



Sussex Police

# Chief Constable's Annual Governance Statement

2024/25

19 June 2025, draft publication due 30 June 2025

Prepared by Corporate Planning

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# 1 Executive summary



Sussex Police is committed to **protecting** communities, **catching** criminals and **delivering** an outstanding service. These priorities are embedded throughout the organisation and, to be successful at fulfilling them, it must have a solid foundation of good governance with sound financial arrangements.

The [Code of Corporate Governance](#) is supported by a framework and assurance mechanisms.

The force is required to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) on a yearly basis, giving assurance on compliance in place for the year ending 31 March. The preparation of the AGS should add value to the governance and internal control framework, it also provides assurance on the areas of improvement identified to further enhance governance arrangements that the force plans to progress during 2025/26.

The Chief Constable (CC) and Chief Finance Officer (CFO) recognise the importance of continual review and scrutiny. They pledge their commitment to doing the right things, in the right way, in line with the force's priorities and values whilst addressing any identified areas for improvement highlighted in this statement.

This statement is designed to complement the annual governance statement of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC), to give the full picture of governance. It is informed by an annual review of governance arrangements with assurance on compliance with the seven principles of the Code of Corporate Governance, by ongoing audit inspection and internal review. This statement has been prepared on the basis of the review of effectiveness of governance arrangements. Advice and recommendations on the Annual Governance Statement have been received from internal and external auditors and the Joint Audit Committee. It represents a fair and reasonable assessment of current arrangements and plans for improvement within Sussex Police.

The arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

Handwritten signature of Jo Shiner in black ink.

Jo Shiner  
Chief Constable  
Date: 19 June 2025



Handwritten signature of Peter Appleton in black ink.

Peter Appleton  
Chief Finance Officer  
Date: 19 June 2025





### Internal Audit approach

Internal Audit provides a risk-based audit plan in which the independent provider Southern Internal Audit Partnership builds following engagement with both the PCC, force Chief Officer Team and the Audit Committee.

The Internal Audit arrangements are compliant with the Code of Practice for the Governance of Internal Audit in UK Local Government (April 2025), the charter is approved annually. The revised charter in line with the code was featured at the [March 2025](#) Joint Audit Committee.

Internal Audit is provided with access to staff and records and operates freely without any interference to its scope, performance of engagements or communication of results. Opportunities are provided to allow the Audit Committee to meet without senior management present.

Oversight of Internal Audit is maintained via the Joint Audit Committee as well as regular attendance and input at the force Organisational Reassurance Board.

Internal audit conforms with the Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) subject to the Application Note, therefore the GIAS in the UK Public Sector.

### Internal Audit opinion 2024/25

The Annual Governance Statement process was reviewed by Internal Audit in 2021/22 with a **reasonable assurance** grading awarded.

#### Annual Internal Audit Conclusion 2024/25

The annual Internal Audit opinion for 2024/25 for the framework of governance was '**reasonable assurance**'.

I am satisfied that sufficient assurance and advisory work has been carried out to allow me to form a conclusion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment. In my opinion the framework of governance, risk management and control are 'reasonable', and audit testing has demonstrated controls to be working in practice.

Where weaknesses have been identified through internal audit review, we have worked with management to agree appropriate corrective actions and a timescale for improvement.

Chief Internal Auditor  
Deputy Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership  
Date: 28 May 2025



### Joint Audit Committee workplan

The Audit Committee revisit their forward workplan as a standing agenda item each quarter. This is available within the meeting papers published online.

The audit committee workplan provides for the internal audit mandate and charter, strategy, plans, engagement reporting and the annual conclusion, and quality reports. The committee also oversees the tracking and implementation of the actions agreed following audits.

The Audit Committee has the opportunity to familiarise itself with the authority's assurance framework and approach to governance, risk management and internal control arrangements to fulfil the wider terms of reference of the committee.

The Audit Committee engage with Internal Audit to review resources to meet their mandate, and quality, to satisfy itself on the effectiveness and include their conclusion in the committee's annual report.

The Audit Committee also have oversight of the Annual Governance Statement before final approval.

### Joint Audit Committee review 2024/25

The Joint Audit Committee (JAC) is a key component of the corporate governance arrangements for both corporation sole.

The JAC's purpose is to provide an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of the governance, risk and control arrangements. It supports the PCC and CC and other statutory officers in gaining confidence as to the existence of effective governance by reviewing the comprehensiveness of assurances to meet the needs of Statutory Officers in respect of reliability and integrity.

The JAC provide independent advice and recommendations to the PCC and CC on the adequacy of arrangements in place for: The risk management framework, the internal control environment, financial reporting, annual governance processes, internal audit and external audit. In each of the above areas the JAC is enabled and required to have oversight, independent review and provide recommendations helping to ensure there are adequate arrangements in place for both internal challenge and public accountability.

Chair  
Independent Joint Audit Committee  
Date: 15 April 2025

### 3 Context and scope



The Chief Constable (CC) and the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) are responsible for ensuring business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and is properly accounted for.

Regulation 6(1)(a) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires an authority to conduct a review at least once in a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and include a statement reporting on the review with any published Statement of Accounts (England). This term 'authority' includes the CC and the PCC legal entities. This requirement is reflected in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24 published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA).

Under the Policing Protocol 2011 the PCC has responsibility for the delivery of efficient and effective policing, management of resources and expenditure by the police force. The PCC has a statutory responsibility to obtain the views of the community and victims of crime about the policing of the force area and must take into account the views of responsible authorities. These views inform the PCC's Police and Crime Plan, which sets the strategic direction and priorities for the force.

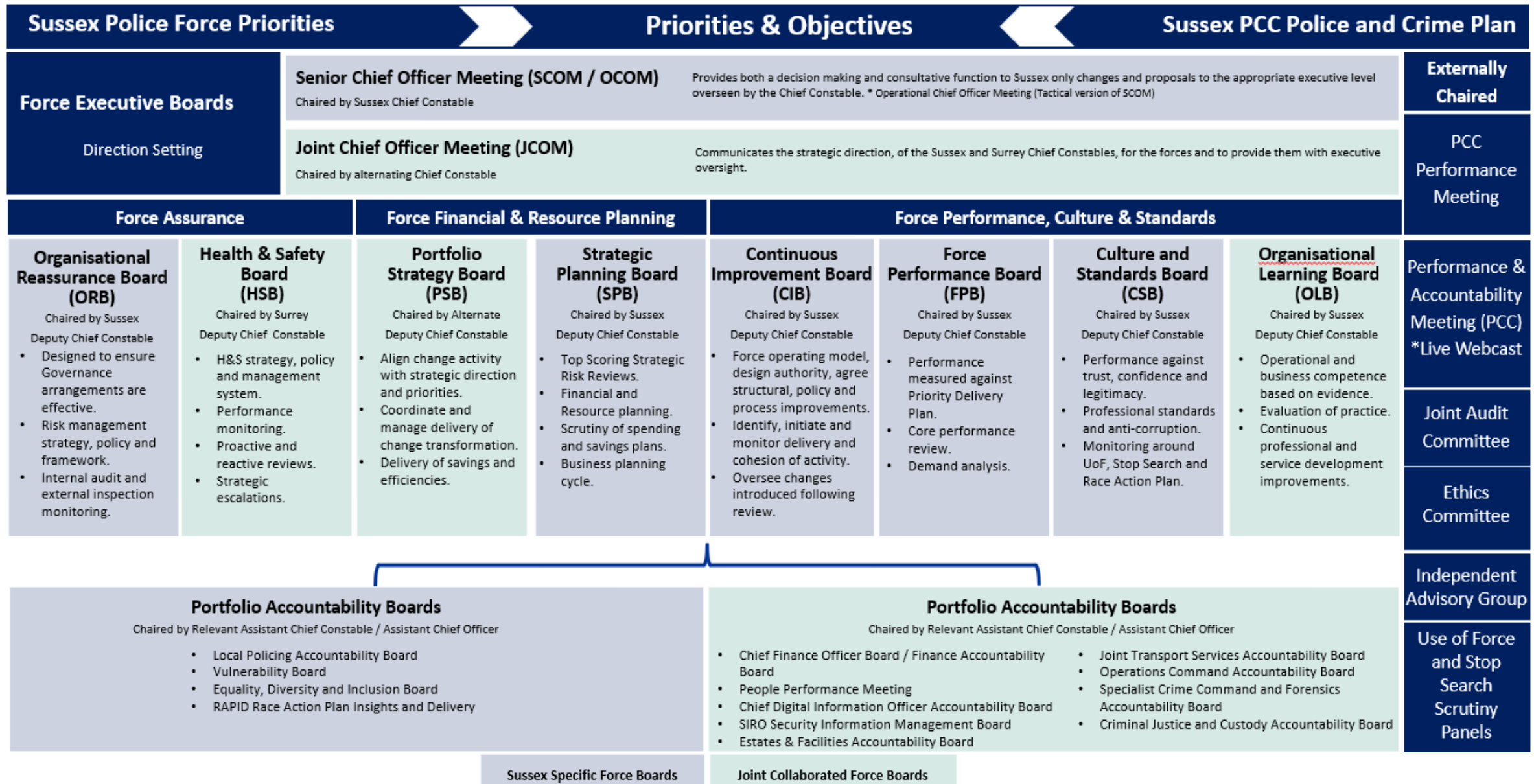
The CC has a statutory responsibility for the control, direction and delivery of operational policing services provided by Sussex Police (hereafter referred to as the force), having regard to the strategic direction and priorities set by the PCC in the Police and Crime Plan. In discharging this overall responsibility, the CC is responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate risk management processes, governance arrangements and ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, which facilitates the effective exercise of these functions.

The force continues to follow the principles of the CIPFA Framework: 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' and the guidance notes for policing bodies (revised 2016) also using the CIPFA Financial Management Code (CIPFA FM Code 2018) to support good practice in financial management and to assist in demonstrating financial sustainability.

The Financial Management Code of Practice (Home Office 2018) stipulates that the PCC and CC should ensure an independent audit committee is in place.

This statement explains how the force has complied with the principles and also meets the requirements of regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the publication of a statement on internal control.

The force's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of CIPFA's statement on The Role of Chief Finance Officers in Policing (March 2021).





The Annual Governance Statement incorporates the continuous review of the effectiveness of the force's governance arrangements throughout 2024/25. It identifies those areas where the force can and will do more to ensure that it has effective governance arrangements that enable the organisation to deliver on its priorities.

Governance arrangements for both the force and the PCC follow the seven principles as set out in the revised Delivering Good Governance: Guidance Notes for Policing Bodies in England and Wales (2016 Edition).

A governance framework, collectively known as the Scheme of Corporate Governance, has been in place for the year ended 31 March 2025 and includes the Code of Corporate Governance, Memorandum of Understanding, Decision-making Framework, Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders. The force system of internal control, based on a framework of policies and procedures, is a significant part of the force governance framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable and foreseeable level. The force cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The joint Code provides a summary of governance arrangements, setting out responsibilities. The Code also details a diarised programme for the regular review of policies. A key element of this is the identification and management of risk.

The force has to continually consider the most significant challenges in policing, where improvements need to be made and the actions police forces can take to strengthen public trust and confidence. Alongside this there is a necessity to support and strengthen the workforce. As with all public sector organisation it is imperative to prioritise resources through sound risk management and decision-making mechanisms and maintaining a keen understanding of the evolving demands faced within communities, technological advancements and policing reforms. Ensuring a constant link is made to service delivery to our communities, whilst also operating within the funding parameters available and providing value for money.

This Statement is an objective appraisal of the force's governance framework and shows that it has adequate arrangements that continue to be regarded as fit for purpose and comply with the Code of Corporate Governance. It shows that the force has met its legal and statutory obligations. While the force has good foundations in relation to its governance arrangements, the force recognises that further work is required to continue to embed and strengthen its governance culture. It also acknowledges that due to the complex and dynamic environment in which it operates, the governance arrangements will need to continually evolve to respond to changing circumstances.

Due to the Government Audit Reset and Recovery legislation to address the national public sector external audit backlog both the 22/23 and 23/24 final Accounts and AGS were subject to external delays, with the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts also being subject to a disclaimed audit opinion as a result of the Audit Reset. The force has a strong record of publishing its statutory accounts and annual governance statements on time and to the standard required, and published both the draft and final annual [Accounts 23/24](#) and [AGS 23/24](#) within the government deadlines and to the expected quality as confirmed by the external auditors. An [explanation](#) was published alongside the annual accounts 23/24 to explain why the accounts were subject to a disclaimed audit opinion and that this was solely a result of the Audit Reset and not in any way a fault of the force. The force continues a constructive working relationship with external parties as the sector is impacted by the external auditor backlog, with agreed plans in place for subsequent years including 2024/25.

# 5 Effectiveness and assurance review



As part of the annual review, the force has considered each principle, providing an outline of the control measures in place, how the principles are demonstrated and evidenced, and indicated any areas for future focus.

## Previous actions

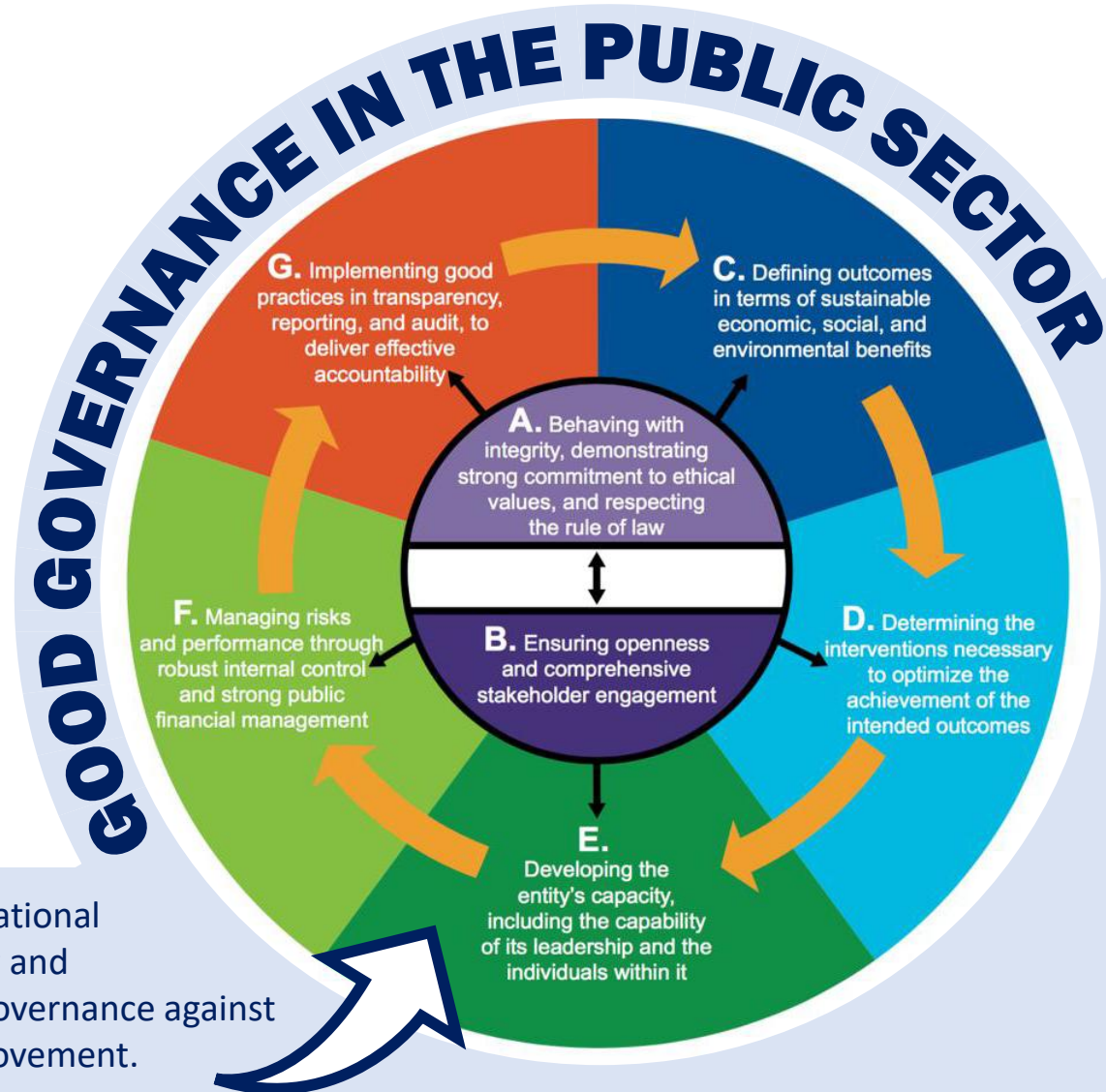
Any actions that remain open from the previous review in the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement are provided, to outline the continued progress and current status. Completed actions are shown in Appendix A.

## New actions

Whilst the force aims to ensure that sound policies and processes are in place and working effectively, some areas of development or areas for improvement in governance will inevitably be identified due to the continually evolving community and policing landscape. The force has identified these areas of continuous improvement and outlined the relevant actions in section 7 'Future improvement areas from 2024/25 review'. New actions have been specifically linked to an individual principle; however, the force recognises that actions can be linked to multiple principles.

## Existing internal business as usual (BAU) actions

As part of this annual review, the force has also indicated any ongoing areas where risks, issues and audit actions are being managed within its existing risk and recommendation governance framework which contribute to compliance with a principle. These are not featured in the 'Future improvement areas from 2024/25 review' but are referenced in the individual principle section as ONGOING BAU. They do not represent an exhaustive list of factors the force is working on but are detailed to provide further context and transparency.



The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) created the International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector to promote better service delivery and accountability through established governance benchmarks. The force assesses the governance against the seven principles of good governance and articulates any areas identified for improvement.

CONTROLS: WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS: DEMONSTRATING PRACTICAL APPLICATION	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES: WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Ethics</li> <li>• Force priorities</li> <li>• Culture focused board structure</li> <li>• Chief Officer assurance statements published</li> <li>• Complaints and whistleblowing mechanisms</li> <li>• Culture and inclusion strategy and maturity matrix</li> <li>• Positive action strategy</li> <li>• Anti discriminatory commitments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A revised Code of Ethics was published in 2024. This provides practical guidance on maintaining public trust and legitimacy. It includes being open, honest and candid, treating all people and their property with fairness, dignity and respect and challenging or reporting behaviour that is unprofessional. The decision making process encourages the use of personal responsibility and professional judgment. Central to this is the National Decision Model (NDM) and, by using the new College of Policing Code of Ethics, officers and staff can ensure they are acting in a fair and ethical way in everything they do. Chief Officer force-wide communications relating to the code, with mandatory training released by the NPCC for all officers and staff.</li> <li>• Standards of integrity, conduct and personal behaviour are communicated, accessible and embedded in recruitment, induction, refresher training and focus performance reviews.</li> <li>• ‘We are Sussex Leaders’ programme launched in 2025 covering the force Priorities, ethics, professional standards and leadership expectations.</li> <li>• Specific force-level strategic board charged with Culture and Standards which is supported by dashboard metrics to allow for discussion and scrutiny. Further supported by an independently chaired Ethics Committee, External Scrutiny Panels for Use of Force and Stop Search, engagement with Staff Networks and Community Independent Advisory Groups. All meetings focus on relevant Authorised Professional Practice, force policy and exploration of continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Force policies are reviewed on a documented cycle, undergoing Equality Impact Assessments prior to being published and communicated across the organisation and in the public domain. These include but are not limited to: Appropriate Relationships and Conflicts; Gifts, Gratuities and Hospitality; Lawful Business Monitoring, Notifiable Associations, Procurement, Substance Misuse Testing, Endorsement; and Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption. All of these policies have clear responsibilities for employees to follow. Publication scheme incorporates areas such as Expenses, Gifts and Hospitality.</li> <li>• Force Policy governing Information Asset Owners introduced to ensure improved definition of responsibilities of this role giving the force assurance that information assets are used proportionately and in accordance with law.</li> <li>• Force Data Breach Policy ensures that any loss of personal data is reported in a timely way and the regulator and/or data subject are transparently informed as required by law. The force has a strong set of policies for the ethical and lawful management of information. This is evidenced by low rates of data breaches, improving compliance with subject rights and high rates of compliance with training requirements (which emphasises ethics and integrity in data management, alongside statutory requirements).</li> <li>• Professional Standards Department operate the Break the Silence service and the Joint force Vetting Unit (JFVU) continues to act as a ‘critical gatekeeper’ for workforce integrity. Clear and accessible advice on the complaints process is available internally and externally with escalation signposting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory training involving Code of Ethics consists of a 3 modules training package alongside an in-person module 4. Completion and attendance tracking is in place.</li> <li>• Competency and values framework structure utilised in all entry routes and promotion processes. Let's talk about sessions and allyship training, and inclusion of a Race Action Plan question in all promotion processes.</li> <li>• Regular integrity checks activity.</li> <li>• Anti corruption annual reporting into the Organisational Reassurance Board (ORB). Annually presented to the Joint Audit Committee for external scrutiny.</li> <li>• Policy review compliance reported to ORB.</li> <li>• Regular publication of force misconduct outcomes with five years of historic data.</li> <li>• Complaints scrutiny within OPCC.</li> <li>• HMICFRS integrity inspection publication and verification process.</li> <li>• Horizon scanning in relation to existing and emerging areas of integrity and ethical consideration. Comparative force inspection reports, learning events and participation in pilots to assess approach to future policing demands.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CONTINUED ACTION 01/24-25 Governance signposting on force website to be reviewed and simplified to make it easier for the public to navigate and locate information.</li> <li>• NEW ACTION 04/24-25 Professional Standards organisational learning mechanisms. New process implementation to capture breadth of internal and externally identified learning sources and engagement opportunities.</li> <li>• NEW ACTION 05/24-25 Technology advancements and supporting structures. Focusing on ethical processes being embedded in operational policing relating to generative AI, data exploitation and live facial recognition.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop Search charter</li> <li>• Operation Pledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The HMICFRS integrity inspection report was published for Sussex on 30/05/25 the force is currently undertaking a review of the areas for improvement cited in the report and will then agree an action plan with the Chief Officer Team which will be managed by the Head of Professional Standards, Vetting and Anti Corruption and their Senior Management Team meeting cycle, with reporting on progress and for scrutiny to the force Culture and Standards Board as well as the Organisational Reassurance Board. Regular updates will also be provided to the HMICFRS via their monitoring portal to apprise them of progress. These areas for improvement when implemented will be subject to HMICFRS endorsement via their verification process.</li> </ul> <p>Since the inspection in October 2024, Sussex Police have already made significant progress in a number of the areas for improvement. We have implemented a comprehensive new organisational learning process which captures learning from all professional standards disciplines, and from external bodies such as IOPC; and then generates action across the force to incorporate learning force-wide. We have addressed the backlog within the Public Confidence Team so that all complaints are recorded and assessed within our service level agreement (SLA) timescales; this has been achieved by filling vacant posts - which in turn has ensured that performance issues connected to the backlog in complaints are no longer apparent. In Vetting, significant progress has been made to address the backlog across applications, which contributed to a number of areas of concern. We are now operating within our SLA timescales for all Vetting cases and have implemented a number of changes in practice which has improved the efficiency of the unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The force Equality Diversity and Inclusion strategy will be updated in 2025, following receipt of the College of Policing Culture and Inclusion strategy and benchmarking utilising the maturity matrix.</li> <li>• The force continues work via the Race Action Plan Insight and Delivery Board (RAPID) to ensure that the national Police Race Action Plan (PRAP), is fully implemented with identified priorities for all workstreams. The force regularly reviews a wide range of data including Stop Search, Use of Force and misconduct data through this meeting cycle to address disproportionality, disparity. It also seeks to improve data quality around protected characteristics. The force is committed to creating an inclusive workforce and fostering a culture of inclusion that also recognises the individual needs of the people it serves by engaging effectively with communities.</li> <li>• Launching the anti-racism statement in 2024 was a positive and important step forward in tackling the reality of policing for Black communities in the county. Sussex Police continues to work with the national Police Race Action Plan to better serve Black colleagues and local communities to ensure they are and feel represented, respected, involved and protected. Furthermore, in response to the Angiolini Inquiry recommendations the force has supported an Anti Discriminatory Statement.</li> <li>• Operation Pledge is the force promise to the public and our staff that we will create a culture within our organisation in which domestic abuse is never tolerated, minimised, or excused; a culture which is supportive, non-judgmental, and empowering to those who experience abuse, and where an individual who chooses to engage in abusive behaviours will be dealt with robustly and will be held to account. The force has implemented a new policy with mandatory reporting flag requirements to assist in identifying data trends, reinforce our focus on apprehending perpetrators and importantly identifying support that can be provided to victims in both the investigation, and the provision of timely specialist outside agency support. Alongside this it ensures visits are conducted by a supervisor in a safe location, specialist case workers, emphasis on confidentiality and safeguarding, additional measures to minimise coercion and control and where appropriate emergency adjustments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of Information asset owners policy and assurance mechanisms introduced.</li> <li>• Data breach reporting is scrutinised via the force Organisational Reassurance Board within the Information Management reporting and also the Security Information Management Board.</li> <li>• New flagging capability introduced as a result of Operation Pledge, to allow appropriate investigations and support mechanisms and scrutiny of outcomes with oversight and scrutiny panels in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NEW ACTION 06/24-25</b> Retention processes including legacy data, DPN and biometrics samples.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Communications strategy</b></li> <li>• <b>Community engagement strategy</b></li> <li>• <b>Children and young persons' strategy</b></li> <li>• <b>Independent advisory groups</b></li> <li>• <b>Use of surveys</b></li> <li>• <b>Single online home</b></li> <li>• <b>Publication scheme</b></li> <li>• <b>Freedom of information policy</b></li> <li>• <b>Performance and workforce data</b></li> <li>• <b>Citizen portal</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Strategy, setting out principles of corporate engagement, prioritisation and management of resources and linked to the national Communications and Engagement APP (authorised professional practice from College of Policing).</li> <li>• Community Engagement Strategy feeds into community profiles to ensure district plans are built from the community itself.</li> <li>• Social media management platform which strengthens management and security of engagement data, analysis of public sentiment, and improving crime reporting through social media channels. force engagement with the public takes place on many levels, from daily street contact and phone calls through to contact via social media (Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), etc.), online interaction via the force website and formal surveys in relation to service priorities.</li> <li>• Working with partner organisations - through community safety partnerships and a range of others - to tackle crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour, and to reduce re-offending and engage meaningfully for instance with children and young persons, providing early intervention offerings and focusing on positive outcomes.</li> <li>• Engagement with Advisory Groups, whose membership reflect different sections of the community, to encourage the active involvement of people from diverse groups. Stop Search, Use of Force cited as good examples.</li> <li>• Satisfaction surveys across a range of victim groups (beyond the statutory requirement) are conducted, providing the force with information about the quality of service these groups have received from the police service.</li> <li>• Targeted opinion research to understand perceptions and behaviours for effective targeting of crime prevention and behavioural change campaigns. This includes research through surveys and focus groups.</li> <li>• Sussex Police website, consistent with national initiative, which offers self-service features for the public, greater consistency of advice and guidance, and an improved user experience.</li> <li>• Regular review and publication of policies including the Freedom of Information Policy. The force has seen sustainable improvement to its transparency through Freedom of Information provision, including an expansion of its Publication Scheme to proactively provide commonly requested data.</li> <li>• Progress made with the refining in exchange of data with stakeholders for civil law purposes notably Family Courts with participation in the Sussex Family Justice Board.</li> <li>• Performance and workforce data available through the force website to ensure transparency and to encourage increased public accountability.</li> <li>• The force launched the Citizen Portal in 2024, allowing victims to receive automated updates, message the officer in charge directly regarding their case and access key information in one place. Future development opportunities are also available to utilise survey capability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External assurance of the community engagement strategy and the community advisory /scrutiny panels conducted in 2024 by The Consultation Institute, leading to some recommendations to enhance current practice.</li> <li>• OPCC Precept consultation and research survey 2024 and the Police and Crime Panel.</li> <li>• PCC Performance Accountability Meeting live webcast.</li> <li>• Linked to the above review, Local Policing will also consider adoption of a minimum standards of community engagement to enhance consistency across geographic areas; consideration will be given to an annual engagement plan addendum and pilot engagement tactics.</li> <li>• HMICFRS PEEL inspection.</li> <li>• Survey results such as Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) engagement return.</li> <li>• Scrutiny of Freedom of Information performance by Information Commissioner.</li> <li>• Information-sharing agreements managed and maintained by Information Management.</li> <li>• RECSX4852 ICO Data Protection Audit Action Plan brought to conclusion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CONTINUED ACTION</b> <b>02/24-25 Advisory group engagement review</b> recommendations relating to Advisory Groups will be implemented during 2024/25. Completion of review and implementation of revised IAG and Independent Scrutiny Panels, incorporating refreshed membership and training.</li> <li>• <b>ONGOING BAU ACTION</b> <b>Neighbourhood policing review Part 2</b>, which relates to community engagement, targeted for implementation Summer 2026.</li> <li>• <b>ONGOING BAU ACTION</b> <b>Firearms and explosives licensing unit stakeholder engagement plan.</b> This will see the various associations that represent licensed firearms holders being invited to meet with police to discuss various subjects through 2025/26.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Force priorities and priorities delivery plan (PDP)</li> <li>• Force management statement (FMS)</li> <li>• Performance framework</li> <li>• Medium term financial strategy (MTFS)</li> <li>• Change delivery governance</li> <li>• Estates and facilities strategy</li> <li>• National and force-specific recommendation management</li> <li>• Local resilience forum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PDP provides a comprehensive statement of mission, outcomes and objectives to be delivered over medium term, linked to performance framework and business intelligence dashboards.</li> <li>• Robust performance framework that monitors progress against key indicators. force Performance Board and Strategic Planning Board (SPB) are part of the wider governance structure.</li> <li>• SPB provides accountability for budget and resourcing decisions driven by the force Priorities, with representation from the Office of the Police &amp; Crime Commissioner as well as Chief Officers, and Portfolio Strategy Board oversees investment decisions and benefits realisation linked to outcomes.</li> <li>• Produced the required FMS, an assessment of projected demand, together with details of identified areas to be addressed through investment.</li> <li>• MTFS produced annually, underpinned by regularly updated medium term financial plans to ensure robust, sustainable multi-year budgets and levels of reserves, to deliver the Police and Crime Plan, reported into monthly executive force boards. It is presented to the Joint Audit Committee for external scrutiny.</li> <li>• Financial planning cycle, budget setting, and reporting in line with financial regulations and linked to force Priorities.</li> <li>• There is an established Change Delivery function which recognises the importance of strategic planning and integration to incorporate national, regional and local change projects and programmes, business change/adoption and change assurance. Supported by a Change Communications, communicating change to those affected and to assist with engagement. The Change Co-ordination Board is being implemented to undertake design authority and deconflict impact between projects and programmes of work.</li> <li>• The Change Delivery priority matrix is a tool utilised to assess running order of projects on multiple criteria including business continuity, financial benefits and national mandates, and these criteria are weighted to allow distinction between them. The matrix ensures resourcing directed to pertinent and impactful change activity. This review is conducted at regular intervals throughout the year via the Comparison of DDaT (Digital, Data and Technology) and Change meeting cycle.</li> <li>• The estates strategy team continue establishing capacity and understanding of Senior Leader appetite, working with the Office of the Police &amp; Crime Commissioner. Once the strategy is approved, an outcome orientated delivery plan will be formulated. The programme of work reports through Chief Officers and to the OPCC Estates Board and internally to the Property Steering Group. Sustainability factors are part of future modelling to consider community needs, policing demands and wider requirements, this is undertaken with linkage to county councils and other partner agencies.</li> <li>• Robust mechanism to record and respond to recommendations and findings from external review, including HMICFRS and the IOPC (Independent Office for Police Conduct), which is overseen by the Organisational Reassurance Board (ORB), chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid term priority delivery plan review undertaken.</li> <li>• External audit of financial accounts and value for money.</li> <li>• Internal audit regime including financial systems and controls.</li> <li>• SIAP Internal Audit on governance and monitoring of collaborated arrangement.</li> <li>• HMICFRS feedback on the force Management Statement.</li> <li>• Change Delivery governance, any major changes to prioritisation are highlighted and addressed.</li> <li>• OPCC Estates Board with regular reporting from the estate's transformation strategy programme..</li> <li>• HMICFRS progress reports to ORB and HMICFRS monitoring portal.</li> <li>• Annual risk assurance review includes horizon scanning on relevant themes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CONTINUED ACTION 03/24-25 Estates transformation strategy. The force will need to ensure resources are in place with the right level of competency to support implementation. The programme design will be required to align with operational needs as directed by the Chief Officer Team, as well as other strategies such as Joint Transport.</li> <li>• ONGOING BAU ACTION Review of Section 22a Collaboration Agreement being conducted 2025/26.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Horizon scanning national / local changes</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Devolution Priority Programme is an initiative by the UK government to fast-track local government devolution in areas that demonstrate a strong commitment and readiness to embrace greater local control. The programme focuses on establishing Mayoral Strategic Authorities, led by directly elected mayors, which will be granted powers over areas such as transport, infrastructure, skills, housing, economic development and public safety including fire and police. If Sussex does establish a Mayoral Combined Authority it is expected that elections for the mayor would be held in May 2026. The force has assigned a designated Senior Responsible Officer to keep apprised of the local status and any associated organisational work streams. This position will allow the force to ensure that it is aware of any challenges, considerations or changes that will directly link to policing and the communities in which we serve.</li> <li>• The force has links into Blue Light Commercial, who are working closely with partners to develop a qualitative approach to the evaluation of social value and sustainability aspects of bid submissions. All of this should also encourage more diverse supply chains, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs), and help their capability to deliver against such a qualitative approach. The PCC and CC will update the AGS as this work develops and any changes are embedded within contract standing orders.</li> </ul>		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategic planning</b></li> <li>• <b>Code of Corporate Governance</b></li> <li>• <b>Risk management strategy and policy</b></li> <li>• <b>Risk assurance process</b></li> <li>• <b>Performance framework</b></li> <li>• <b>Continuous improvement</b></li> <li>• <b>Power BI advancements</b></li> <li>• <b>Change delivery</b></li> <li>• <b>Organisational learning</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Planning Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC), reviews and aligns the output of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Force Management Statement. Detailed demand data is compiled by the force and is presented monthly at the Strategic Planning Board to ensure monitoring of resources against requirements. Annual workshops for the force Management Statement provide a vehicle for Chief Officers and Department Heads to engage in detailed review of performance and demand/resourcing data and to review plans and progress.</li> <li>• Annual review of the corporate governance framework and key high-level governance documents, including the Code of Corporate Governance, ensuring the Code is aligned with the CIPFA guidance published in 2016.</li> <li>• An established risk management strategy and policy in place, to ensure that opportunities and barriers to achievement of the force’s organisational objectives and regional and national responsibilities are identified and managed effectively. Regional and national liaison with other force risk practitioner functions to conduct benchmarking, horizon scanning and shared learning in this area. The force continues to conduct a risk assurance process annually, to ensure there is effective internal and external scrutiny of the management of strategic risks.</li> <li>• Performance framework based on force priorities/strategic objectives, with a focus on qualitative assessment of behaviours and performance and root-cause analysis of issues.</li> <li>• The Continuous Improvement Board is chaired by the DCC, supported by the Local Policing &amp; Unify Board, operating at a tactical project level and chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) for Local Policing. Ensuring a focused and phased approach to meet its current and future demand with live data to support monitoring and evaluation.</li> <li>• Power BI Dashboards, and data and insight packs are developed, available online, allowing users within the force to self-serve and access information previously unavailable to them.</li> <li>• Change Delivery Portfolio Strategy Board, attended by Chief Officers, ensures robust scrutiny of the change programmes to ensure that significant and complex change programmes are monitored, reviewed and delivered effectively; the force employs a continual change cycle, where bids are received throughout the year and assessed using the prioritisation matrix to ensure the projects and programmes with the most impact and with the most urgency are resourced as a priority.</li> <li>• The force established a multi-year service transformation programme designed to modernise, simplify and digitise process in order to improve services and outputs and reducing operating costs. This is a high priority for the force and forms a central component of the financial sustainability plans against a backdrop of significant funding challenges.</li> <li>• Fortnightly Senior Leader Meeting introduced, to ensure key messages around the priority delivery plan and provides an opportunity to address any changing internal or external factors.</li> <li>• Organisational Learning Board reviews opportunities to identify areas of improvement or change from internal and external sources such as the IOPC, College of Policing practice bank and HMICFRS innovative or promising practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk management strategy and policy review featured in Organisational Reassurance Board (ORB).</li> <li>• Risk benchmarking and peer reviews.</li> <li>• Risk strategy, policy and annual assurance process output is presented to the Joint Audit Committee (JAC).</li> <li>• SIAP Internal Audit risk management audit.</li> <li>• Risk assurance output shared in ORB, JAC and with national risk forum.</li> <li>• PCC Performance and Accountability Meeting (PAM) an opportunity to publicly hold the Chief Constable to account particularly on police officer numbers and Sussex Police’s financial plans including how they will handle budget pressures.</li> <li>• Change delivery heatmap and Dashboard demonstrated to JAC to provide an overview of how the organisation maps and manages change.</li> <li>• SIAP Internal Audit on Change Delivery governance and benefit realisation graded reasonable May 2024.</li> <li>• HMICFRS inspection reviews strategic planning and value for money. HMICFRS progress reports to ORB and HMICFRS monitoring portal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NEW ACTION 07/24-25 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)</b> DBS is an externally funded service which the force delivers on behalf of the Home Office. Due to increases in demand and challenges with staff attrition and retention backlogs have accrued. The force has a comprehensive action plan in place, this year will focus on completing the delivery of that action plan. Delivery on the action plan will include a reduction in backlog, improving training and mentoring, outsourcing of some work and changes to process. STRSX5291.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Workforce plans</b></li> <li>• <b>Recruitment strategy</b></li> <li>• <b>Wellbeing strategy</b></li> <li>• <b>Focus performance management framework</b></li> <li>• <b>Promotions calendar</b></li> <li>• <b>Development, talent and leadership programmes</b></li> <li>• <b>Learning and development strategy</b></li> <li>• <b>College of Policing mandated curriculum</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear roles and responsibilities for each of the force's senior officers. Workforce plan in place and reviewed regularly, which identifies the future workforce mix and profile requirements. Force capability continues to be monitored at the People Performance Meeting, dashboards are in place to assist with identifying skills gaps, diversity elements to all workforce planning alongside Focus oversight reporting from Learn.</li> <li>• Wellbeing Strategy in place covering five areas: mind health, physical wellbeing, leadership, financial wellbeing, workplace wellbeing. There is a dedicated intranet page for each area of the wellbeing strategy; the leadership element was introduced in early 2024. The Wellbeing Board addresses issues being faced by the workforce.</li> <li>• Individual performance review and management process, Focus, ensures regular constructive feedback on performance; Succession planning framework, known as Future Focus, which enables line managers to undertake career planning with staff and officers (including career gateway), identifying talent at the same time as succession planning for critical roles within departments and putting in place plans.</li> <li>• Officers are offered quick scan/quick screen to identify dyslexia or other neurodivergent conditions, to ensure these individuals are offered the right level of support to succeed.</li> <li>• Talent pools are embedded in the force to develop and support future leaders in conjunction with Future Focus.</li> <li>• The force has 180 mentors currently in place with another 40 coaches providing support.</li> <li>• Leadership training team provide opportunities for police officers and staff to be mentored or become mentors for new recruits or those going through career progression. Programme running specifically for officers and staff who are Black or of colour. All mentors are either Black or of colour and mostly external contacts to the force. This will be supplemented with a new executive sponsor programme.</li> <li>• Commenced work on structured identification of learning and skills gaps, with implementation anticipated in 2025. Learn management system is being configured to house all training courses, training and accreditation to provide better reporting on essential skills and training qualifications.</li> <li>• Introduction of 'We are Sussex Leaders' programme in 2025. With 904 going through the course supported by 97 senior leader mentors. First and second line leaders are assigned a syndicate and senior lead to provide a shared support network.</li> <li>• The Investigative Improvement Board reviews NPCC Recruitment, Retention and Wellbeing (of Investigators) tracker. The Detective Succession Planning Panel reviews where detective and detective supervisors are posted, to ensure the right resources are in the right places.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HMIC PEEL Inspections, 2021/22 assessed Sussex as 'Adequate' for building, supporting and protecting the workforce; areas for improvement are tracked through to completion.</li> <li>• HMICFRS value for money profiles.</li> <li>• National Recruitment, Retention and Wellbeing Meeting .</li> <li>• Joint Audit Committee receive reports on workforce, wellbeing, recruitment, training and health &amp; safety and provide scrutiny.</li> <li>• Ofsted inspections.</li> <li>• Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service (SEQOHS) re-accreditation (March 2024).</li> <li>• Regional Pay &amp; Conditions Meeting.</li> <li>• Oscar Kilo – national award for creating a positive wellbeing environment. Oscar Kilo Blue Light Wellbeing Framework overseen by Wellbeing Board.</li> <li>• Annual staff surveys and organisational health check results and team discussions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ONGOING BAU</b> STRJ3393 force continues to track detective resourcing as a concern – there is good attraction to the direct entry route. In-force conversion rates remain low, L&amp;PD (Learning &amp; Professional Development) support candidates sitting the NIE (national investigators' exam) and work with operational colleagues to develop career pathways to become detectives.</li> <li>• <b>ONGOING BAU</b> DEPJ4921 Student officer pass rates for NIE is tracked as a risk.</li> <li>• <b>ONGOING BAU</b> RECSX4631 the force continues to work on Sussex HMICFRS PEEL inspection 2021/22 – Area for Improvement 7 – Staff sickness, return to work meetings.</li> <li>• <b>ONGOING BAU</b> RECSX4632 SX PEEL 2021/22 – AFI 8 – Supervisors one-to-one meetings with their team members.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Learn management system</b></li> <li>• <b>Training prioritisation</b></li> <li>• <b>Detective succession planning</b></li> <li>• <b>Coaching unit</b></li> <li>• <b>Staff surveys</b></li> <li>• <b>Operation Hampshire</b></li> <li>• <b>Command oversight board</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated coaching unit in place to support those who join on the Detective Degree Holder entry which is best practice to ensure student officers have the necessary skills required to complete Independent Patrol.</li> <li>• The force has undertaken two organisational health checks since the initial workforce survey and these were introduced to monitor the wellbeing of the forces, as a direct result of feedback.</li> <li>• College of Policing's Insights and 360 feedback tools used to give individuals greater self-awareness of their impact on others and the opportunity to adapt to different situations and scenarios. Insight sessions to support understanding of different approaches to leadership and adapting approaches.</li> <li>• Mental health first aiders and defuse-trained staff across the force plus trauma presentation inputs within CPD (continuing professional development) and annual wellbeing event focus on initiatives such as mini health checks, advice and guidance.</li> <li>• Seven point plan and dedicated Operation Hampshire intranet site specifically targeted at providing guidance for supervisors when dealing with a team member who has been the victim of an assault. Data on assaults is shared and monitored at the Health and Safety Board. Commissioned audit in 2025 to review the force measures in terms of health and safety compliance.</li> <li>• The force has invested in specialist training such as Senior Responsible Officer change training, managing successful programmes (MSP), financial qualifications and CIPFA good governance diplomas in order to equip portfolio areas with additional skill sets to manage the complex and evolving policing requirements.</li> <li>• The force has a strong set of staff networks and also a number of champions representing LGBT, Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, Gypsy Roma Travellers, Use of Force and Stop and Search and other portfolio areas to deliver Equality Diversity Inclusion. Each have their own internal meeting to understand the impact of policing on communities and also actively provide information, opportunities for learning and discussion internally.</li> <li>• The Leadership Training Team run virtual continuous professional development (CPD) sessions available to Senior Leaders, First Line Leaders, Coaches and Mentors and some sessions have been opened for all to access across both forces. The aim(s) of these sessions, is for our Leaders to enhance their skills, broaden their knowledge of topics affecting policing and filter this information through their teams. Since sessions have been delivered virtually, we have seen increased attendance, engagement and have taken advantage of recording Inputs, so people can view at their leisure. A wide range of subject areas are addressed such as resilience, inclusivity, Neurodiversity, communication, optimisation, professional curiosity, fraud, culture and leadership. Sessions are staggered through the year, with 2 – 3 available each month.</li> <li>• The apprenticeship scheme has now been extended to provide offerings across technical roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous improvement ethos, for example Innovate Forum and Organisational Learning Board.</li> <li>• Command Oversight Board (COB) is responsible for reviewing operational training and ensures consistency in the skills of Commanders alongside succession planning.</li> <li>• Safety Responsibilities and risk based assurance' process being introduced 2025/26. This will provide auditable health and safety information on where health and safety risk exists within the organisation and how well it is being managed. This information will be fed into the risk governance structure.</li> </ul>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Code of Corporate Governance and framework</b></li> <li>• <b>Integrated financial management, with planning, budgeting, reporting and control</b></li> <li>• <b>Internal Audit arrangements</b></li> <li>• <b>Counter fraud and anti-corruption</b></li> <li>• <b>Organisational Reassurance Board (ORB)</b></li> <li>• <b>Risk management strategy and policy</b></li> <li>• <b>Procurement training</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision making is carried out in accordance with the governance framework detailed in the Code of Corporate Governance. Chief Officers produce assurance statements for their portfolio responsibilities on an annual basis. Ethical decision making embedded at all levels following the National Decision Model (NDM), which has at its centre the policing Code of Ethics.</li> <li>• Effective arrangements to challenge and scrutinise the force’s own performance, including the development of the Sussex Police performance dashboard and the development of the Force Performance Board, which allows scrutiny of delivery against the Police and Crime Plan by both the force and PCC. Compared performance against peer data as provided by HMICFRS Value for Money profiles, seeking improvement where best practice was identified.</li> <li>• The financial management capability review, piloted by the force, has been undertaken independently by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). The assessment reviewed the force’s approach to financial management and its financial resilience against world-class financial-management standards.</li> <li>• The force adopts a finance structure based around the core principles of the Achieving Financial Excellence in Policing (AFEP) programme and has been recognised as best practice by CIPFA nationally. The principles of managing public money are covered within the CIPFA Code and CIPFA qualifications held, and the force follows the core pillars of integrity, ethics and law.</li> <li>• Procurement four part training sessions rolled out to first and second line leaders focusing on procurement processes, changes and obligations.</li> <li>• Dedicated Transformation Accountant to act as a finance business partner to the transformation programme. Change programme and spending approval process developed in conjunction with finance senior leaders and change delivery.</li> <li>• Change programmes and projects are built on comprehensive business cases to drive value for money, effective resource management, and clearly defined benefits; expenditure is scrutinised and challenged by Chief Officers via relevant programme and project boards led by Chief Officers. A process is in place between change delivery and finance to manage and monitor the delivery of savings, which has been incorporated into the budget-setting process.</li> <li>• The risk management strategy and policy is embedded in the governance structure and is used effectively to inform decision making.</li> <li>• Business continuity arrangements are in place to meet the requirements outlined in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, implementing associated audit actions identified in the internal audit cycle. Progress is reported to the ORB.</li> <li>• Data-protection and information-management policies and strategy are in place, with a process for Information Sharing Agreements (ISA) to be reviewed and updated regularly. Engaged with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) for a consensual audit and agreed action plan for improved Subject Access Rights performance and proactively sought review and guidance from the ICO on FOI performance and from the DBS Police Performance Team. Progress is reported to the ORB and Security Information Management Board (SIMB).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value for money, external audit cycle.</li> <li>• Regular SIAP Internal Audit programme, with agreed process for monitoring.</li> <li>• Benchmarking Internal Audit review with peer review in 2025 determining if any improvements can be made to programme.</li> <li>• Internal Audit on risk management framework.</li> <li>• Organisational Reassurance Board risk reporting.</li> <li>• Strategic risk reporting presented to the Joint Audit Committee.</li> <li>• Risk benchmarking with other forces.</li> <li>• Membership of the National Police Chiefs’ Council risk forum.</li> <li>• Horizon-scanning activities.</li> <li>• Overtime working group provides additional controls, monitoring and reporting with new monitoring metrics tool in Power BI.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ONGOING BAU Business Continuity</b> RECJ4944 Internal auditors SIAP Business Continuity (SAP/Oracle) 2023/24 – Limited Assurance audit actions being tracked through completion and reported to the Organisational Reassurance Board.</li> <li>• <b>ONGOING BAU SAP upgrade</b> Contracted with partner in June 2023 to upgrade the existing SAP system to ensure the system is stable, in support, and compliant. Upgrade is complete, however technical resolutions to outstanding issues are being addressed.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scheduled review of key regulations, codes and protocols</b></li> <li>• <b>Robust Internal and External Audit arrangements</b></li> <li>• <b>Adherence to statutory deadlines</b></li> <li>• <b>External scrutiny from third parties such as Joint Audit Committee</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Sussex Police &amp; Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Chief Constable (CC) ensure that they work in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The overarching scheme of governance sets out the arrangements in place for effective governance and financial management including the management of risk. It comprises a number of elements as follows:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Schedule of MOU: The MOU describes how the PCC and CC will work together and ensure sufficient support in areas such as estate management, procurement, finance, HR, communications and corporate development.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Corporate Governance: how the PCC and CC achieve the core principles of ‘good governance’.</li> <li>• Decision Making Framework, Appendix 1, Appendix 2: how the PCC makes/publishes key decisions and holds the CC to account.</li> <li>• Scheme of Delegation for PCCs and CC.</li> <li>• Financial Regulations: these set out the framework for managing the PCC’s financial affairs.</li> <li>• Contract Standing Orders: these describe the rules for the procurement of goods, works and services. The Contract Standing Orders have not been reviewed at this time as the Procurement Reform Bill is currently progressing through the House of Commons and therefore a comprehensive review will be undertaken once the Bill is approved and published. It is anticipated that the Bill will be approved by late summer/autumn allowing for a full review to be progressed in line with the 2024/25 financial year.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• The force undergoes extensive internal and external inspection and the results of these inspections are available online.</li> <li>• Internal Audit is provided through a managed service contract with the Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP) and regular updates are provided to the Joint Audit Committee.</li> <li>• Force complied with requirements for accounts to be published in line with statutory deadlines and continues to work closely with its external auditors to produce the audited accounts.</li> <li>• Information is published to allow appropriate scrutiny of decision making.</li> <li>• Continue to support the work of the Joint Audit Committee in its role of monitoring and advisory capacity for force governance and internal control.</li> <li>• Continue to evolve the format of the Annual Governance Statement with the aim of being clearer and more digestible to readers.</li> <li>• The public are able to attend appropriate police disciplinary hearings to observe proceedings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accounts publication history.</li> <li>• Memorandum of Understanding, Financial Regulations, Code of Corporate Governance, Contract Standing Orders, Protocol for Collaborated Services and Scheme of Delegation are shared with the Joint Audit Committee and available online.</li> <li>• Internal audit results and actions are tracked to completion internally via the Organisational Reassurance Board. Overdue actions presented to the Joint Audit Committee.</li> <li>• SIAP audit on governance and monitoring of collaborative arrangements graded reasonable May 2024.</li> <li>• HMICFRS publish inspection reports and provide status updates on their website.</li> <li>• The Police Crime Commissioner holds a Performance Accountability Meeting and this will address regular areas and also any emerging issues, this is live streamed so that members of the public have access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CHALLENGE</b> There has been a national issue regarding the external audit backlog, affecting the publication of the AGS in 22/23 and 23/24 as external auditors audit opinion was delayed.</li> </ul> <p>The force has a strong record of publishing statutory finance, accounts and annual governance statements on time and to the required standard.</p> <p>The force continues a constructive working relationship with external parties as the sector is impacted by the external auditor backlog, with agreed plans in place. The government has indicated it hopes that disclaimed opinions driven by backstop dates will be mostly limited up to and including 24/25. The force as in previous years will issue a public notice statement to provide explanation and assurance.</p>



Action number and reference	Action identified and objective	Owner	Status and target date	Governance area and principle linkage	Commentary
<p>Action 01/24-25 BROUGHT FORWARD FROM 2023/24 REVIEW previous reference 03/23-24</p>	<p><b>Governance signposting</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Whilst the force can demonstrate and evidence transparency and visibility of key areas of governance, accessibility to the public may be hindered by the consistency in website location and ease of navigation.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> force to conduct a review of current website governance information and signposting available, with a view to ensuring information is easy to locate and informative.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Due to be commenced following publication of 2024/25 draft.</p>	<p>Chief Finance Officer &amp; Corporate Planning Department</p>	<p><b>Open</b> Target: 2025/26</p>	<p><b>Principle: A</b> Monitored via: Corporate Development Department input into Organisational Reassurance Board</p>	<p>To deliver improved signposting and information relating to governance framework transparency.</p> <p>Seek input from internal stakeholders, Independent Advisory Group members and HMICFRS force liaison.</p>
<p>Action 02/24-25 BROUGHT FORWARD FROM 2023/24 REVIEW previous reference 04/23-24</p>	<p><b>Advisory group engagement review</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Following the review undertaken, a series of recommendations have been provided to enhance the force approach.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> force to implement during 2024/25.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> The force engaged with Advisory Groups in May 2024 around the planned recommendation implementation. Review of engagement approach with Advisory Groups now being undertaken.</p>	<p>ACC Local Policing and ACO Trust and Legitimacy</p>	<p><b>Open</b> Target: 2024 /25</p>	<p><b>Principle: B</b> Monitored via: Accountability Boards and into Organisational Reassurance Board</p>	<p>Work has commenced to launch a complete refresh of our Independent Advisory Groups (IAG). The force launched a recruitment campaign in October 2024 to ensure that we are getting fresh ideas and viewpoints from our communities who are disproportionately affected by our powers, policies and practices. We are also reviewing our terms of reference for each advisory group to ensure that they are fit for purpose and focusing on the right issues. The timeline for this is as follows:</p> <p>Oct 24 – Advert for Independent Advisory Group members goes live. Jan 25 – Application window closed. Apr 25 – Engagement days on divisions. Jul 25 – Training to be delivered to our new members. Sep 25 – Launch of new framework with people in post.</p>



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<p>Action 03/24-25 BROUGHT FORWARD FROM 2023/24 REVIEW previous reference 05/23-24</p>	<p><b>Estates transformation strategy</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> The force will need to ensure resources are in place with the right level of competency to support implementation and that the programme design is aligned to operational needs and requirements as directed by the Chief Officer Team.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Force to review, ensuring sufficient and appropriate governance measures in place with alignment to Transport strategy.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> A delivery plan is expected to be finalised and approved by early 2025.</p>	<p>Estate Strategy Director</p>	<p><b>Open</b> Target: 2024-26</p>	<p><b>Principle: C</b> Monitored via: Estates Accountability Board, specific Transformation Board and reported to the OPCC Estates Board</p>	<p>Transformation strategy to link in with existing governance framework. Environmental sustainability is being considered as part of this work.</p> <p>Currently a basic analysis of the carbon emission in relation to the built estate is profiled each year. The target is to get to net zero carbon by 2050 (aligned to the rest of the public sector). However, for the public sector the cost of net zero is at odds to the revenue funding and historic profile of cost reductions. Across the public sector, without significant Government grant, reaching net zero is highly unlikely. The force has developed a 'pilot carbon emission calculator', so at each site it can see the actual impact of potential investments being made on reducing carbon in the built estate.</p> <p>Current Business As Usual (BAU) investment in estates through the estates function includes upgrading of plant and services (which reduces carbon consumption) and a programme of PV (photovoltaic) installs to roof (to self-generate electricity on site to offset demand from the grid) – all as ongoing reinvestment having a real and measurable impact.</p> <p>The Estate Transformation programme is a multi-year programme to reset the built estate through (i) Reducing the size of the estate (and carbon emissions) (ii) Completing a phased programme of reinvestment in the retained estate (investment will also reduce emissions) and (iii) Building or purchasing new estate where needed (with lower comparative emissions). The transformation programme is currently in the 'forming' stage, with the strategy just being set (current going through DCC and PCC approvals) which includes the above scope.</p> <p>The force also has in place an environmental sustainability policy.</p>



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<p>Action 04/24-25 NEW</p>	<p><b>Professional Standards Department (PSD) organisational learning and stakeholder engagement mechanisms.</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Opportunity to further advance the capture and sharing of organisational learning internally and also improve engagement between Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) and external partner agencies/stakeholders around corruption risks. Improving transparency and fostering relationships.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> PSD organisational learning meeting to be implemented. Additional external stakeholder engagement is also to be arranged.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> In progress with internal agenda and terms of reference agreed and first meeting held. Linked to HMICFRS area for improvement monitored and tracked via force risk management platform RECSX5582.</p>	<p>Head of Professional Standards</p>	<p><b>Open</b> Target: 2025/26</p>	<p><b>Principle: A</b> Monitored via: Culture and Standards Board and the PSD Performance Meeting</p>	<p>The new Vetting APP publication was released December 2024 which reflects recommendations from HMICFRS to better support our practice and process for collecting, sharing and evaluating organisational learning.</p> <p>PSD implemented a new process in February 2025 for disseminating PSD, IOPC, Civil Claims, Gold Group and other externally identified organisational learning. The PSD organisational learning meeting ensures that learning is reviewed, discussed and appropriately allocated across the force. These meetings are to be held monthly and there is an expectation that the allocated area/division/department will supply feedback within 14 days and any evidence for the learning. If formal tracking is required, the learning will be uploaded to the force risk management platform.</p> <p>PSD are delivering training inputs to new recruits and new supervisors to support in enforcing standards of professional behaviour.</p> <p>PSD will continue to explore methods of fostering improved relationships between the wider workforce, stakeholders (including partners) and the public.</p>



Action number and reference	Action identified and objective	Owner	Status and target date	Governance area and principle linkage	Commentary
<p>Action 05/24-25 NEW</p>	<p><b>Technology advancements and supporting structures.</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> The force will have to consider how it evidences ethical considerations around data exploitation, particularly regarding Artificial Intelligence.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Implement the National Police Chief Council (NPCC) Artificial Intelligence (AI) Checklist to provide governance and assessment.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Building the NPCC AI Ethics checklist into our governance and structure of relevant projects.</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer, Head of Corporate Development and Assistant Chief Constable for Specialist Crime Command and Forensics with support from LFR Project Director</p>	<p><b>Open</b> Target: 2025/26</p>	<p><b>Principle: A</b> Monitored via: Strategic Planning Board, Force Performance Board and Portfolio Strategy Board</p>	<p>Focusing on ethical processes being embedded in operational policing relating to Generative AI, Data Exploitation and Live Facial Recognition.</p> <p>The NPCC AI checklist is being built into current relevant force governance and processes - for instance terms of reference and key checkpoints (initial scoping and key milestone check points) for projects exploring AI application/s.</p> <p>In February 2025 the force was successful in its bid to the Home Office to become a host force for the South-East region for a live facial recognition van. Since then, a project has been working at pace to ensure that we have processes, technology and staff training in place to make the van operational. Linked in with the NPCC ACC for Specialist Crime Command.</p> <p>Risk identified: Both political and public interest in the deployment of live facial recognition vans is significant. At the core of deployment of the new capability is the need for community engagement in order to maintain public confidence in accordance with the Code of Ethics.</p> <p>Action: A distinct project under a NPCC Senior Responsible Officer is in place working to College of Policing APP guidance on Live Facial Recognition. Distinct workstreams exist regarding public facing documentation and policy, creation of watchlists and training on community engagement by the staff deployed.</p> <p>Monitored via Strategic Planning Board and SRO Live Facial Recognition Delivery Board. Live facial recognition has been subject of scrutiny at the Sussex Ethics Committee. The software vendor algorithm is subject to testing by the National Physical Laboratory to safeguard against bias, including factors such as race and gender.</p>



Action number and reference	Action identified and objective	Owner	Status and target date	Governance area and principle linkage	Commentary
<p>Action 06/24-25 NEW</p>	<p><b>Retention processes</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> The force needs to improve processes in relation to legacy data, DPN and biometrics samples.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Ensure relevant Portfolios are trained and applying relevant force policies and that adequate mechanisms are in place to administer. To deliver improved application of retention policies.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Risk is monitored and managed via the force risk register STRSX3256.</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer (SIRO) and Head of Information Management</p>	<p><b>Open</b></p> <p>Target: 2025/26</p>	<p><b>Principle: A</b></p> <p>Monitored via: Security Information Management Board and the Information Management reporting into Organisational Reassurance Board</p>	<p>The full decommissioning of the legacy CIS crime database is nearing finalisation. Details of CIS Archive records to be retained were extracted using PowerBi. MoPI teams undertook a final review of the data to ensure accuracy prior to Records Management Unit (RMU) starting disposal process. The updated extract was shared with the RMU Operations Support Manager in May 2025 to disseminate to their team. Physical deletion of the files will be business as usual for RMU with support from MoPI teams.</p> <p>ETL teams also engaged to ensure appropriate removal from the Data Warehouse. This will align the PowerBi search tool with retained crime records in RMU storage.</p> <p>The final stage of this process will then be initiated, this being the removal of legacy Crime data currently on the Police National Database (PND) and new upload the amended MoPI 1 only data.</p> <p>The next phase will be to review Intelligence / Nominal records on CIS Archive. SCC Intel will be tasked with reviewing CIS Archive to assess lawfulness of retention. If records are to be retained, SCC Intel will be responsible for the extraction and import into NICHE. Once this review is complete, the legacy CIS Archive Nominal database will be deleted from Sussex Police and PND as all retained information will be auto uploaded with Niche.</p> <p>Alongside this, the MoPI team continue with a now-established routine of reviewing MoPI 2 &amp; 3 records in Niche.</p>



Action number and reference	Action identified and objective	Owner	Status and target date	Governance area and principle linkage	Commentary
<p>Action 07/24-25 NEW</p>	<p><b>Disclosure Barring Service (DBS)</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> The DBS is a vital safeguarding tool, ensuring that no-one who presents a risk to vulnerable persons is permitted to work with children or vulnerable adults. High demand and rising backlogs create two risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If the quality of work diminishes, there is a risk that inappropriate individuals may be accredited for work.</li> <li>- If the output of work cannot meet demand, there is a risk that public service providers will be unable to recruit due to a lack of DBS-accredited candidates.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Implement action plan.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Risk is monitored and managed via the force risk register STRSX5291.</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer (SIRO) and Head of Information Management</p>	<p><b>Open</b></p> <p>Target: 2025/26</p>	<p><b>Principle: D</b></p> <p>Monitored via: Security Information Management Board and the Information Management reporting into Organisational Reassurance Board</p>	<p>DBS is an externally funded service which the force delivers on behalf of the Home Office. Due to increases in demand and challenges with staff attrition and retention backlogs have accrued.</p> <p>The force has a comprehensive action plan in place during 2025 the focus will be on completing the delivery of that action plan.</p> <p>Delivery on the action plan will include a reduction in backlog, improving training and mentoring, outsourcing of some work and changes to process. The force is also exploring additional technology that can assist within this area.</p>



Action number and reference	Action identified and objective	Owner	Status and target date	Governance area and principle linkage	Commentary
<p>Action 01/23-24 (previously featured in AGS item 16 on 2022/23) RECJ3807 COMPLETED</p>	<p><b>IT systems life cycle support and planning</b></p> <p>Internal audit report with Reasonable grading conducted in 2020/21, with eight actions associated. One audit action remains outstanding, which had a Medium priority.</p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Additional cost continues to be incurred to provide support or additional security measures for Windows Server 2008 installations.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Upgrade all 2008 servers where able (application/service is unaffected), for example SAP in Sussex.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Confirmed complete May 2024.</p>	<p>Chief Digital Information Officer (CDIO)</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p><b>Principle: F</b> Monitored via: DDaT Risk Management Board and reported to the Organisational Reassurance Board</p>	<p>Confirmed complete by CDIO May 2024. This was linked to technical rationalisation plan. Each server had a plan or project linked. All 2008 servers have now been upgraded, replaced or decommissioned.</p>
<p>Action 02/23-24 COMPLETED</p>	<p><b>FOI publication scheme</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Members of the public may not be able to locate relevant FOI information, and this will potentially lead to increased and unnecessary FOI requests.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Force to enhance proactive signposting of available data on policing in Sussex.</p> <p><b>Summary:</b> Improved publication scheme and more efficient working practice including reducing redactions where appropriate.</p>	<p>Head of Information Management</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p><b>Principle: A and B</b> Monitored via: Information Management input into Organisational Reassurance Board</p>	<p>The Information Access Team has significantly increased the amount of proactively published information. As a result, the force is offering increased transparency and accountability and the IAT has been able to greatly improve its FOI service by signposting many applications to published information, thereby enabling us to exempt the FOI request under s12 FOIA 2000 (information already readily accessible). Alongside performance improvement in the IAT this also reduces demand on the wider force in researching and collating data for FOI disclosures.</p> <p>A document has been prepared and published which sets out a number of widely published resources available through government and local partnerships.</p> <p>The intention to publish a series of 'super responses' for frequently requested information has also been realised. PSD now publish detailed misconduct data quarterly and reports have been proactively published covering issues as diverse as Fleet, drink spiking and dangerous dogs.</p>



Action number and reference	Action identified and objective	Owner	Status and target date	Governance area and principle linkage	Commentary
Action 06/23-24 COMPLETED	<p><b>Transformation benefit tracking</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Visibility of benefit delivery.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Implement improved benefits assessment for change projects linked to Service Transformation Programme.</p>	Assistance Chief Constable - Transformation	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>Target: 2024/25</p>	<p><b>Principle: D</b></p> <p>Monitored via: Transformation Board</p>	<p>This area was subject to an internal audit with a reasonable grading awarded in May 2024.</p> <p>The force is alert to the need to track benefits, with suitable processes in place and are doing so in the programme management which covers both change and transformation, as well as DDAT change.</p> <p>The audit actions were tracked by the force via the risk platform RECJ5091 and all confirmed as completed by September 2024.</p>
Action 07/23-24 COMPLETED	<p><b>First-line leader training. We are Sussex Leaders (WASL) programme.</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Specific training to support new leaders and managers, particularly relating to colleagues promoted during the period of Uplift.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Design and roll out bespoke training support packages.</p>	ACO People Services and ACC Local Policing	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>Target: 2024 /25</p>	<p><b>Principle: E</b></p> <p>Monitored via: force Performance Board and L&amp;PD</p>	<p>The force completed an internal performance review of Sergeant and first-line operational supervisors - for the force Performance Board. An action was to introduce a bespoke training package for acting Sergeants, particularly due to the volume after Uplift.</p> <p>Chief Officers commissioned the development of a leadership programme aimed at our first and second-line leaders (FLL/SLL) within Sussex Police. The purpose of the programme is to clearly outline the force's leadership expectations in relation to a few key areas including leadership, service delivery, demand/risk management and performance management.</p> <p>The programme aims to set out senior leadership expectations to all first- and second-line leaders. It also aims to build peer networks across the force. Professional workshops were conducted throughout Jan/Feb 25 and the second set planned across Sept/Oct 25 with senior sponsorship.</p>



Action number and reference	Action identified and objective	Owner	Status and target date	Governance area and principle linkage	Commentary
<p>Action 08/23-24 COMPLETED</p>	<p><b>Capital requirement scrutiny</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Identified opportunity to better align capital requirements and choices with revenue budgets.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> A new process to assess and scrutinise capital requirements in line with capital funding planning is to be developed and agreed for implementation in 2024/25.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Completed with capital approvals process created and aligned with revenue governance, and MTFP</p>	<p>Chief Finance Officer</p>	<p><b>Completed</b> Target: 2024/25</p>	<p><b>Principle: F</b> Monitored via: CFO and DCC planning meetings, SPB, PCC financial monitoring and performance process</p>	<p>This was intended to better align capital requirements and choices with impact on revenue budgets, in light of funding challenges and savings targets, to maximise use of available resources.</p> <p>Capital planning reviews are now held through the year to ensure that in-year capital requirements are forecast and spending plans managed including potential slippage. The capital planning also assesses the future year capital requirements and the financing options in order to ensure that the forces only borrow externally for the appropriate long term assets and consider the necessary operational choices in order to maintain a sustainable capital plan.</p> <p>This was required to ensure that the cost of capital requirements and spending is factored into the revenue budget planning more transparently. With a capital approvals process in place.</p>

# 8 Appendix B – How the review is undertaken

## ∞ Process

- The approach and schedule for the production of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) was ratified at the February 2025 force Organisational Reassurance Board (ORB).
- Regular alignment meetings are held with the Office of Police Crime Commissioner.
- The review undertaken and evidence to support the assessment is reported into the ORB in May alongside the draft Statement where ratification is sought.
- The Joint Audit Committee (JAC) have a standing agenda item relating to the AGS at every meeting. They recommend signing of the final AGS after external audit review.
- It is planned that the final AGS will be recommended for approval by the Chief Constable following accounts external audit completion in 2025.

## 🔗 Engagement

As part of the annual review, the force engages with relevant stakeholders across the force and in addition external contributors, including but not limited to;

- Chief Officer Team
- Portfolio and Thematic Leads (collaborated and force specific)
- Corporate Planning (including risk management and HMICFRS inspection coordination)
- Framework review via SCOM (Sussex Chief Officers' Meeting) and ORB
- Evidence and assurance gathering via ORB briefing and distribution
- Internal Audit
- Office of Police & Crime Commissioner
- External Audit

## 📌 Useful signposting and information links

[How We Work](#) page of the OSPCC website contains the following;

- Code of Corporate Governance
- Memorandum of Understanding, Decision-Making Framework, Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders
- Complaints Procedure and Complaints Policy

[Financials](#) page of the OSPCC website contains the following;

- Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statements

The force website provides the following;

- Chief Officer Assurance Statements [chief-officer-assurance-statements](#)
- Policies publication scheme [published-items](#)
- Gifts, hospitality, business interests and expenses [gifts-hospitality](#) , [expenses](#)

Other useful links;

- [Policing Protocol Order 2011](#)
- [Joint Audit Committee](#)
- [Competency and Values Framework](#) and [Code of Ethics](#)

## 🔗 Framework Sources

