the wider context of geopolitical instability, rapid developments in artificial intelligence, increasing societal polarisation, and continued national policing reforms. In this environment, the Chief emphasised the need for the organisation to remain strategic rather than reactive, underpinned by strong governance, planning and decision-making.

Reflecting on 2025, she noted the implementation of the new geographic policing model, developments within Neighbourhood Policing and Public Protection, and increased senior leadership visibility. Recent visits to 29 stations indicated cautious optimism amongst officers and evidence of more joined-up working. However, significant challenges remain, including crime recording practices, crime allocation, pressures on patrol teams, and the

impact of shift patterns on service quality. The Chief also highlighted issues with digital tools, implementation of new processes, and inconsistent standards across some recent incidents.

Looking ahead, she expressed confidence that the organisation is focused on the right strategic priorities, with three key areas being refined into well-defined plans by March. This includes work on disproportionality, improving digital capability and competency (including safe innovation with tools such as Copilot), and clarifying how the organisation will support and challenge through strengthened service leadership. Governance arrangements will be aligned to support delivery.

The Chief emphasised that raising standards and effective leadership will be central, supported through one-to-one engagement with leaders and reinforcing expectations around professionalism, courtesy and confidence. Senior colleagues supported the emphasis on service leadership both in supporting frontline colleagues and in ensuring appropriate challenge in the interests of the public.

## **6 Police and Crime Plan**

The Board discussed the increasing profile of live facial recognition, and the PCC sought to understand ASP's approach to using it. The need for robust community engagement and ethical considerations ahead of deployment were discussed and this work is being led by an Assistant Chief Constable. ASP were also speaking to other police forces around best practice in using it. The Board also discussed the links to the Amnesty International report.

The PCC highlighted concerns about the inconsistency in the timeliness of response to Priority incidents. The Chief Constable had stated that a Perpetrator Focus was not yet part of the DNA of the organisation, particularly in Patrol and NPT and the Board discussed the ongoing efforts to address the cultural and resource related challenges within ASP.

It was noted that the first regular meeting with BCU Commanders and OPCC Directors had taken place and was positive.

## **7 Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (*inc Winter of Action*) (Oral)**

The Board received an oral update from the ASB and NPG Implementation Delivery Lead, on the Winter of Action initiative, reporting increased police visibility, reductions in retail and street crime, and positive feedback from businesses and communities, while also addressing data recording challenges and ongoing engagement with local partners.

Additional information would be included in the submission to the Home Office, highlighting some of the additional work being undertaken as part of the initiative. Confirmation of continued funding post April had not been received, though it was believed the work underway could be sustained.

## **8 Monthly PEEL Question – How good is the force at providing a safe and lawful custody environment?**

Police and Crime Plan Priority 5

The Head of Custody introduced himself and provided a brief update noting all the Areas for Improvement from the PEEL Inspection had been submitted for review and closure and the department was prepared for any future inspection.

The Director of Performance and Accountability highlighted some of the positive elements that had been noted in the report, in particular the caring attitudes of custody staff; positive feedback from detainees on their experiences; good evidence on diversion of prisoners; mental health provisions; and keeping children out of custody. She also shared some feedback from the Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) following the Panorama programme who stated that the programme had not reflected their experience in ASP.

The Board moved on to discuss some of the areas of concern within the report.

The report showed 31% of Custody Inspector Reviews were not completed on time. These largely occurred when the Custody Inspector was off-duty and responsibility transferred to Patrol Inspectors. National challenges around late-night working were noted. Options for moving to a 24/7 provision of Custody Inspectors are due to be considered at the Constabulary Management Board in February.

The PCC stated missing reviews should be exceptional and believed 31% remained too high. It was noted Detention Officer staffing provided full 24/7 custody coverage, and custody lines or units are only closed when staffing falls below safe levels, which remains rare.

The Board discussed the increased Use of Force (UoF) within Custody, with ASP having the 5<sup>th</sup> highest recording of UoF in Custody nationally. This was attributed to an improved understanding of definition and more consistent recording practices. Incidents were reviewed with independent and partner input to provide scrutiny and feedback. The importance of using Body-Worn Video (BWV) was emphasised, particularly as CCTV does not capture all angles or audio. Work was underway to improve BWV use in custody, including clearer guidance, improved docking infrastructure, and increased communication. It was noted that Custody Officers have been issued BWV but Detention Officers do not, and expanding BWV to DOs would require changes to training, equipment, and role expectations.

ASP would be reintroducing the Custody Assurance Board – within the next couple of months – which would strengthen the scrutiny provision for the department, and part of their role would be to review UoF within Custody. The role of PCC's Independent Custody Visitors as part of, or receiving feedback from, the Custody Assurance Board would be considered.

The Board discussed the monitoring of Exposure of Intimate Parts searches, with regular dip-samples being undertaken to ensure compliance.

The recommendations in the child focused section of the report had been progressed well and were being monitored as part of the continuous checking and testing.

The Senior Scrutiny and Assurance Manager shared feedback from the ICVs around neurodiversity signage within custody suites and the Board discussed provisions in place to support neurodiverse detainees.

**A.O.B**

**Date of the next Governance and Scrutiny Board: 10 February 2026 11:00 - 12:30 and 13:00  
- 14:30**