



AVON & SOMERSET

POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER

PCC DECISION

REF 2026/004

Decision Title: Legal Services & Vetting – Final Business Case

Decision summary:

The PCC approved a Final Business Case on 17/03/26 in support of the proposals for the uplift resources across Legal Services & Vetting in order to meet statutory obligations, reduce risk, and restore public confidence.

Background or reference to supporting papers:

Avon & Somerset Constabulary faces significant and urgent challenges within Professional Standards Department (PSD) and Vetting, driven by national scrutiny, new statutory requirements, and the findings of the 2025 HMICFRS Integrity Inspection, which graded the force as requires improvement in vetting, professional standards, and counter-corruption. There are now eight AFIs and two re-opened national recommendations requiring immediate action. Simultaneously, PSD has moved under the Legal & Compliance Services portfolio, increasing leadership, governance, and advisory demands on Legal Services.

Vetting demand has significantly increased due to the Police Vetting Regulations 2025, continuous vetting requirements, and new triggers for reviews. The Constabulary Vetting Team is comparatively under-resourced against Forces of similar size and is experiencing substantial backlogs. Without additional capacity, the organisation will be unable to comply with statutory processes, including vetting withdrawals, leading to risk exposure, delays in recruitment, and potential further criticism from HMICFRS.

PSD has seen increased complexity, higher misconduct volumes, and reduced experience within its senior leadership and investigative teams due to staff rotation. This has escalated dependence on Legal Services for early advice, case supervision, and support. Legal Services currently lacks the capacity to meet this rising demand, creating risk of procedural delays, inconsistent decision-making, judicial review challenges, and extended staff suspensions at significant cost.

The investment outlined in the Final Business Case provides effective mitigations in recognition of the current operating environment.

Avon and Somerset Police & Crime Commissioner

I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any declarations of disclosable interest in this matter. Any such interests are disclosed.

The above request has my approval.

Date 21/03/2026



Police & Crime Commissioner for Avon & Somerset

CFO Signatures

Date 17/03/26

(OCC CFO required if decision requested or presented for approval by Constabulary)



PCC CFO

**Nick ADAMS
OCC CFO**

Other relevant lead officer as required

Date 17/03/26

(e.g PCC CEO, COG lead)

Chief Executive

Karl Parfitt



Job title

name

signature