

*** PROVISIONAL ***



Sussex Police

Chief Constable's Annual Governance Statement **2025/26**

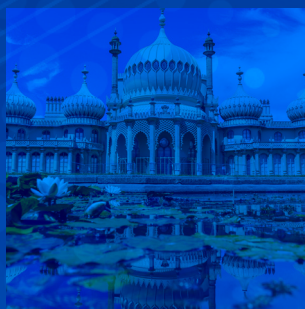




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Context and scope

The Chief Constable and the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) are jointly responsible for ensuring that the business of policing in Sussex is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively.

Regulation 6(1)(a) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires an authority to undertake, at least once each year, a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and to publish a statement reporting on the outcome of that review alongside the Statement of Accounts. For the purposes of these regulations, the term authority includes both the Chief Constable and the Police & Crime Commissioner as separate legal entities. This statutory requirement is reflected in the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (2025/26).

Under the Policing Protocol Order 2011, the PCC is responsible for securing the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force, holding the Chief Constable to account for the exercise of operational policing functions, and for the management of policing resources and expenditure. The PCC also has a statutory duty to obtain and consider the views of the public and victims of crime, alongside those of relevant responsible authorities. These views inform the [Police and Crime Plan](#), which sets the strategic objectives and priorities for policing in Sussex.

The Chief Constable has statutory responsibility for the control, direction, and delivery of operational policing services provided by Sussex Police (hereafter referred to as the force). In exercising this responsibility, and having regard to the strategic direction set by the PCC, the Chief Constable is accountable for establishing and maintaining effective governance arrangements, robust risk management processes, and a sound system of internal control that supports the lawful and effective discharge of policing functions.

The Force continues to operate in line with the principles of CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government and the accompanying Guidance Notes for Policing Bodies (Revised 2016). In addition, the Force applies the CIPFA Financial Management Code (2018) to support good practice in financial management and to demonstrate financial resilience and sustainability.

In accordance with the Home Office Financial Management Code of Practice (2018), the PCC and the Chief Constable ensure that an independent

Joint Audit Committee is in place to provide oversight, assurance, and appropriate challenge in relation to governance, risk management, and financial reporting.

This Annual Governance Statement explains how Sussex Police has complied with the principles of good governance and fulfils the requirements of Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in respect of reporting on the effectiveness of internal control arrangements. The Force's financial management arrangements are consistent with the requirements of CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Policing (March 2021), ensuring that financial stewardship, professional standards, and statutory responsibilities are properly discharged.

Executive Summary

Sussex Police is committed to protecting communities, catching criminals and delivering an outstanding service. The achievement of these priorities is underpinned by robust governance, effective risk management, and sound financial arrangements.

The Force operates within an established [Code of Corporate Governance](#), supported by a comprehensive governance framework and a range of assurance mechanisms designed to promote transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

In accordance with statutory requirements, Sussex Police produces an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) each year. This statement provides assurance on the effectiveness of governance, risk management, and internal control arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2026. The preparation of the AGS is intended to add value by supporting informed decision-making, strengthening internal controls, and identifying areas for improvement that will be progressed during 2026/27.

The Chief Constable and Chief Finance Officer (CFO) recognise the importance of ongoing review, challenge, and scrutiny in maintaining effective governance. They remain committed to conducting

the business of Sussex Police lawfully, ethically, and efficiently, in line with the Force's priorities and values, and to addressing the improvement actions identified within this statement.

This AGS has been prepared to complement the corresponding statement by the PCC, providing a comprehensive and holistic view of governance across the policing landscape in Sussex. It is informed by an annual review of governance arrangements, assurance on compliance with the CIPFA seven principles of good governance and the organisations own Code of Corporate Governance, and evidence from ongoing internal and external audit, inspection activity, and management review.

The effectiveness of the governance framework has been evaluated, with advice and recommendations received from Internal Audit, External Audit, and the Joint Audit Committee. The statement represents a fair and balanced assessment of the current governance arrangements, confirms that these arrangements remain fit for purpose, and sets out the planned actions to further strengthen governance and internal control within Sussex Police.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J Shiner'.

Chief Constable Jo Shiner KPM

Date: 19 May 2026



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P Appleton'.

Chief Finance Officer Peter Appleton

Date: 14 May 2026

External input: Internal Audit

Internal audit approach

Southern Internal Audit Partnership provide independent public sector internal audit services. Internal Audit provides a risk-based audit plan which the independent provider builds following engagement with 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 audit charter is approved annually and in line with the code features within the agenda for the Joint Audit Committee.

Internal Audit is provided with access to staff and records and operates freely without any interference in its scope, performance of engagements or communication of results. Opportunities are provided for the Audit Committee to meet staff 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 2025/26

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

Annual Internal Audit Conclusion 2025/26

The annual Internal Audit opinion for 2025/26 for the framework of governance was 'reasonable'.

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.

Penny Frost CMIIA

Chief Internal Auditor

Deputy Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership

Date: 27 May 2026



External input: Joint Audit Committee

Joint Audit Committee review 2025/26

The Joint Audit Committee (JAC) is a key component of the corporate governance arrangements for the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner and Sussex Police.

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 Chief Constable 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 Chief Constable on the adequacy of arrangements: 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.

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.

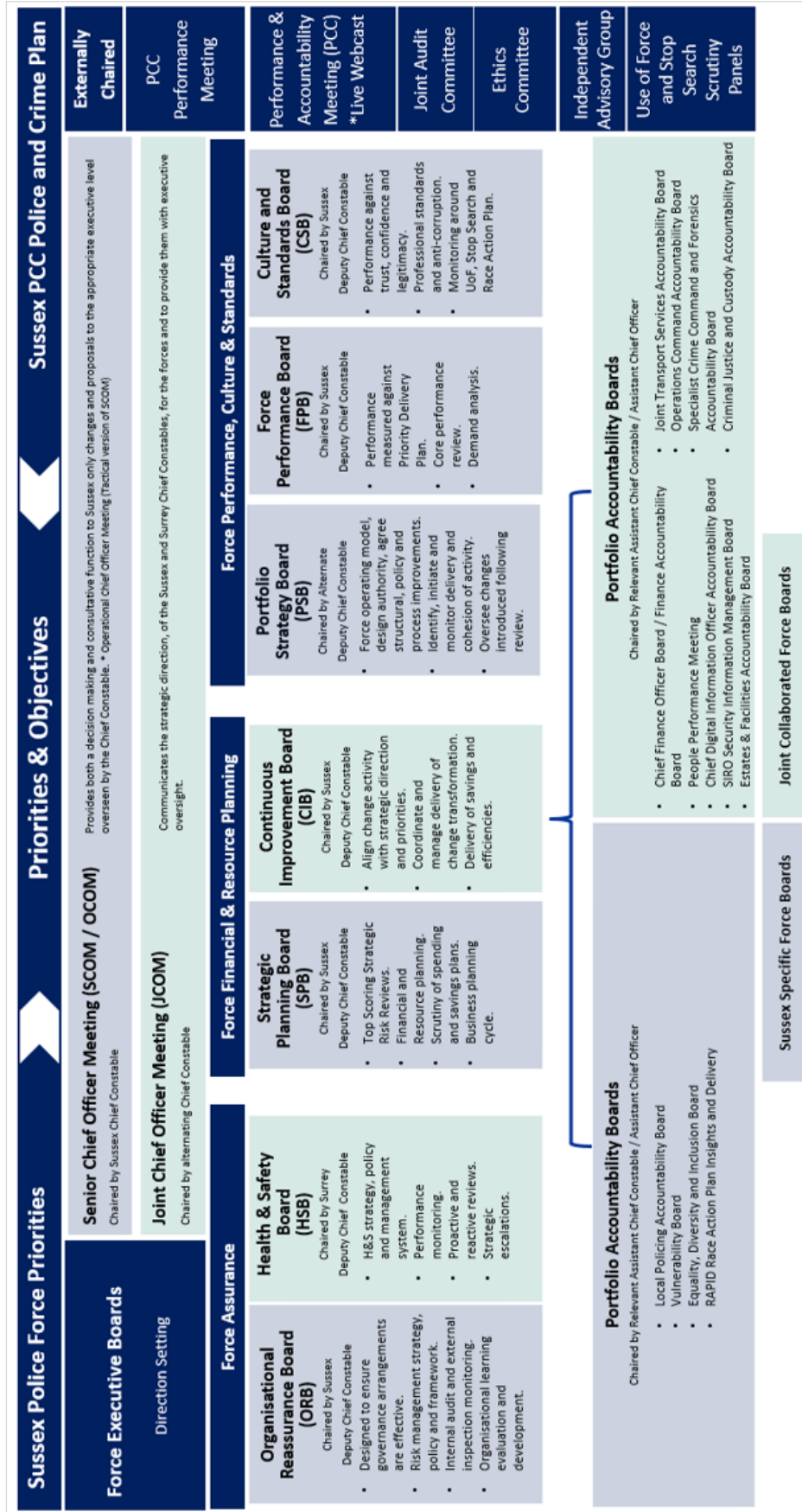
Eric Hepburn CBE

Chair Independent Joint Audit Committee
Deputy Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership

Date: 24 March 2026



Governance framework



Effectiveness and assurance review

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) reflects the continuous review of the effectiveness of the Force's governance arrangements throughout 2025/26. It provides an assessment of whether the governance framework in place has operated as intended and identifies areas where further improvement is required to ensure that governance arrangements continue to enable the Force to deliver its priorities effectively.

Governance arrangements for both the Chief Constable and the Police & Crime Commissioner are aligned to the seven principles of good governance set out in the Delivering Good Governance: Guidance Notes for Policing Bodies in England and Wales (Revised 2016). These principles provide the overarching framework against which the effectiveness of governance arrangements has been assessed.

Governance Framework

The AGS reflects the continuous review of Governance Framework

A comprehensive governance framework, collectively referred to as the Scheme of Corporate Governance, was in place for the year ended 31 March 2026. This includes the:

- Code of Corporate Governance
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Decision-Making Framework
- Scheme of Delegation
- Financial Regulations
- Contract Standing Orders

Together, these documents define roles, responsibilities, accountabilities, and decision-making arrangements across the Force and support effective control, transparency, and accountability.

The Force's system of internal control, established through a framework of policies, procedures, and management controls, forms a central element of this governance framework. It is designed to manage risks to a reasonable and foreseeable level, recognising that no system of control can eliminate all risk. Accordingly, the governance framework provides reasonable, but not absolute, assurance regarding the achievement of objectives and the effectiveness of arrangements.

The joint Code of Corporate Governance summarises these arrangements, clearly setting out

responsibilities and providing for a scheduled and diarised programme of policy review. A key feature of this framework is the systematic identification, assessment, and management of risk, ensuring that risk considerations are embedded within planning, decision-making, and performance management.

Overall assessment of effectiveness

This AGS provides an appraisal of the Force's governance framework. It concludes that adequate arrangements are in place, which continue to be regarded as fit for purpose and compliant with the Code of Corporate Governance and relevant statutory requirements. The Statement confirms that the Force has met its legal and regulatory obligations during the year.

While governance foundations are well established, the Force recognises that further work is required to embed and strengthen governance culture and to ensure arrangements remain proportionate, effective, and responsive to a changing operating environment. The improvement actions identified within this Statement reflect this commitment to ongoing enhancement.

External audit context

As part of the Government's Audit Reset and Recovery Programme, which was introduced to address a national backlog in public-sector external audits, the external audits of the 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 Statements of Accounts and Annual Governance Statements were subject to delay. The Statements of Accounts for 2022/23 and 2023/24 received disclaimed audit opinions, and the 2024/25 accounts received a qualified opinion. These outcomes arose solely from the implementation of the national audit reset arrangements and not from any weaknesses in the Force's governance, financial management, or internal controls.

The Force has a strong and consistent track record of publishing its statutory accounts and AGS on time and to the required standard. The draft 2025/26 Statement of Accounts and AGS were published within Government-set deadlines and to the expected level of quality, as previously confirmed by the External Auditor. As in previous years, the Force intends to publish the final versions in line with statutory requirements.

To support transparency and public understanding, clear explanatory statements accompanied previous

published accounts, explaining the nature of the audit opinions and the national reasons for them. The Force continues to maintain a constructive, open, and transparent working relationship with its External Auditors and sector partners, with agreed plans in place to support audit delivery, including for 2025/26, as the wider public audit system continues to recover from national audit backlog challenges.

Operating Environment and Ongoing Considerations

The Force operates within a complex, dynamic, and evolving community and policing environment, requiring continual consideration of the most significant challenges it faces. These include maintaining public trust and confidence, responding to changing community needs, rapid technological advancement, and ongoing national policing reform. In parallel, there remains a continuing responsibility to support, develop, and sustain a capable, resilient, and ethical workforce, underpinned by strong leadership and a clear commitment to integrity and openness.

The external landscape within which the Force operates continues to evolve, shaped by emerging and developing influences such as police reform legislation, local government reorganisation, potential devolution arrangements, and the future removal of, the PCC model. While the timing and final form of such reforms remain uncertain, they have the potential to bring significant longer-term implications for governance, accountability, and assurance arrangements.

In line with the CIPFA/SOLACE principles of good governance, Sussex Police recognises the importance of clearly defining its intended outcomes, ensuring effective stewardship of public resources, and maintaining robust arrangements for managing risk, performance, and financial sustainability. As with all public sector organisations, the Force must prioritise limited resources through sound financial management and informed, evidence-based decision-making, while maintaining a clear focus on service delivery, value for money, and long-term sustainability.

Governance arrangements must therefore be sufficiently robust to provide effective oversight, transparency, and assurance, while retaining the flexibility to adapt to structural, legislative, and partnership change. Continuous improvement in governance is essential to ensure that the Force remains accountable to the communities it serves and well-positioned to respond effectively to emerging risks, changing demands, and future reform.

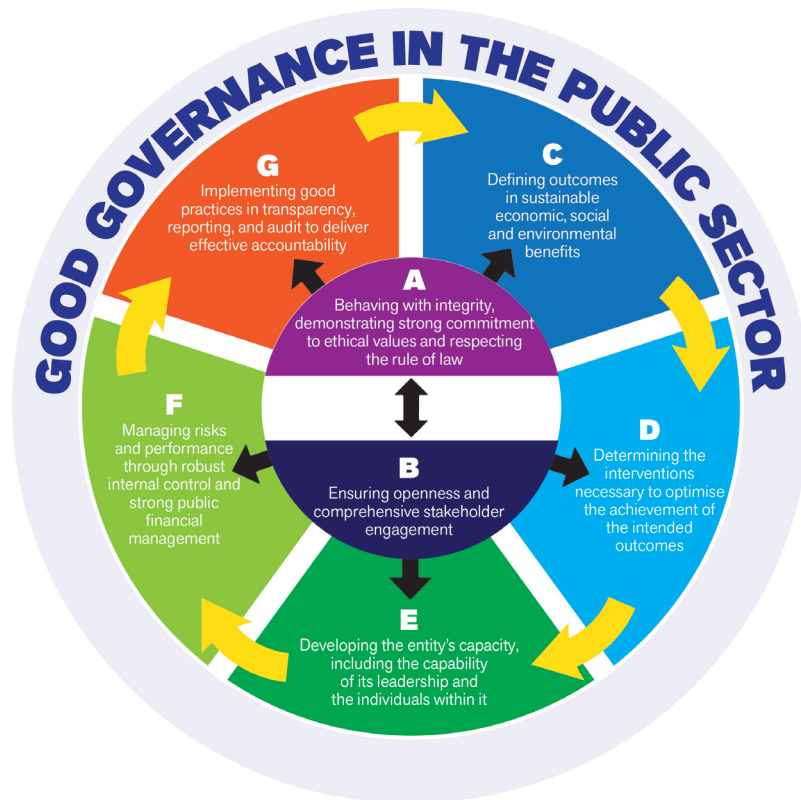
As part of the annual review, the force has considered each of the seven CIPFA principle of good governance, providing an outline of the control measures in place, how the principles are demonstrated and evidenced, and indicated any areas for future focus.

Previous actions

Any actions that remain open from the previous review in the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement are provided, to outline the continued progress and current status. Completed actions are shown in Appendix A.

New actions

While 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 2025/26 review'. New actions have been specifically linked to an individual principle; however, the force recognises that actions can be linked to multiple principles.



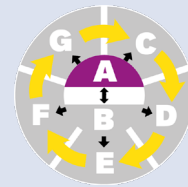
The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) created the International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector to promote better service delivery and accountability through established governance benchmarks. The force assesses the governance against the seven principles of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



CIPFA PRINCIPLES

OUR ASSESSMENT

CIPFA Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.



CONTROLS: What is in place?

- Code of Ethics
- Force Priorities
- Culture and Standards Board, Ethics Committee, Scrutiny Panels, Independent Advisory Groups
- Chief Officer Assurance Statements published
- Governance framework incorporates policies and procedures addressing procurement processes, anti-fraud, bribery and corruption supported by publication of expenses, gifts and hospitality
- Whistleblowing arrangements
- Complaints handling
- Culture and inclusion strategy
- Police Race Action Plan supported by ACO (Assistant Chief Officer) Trust and Legitimacy
- Anti-Racism Statement
- Stop search charter
- Operation Pledge (tackling Domestic Abuse)
- Complaints and whistleblowing mechanisms
- College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP)
- Management of required accreditation
- Eight safety responsibilities

STRENGTHS: Demonstrating practical application

- Sussex Police demonstrates strong and sustained commitment to integrity, ethical behaviour, and compliance with the rule of law, supported by clear leadership expectations, robust governance, and comprehensive internal and external scrutiny.
- A revised National Code of Ethics, published in 2024 and aligned to the College of Policing framework, provides practical guidance to officers and staff on maintaining public trust and legitimacy. It promotes openness, honesty, fairness, dignity, and respect, and sets clear expectations for challenging and reporting unprofessional behaviour. Ethical decision-making is reinforced through application of the National Decision Model, mandatory training, and force-wide communications from the Chief Officer team, ensuring consistent understanding and application across the organisation.
- Standards of professional behaviour are embedded throughout the employment lifecycle, including recruitment, vetting, induction, refresher training, leadership development, and performance management. The launch of the "We Are Sussex Leaders" programme in 2025 further strengthens ethical leadership, reinforces professional standards, and clearly articulates expectations aligned to force priorities and values.
- Oversight of culture, ethics, and standards is supported by dedicated governance arrangements, including a force-level Culture and Standards Board, informed by performance and conduct dashboards. This is complemented by independent and external scrutiny through an independently chaired Ethics Committee, External Scrutiny Panels for Use of Force and Stop and Search, and engagement with Staff Networks, Community Independent Advisory Groups and Independent Custody Visitors. Newly introduced Community Advocates for Reconciliation and Engagement (CARE) regime providing breadth of voice, representation and engagement. These arrangements promote transparency, challenge, learning, and continuous improvement, grounded in Authorised Professional Practice and Force policy.
- The Force maintains a comprehensive and regularly reviewed suite of policies governing ethical conduct, conflicts of interest, fraud and corruption, information management, and transparency. All policies (and projects / change activity) are subject to documented review cycles and Equality Impact Assessments prior

to publication and are made available internally and externally where appropriate, reinforcing accountability and openness.

- Arrangements are in place to ensure ethical and lawful management of information. Clear responsibilities for Information Asset Owners, robust data breach reporting processes, and high levels of training compliance provide assurance of compliance with statutory information rights. Improvements to the Force Privacy Notice have further enhanced transparency, including Communications Data and Live and Retrospective Facial Recognition. Supported by the introduction of an Artificial Intelligence Governance Board to determine and disseminate the ethical framework governing use.
- Workforce integrity is further safeguarded through the Professional Standards Department, including the Break the Silence confidential reporting service and the operation of the Joint Force Vetting Unit, which acts as a critical gatekeeper for workforce integrity. Clear and accessible complaints processes are available internally and externally, with appropriate escalation and oversight arrangements. Further investment through the introduction of a Prevention and Engagement Inspector role to address trends, culture, behaviour and organisational learning.
- The Force responded constructively to the HMICFRS integrity inspection, published in May 2025. An agreed action plan is in place with the Chief Officer Team, with delivery managed by the Head of Professional Standards, Vetting and Anti-Corruption, and oversight provided through senior management governance, the Culture and Standards Board, and the Organisational Reassurance Board. Progress is regularly reported to HMICFRS through its monitoring portal, with actions subject to formal verification. Since the inspection, Sussex Police has made demonstrable progress, including the introduction of a comprehensive organisational learning process across professional standards functions and the wider Force, resolution of complaint-handling backlogs, and significant improvements in vetting timeliness and efficiency.
- The Force continues to promote fairness, inclusion, and legitimacy through its Culture and Inclusion Strategy, which was refreshed following national guidance and benchmarking. Delivery of the Police Race Action Plan is overseen through the RAPID Board, with routine scrutiny of data relating to Stop and Search, Use of Force, complaints, and misconduct to address disproportionality and improve confidence. The publication of an anti-racism statement in and an anti-discriminatory statement in response to the Angiolini Inquiry further reinforces the Force's commitment to equality and respect. A dedicated Chief Officer role is held in Trust and Legitimacy at an executive level to improve openness and engagement.
- In addition, Operation Pledge sets out a clear ethical commitment to tackling domestic abuse, establishing a culture of zero tolerance, robust accountability for perpetrators, and a victim-centred approach supported by clear policy requirements, safeguarding measures, and specialist support pathways.
- Sussex Police recognises information disorder as an increasing ethical and operational risk, particularly in the context of critical incidents. The Force is committed to transparent, accurate, and lawful communication that maintains public trust and confidence. Governance arrangements ensure that national recommendations are embedded into Force practice, including the establishment of clear systems and processes to monitor, assess, and respond to misinformation and disinformation. This supports consistent, proportionate, and ethical communications, enabling the Force to counter harmful narratives effectively. These arrangements reinforce the Force's commitment to integrity and ethical decision-making in its engagement with the public, media, and stakeholders, particularly during sensitive or high-risk events.
- Within Forensic Investigations, Sussex Police adheres to nationally recognised professional and regulatory standards. The Force holds ISO 17025 accreditation for a range of its most commonly undertaken Forensic Science Activities (FSAs) and complies with the Forensic Science Regulator's Code of Practice in these areas. These arrangements provide assurance that forensic processes are carried out competently, ethically, and transparently, ensuring the reliability of forensic evidence, supporting the integrity of the criminal justice process, and maintaining public confidence in policing outcomes.
- Sussex Police demonstrates its commitment to integrity, ethical responsibility, and the protection of people through strengthened health and safety governance. The Health and Safety Service has introduced the Eight Safety Responsibilities, providing clear and simplified expectations for Heads of Department in their duty to safeguard officers, staff, detainees, and members of the public. These responsibilities reinforce accountability, promote consistent compliance with legal and professional health

and safety obligations, and support a culture of proactive risk management. By clarifying leadership responsibility and expectations,

the Force strengthens ethical conduct, lawful practice, and the protection of individuals.

HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED

- Mandatory training packages on Code of Ethics monitored for completion.
- Competency and values framework structure utilised across entry routes and career progression.
- Time to talk sessions and allyship training, and inclusion of a Race Action Plan question in all promotion processes.
- Annual integrity checks.
- Adherence with the Vetting Authorised Professional Practice (APP) and Home Office Guidance.
- Revised Anti-Corruption Control Strategy and Anti Corruption Threat Assessment for 2026.
- Policy review compliance reported to ORB.
- Regular publication of force misconduct outcomes.
- Complaints scrutiny within OPCC.
- HMICFRS integrity inspection publication and verification process.
- 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.
- Information asset owners policy and assurance mechanisms introduced.
- Data breach reporting is scrutinised via Organisational Reassurance Board via Information Management reporting and also the Security Information Management Board.
- IPCO inspection on handling of communications data and SIAP internal audit on Information management code of practice.
- Flagging capability Operation Pledge, allows appropriate investigations and support mechanisms and scrutiny.
- Safety Responsibilities and risk based assurance to review compliance to the Eight Safety responsibilities.
- Audit programme internally for Forensics alongside United Kingdom Accreditation Service annual audits

CHALLENGES: What can be improved?

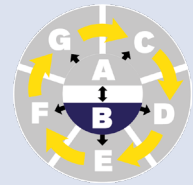
ACTION 01/25-26

Continued from 06/24-25

Retention processes including legacy data, digital processing notices (DPN) and biometrics samples.

SUMMARY: Collectively, these arrangements demonstrate a clear “tone from the top”, embed ethical values across the organisation, and provide assurance that Sussex Police conducts its business with integrity, transparency, and respect for the rule of law, fully in line with CIPFA/ SOLACE Delivering Good Governance principles.

CIPFA Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.



CONTROLS: What is in place?

- Communications strategy
- Community engagement strategy
- Children and young persons' strategy
- Independent advisory groups
- Use of surveys
- Single online home
- Force Publication Scheme
- Freedom of information policy
- Performance and workforce data
- Citizen portal
- Professional standards engagement

STRENGTHS: Demonstrating practical application

- Sussex Police demonstrates a strong commitment to openness, transparency, and meaningful engagement with communities, victims, staff, partners, and stakeholders through a clear strategic approach to communications, engagement, and public accountability. A dedicated Chief Officer role is held in Trust and Legitimacy at an executive level to improve openness and engagement.
- The Force's Communications Strategy sets out principles for corporate engagement, prioritisation, and the effective use of resources, and is aligned to the College of Policing APP on Communications and Engagement. This provides a consistent framework for open, accurate, and timely communication with the public and media, supporting trust, confidence, and informed participation.
- Community engagement is embedded through a dedicated Community Engagement Strategy, which informs community profiles and ensures local policing plans are shaped by the needs and priorities of the communities they serve. Engagement takes place across multiple channels, including face-to-face contact, telephone interaction, digital platforms, and structured consultation activity.
- Digital engagement is supported through a social media management platform, strengthening the governance and security of engagement data, improving analysis of public sentiment, and enabling access to crime reporting via online channels. The Force website provides accessible self-service functionality, consistent advice and guidance, performance and workforce data, and an improved user experience in line with national initiatives, supporting transparency and accountability. The Force has introduced a new initiative via social media WhatsApp Broadcast channel to promote openness and transparency with the public and stakeholders.
- The Force works closely with partner organisations through established partnership arrangements and statutory governance structures, including Community Safety Partnerships, the Children Safeguarding Partnership, and the Adult Safeguarding Board. These arrangements support collaborative approaches to tackling crime, safeguarding vulnerable people, reducing re-offending, and delivering early intervention and positive outcomes for communities, including children and young people.
- Sussex Police actively engages with Advisory Groups whose membership reflects the diversity of local communities. Community Advocates attend independently chaired Use of Force and Stop and Search scrutiny panels, providing challenge, insight, and feedback to inform operational learning and support legitimacy and public confidence. In addition, public order policing operations are now inviting community members to observe in order to illustrate transparency on decisions.
- The Force seeks feedback from those it serves to inform improvement. Victim satisfaction surveys are conducted across a wide range

of victim groups, extending beyond statutory requirements, to assess service quality and identify learning. Targeted opinion research, including surveys and focus groups, is also undertaken to understand perceptions and behaviours and to support effective crime prevention and behavioural change campaigns.

- Internal engagement is equally recognised as vital to openness and accountability. The Force undertakes regular staff surveys and engages routinely with staff representative bodies, including the Sussex Police Federation and Unison, ensuring that workforce views are heard and considered in decision-making.
- Transparency is further reinforced through the regular review and publication of policies, including the Freedom of Information Policy, and sustained improvement in FOI performance. The organisation has expanded its Force Publication Scheme to proactively release commonly requested information, improving access to data and enabling public scrutiny. Progress has also been made in strengthening lawful data sharing with key stakeholders, including the Family Courts, through engagement with the Sussex Family Justice Board.
- Sussex Police promotes openness, transparency, and accountability through the publication of responses to national reports and super-complaints, ensuring that the public is informed of findings, actions taken, and progress made.
- The Professional Standards Department (PSD) is subject to structured internal and external scrutiny and engages regularly with key stakeholders. This includes quarterly scrutiny

meetings with the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) on complaints performance, monthly accountability meetings with the Office of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner focusing on but not limited to complaints review, PSD investigations, civil claims and inquests, vetting decisions, disproportionality, and operation of a Vetting Appeal Panel, with independent advisory group involvement where appropriate. The department has also sought development of partnership engagement with representatives from the Violence Against Women and Girls forum. These arrangements support transparent decision-making, enable challenge and assurance from independent bodies, and demonstrate a commitment to engaging openly with stakeholders on matters relating to conduct, fairness, and legitimacy.

- In 2024, the Force launched the Citizen Portal, enabling victims to receive automated updates, communicate securely with the officer in charge of their case, and access key information in one place. The Force continued to advance the Citizen Portal functionality through a phased expansion in 2025 and into 2026. This enhances openness, improves the victim experience, and strengthens two-way engagement, with future opportunities to incorporate additional feedback and survey functionality.

HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED

- Community engagement strategy and the community advisory / scrutiny panels.
- OPCC Precept consultation and research survey 2024 and the Police and Crime Panel.
- PCC Performance Accountability Meeting live webcast.
- 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.
- HMICFRS PEEL inspection.
- Survey results such as Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) engagement return.
- Scrutiny of Freedom of Information performance by Information Commissioner.
- Information-sharing agreements managed and maintained by Information Management.
- Citizen Portal monitoring on usage and feedback mechanisms.

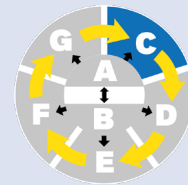
CHALLENGES: What can be improved?

No actions identified under this heading.

SUMMARY: Overall, these arrangements demonstrate that Sussex Police strives to maintain open, transparent, and inclusive engagement with its communities, workforce, partners, and stakeholders, using feedback and insight to inform service delivery and decision-making, in line with CIPFA Principle B – Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.



CIPFA Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.



CONTROLS: What is in place?

- Force priorities and Priorities Delivery Plan (PDP)
- Force management statement (FMS)
- Performance framework
- Medium term financial strategy (MTFS)
- Change delivery governance
- Estates and facilities strategy
- Local resilience forum
- National and force-specific recommendation management
- Horizon scanning national / local changes

STRENGTHS: Demonstrating practical application

- Sussex Police defines and delivers its outcomes through clear strategic planning, robust performance management, and sustainable financial and investment decisions aligned to the Police and Crime Plan and community priorities.
- The Force's Priority Delivery Plan (PDP) sets out a comprehensive statement of mission, outcomes, and objectives to be delivered over the medium term. These outcomes are supported by a robust performance framework, incorporating performance indicators and business intelligence dashboards that enable progress to be monitored and reported transparently. Oversight is provided through established governance structures, including the Force Performance Board (FPB) and the Strategic Planning Board (SPB).
- Strategic decision-making is underpinned by strong financial and resource planning. The Strategic Planning Board (SPB) provides accountability for budget and resourcing decisions driven by Force priorities and includes representation from both Chief Officers and the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC). Investment and benefits realisation are overseen by the Portfolio Strategy Board (PSB), ensuring that resources are directed toward initiatives that deliver the greatest impact and value in support of intended outcomes.
- The organisation uses data and intelligence to inform decision-making and target resources effectively, ensuring they are directed to areas of greatest need and risk. The Force continues to leverage Power BI, demand analysis and modelling to triangulate, allowing the organisation to respond in an agile way, supporting management of demand as efficiently as possible.
- The Force produces an annual Force Management Statement (FMS), incorporating an assessment of future demand, capacity, capability and identifying areas future challenges and plans. This is aligned with Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which is produced annually and underpinned by regularly refreshed multi-year financial planning. This approach ensures sustainable budgets, appropriate reserves, and financial resilience, enabling delivery of policing outcomes in the medium to long term. The MTFS is reported through executive Force boards and presented to the Joint Audit Committee for independent scrutiny.
- Annual financial planning, budget setting, and in-year financial monitoring are undertaken in accordance with Financial Regulations and are explicitly linked to Force priorities, ensuring alignment between funding decisions and service outcomes.
- Change and transformation are managed through an established Change Delivery function, which integrates national, regional, and local programmes, business change, benefits realisation, and assurance. Change activity is supported by a structured change communications approach to ensure effective engagement with those affected. The Change Coordination Board provides design authority

and manages dependencies and impacts across programmes. The Change Delivery Priority Matrix is used to assess and prioritise projects based on multiple criteria, including operational continuity, financial benefits, and national mandates, ensuring that resources are focused on high-impact and sustainable change.

- The Force's Estates Strategy continues to develop, with increasing clarity on senior leader appetite and close collaboration with the OPCC. Once approved, an outcome-focused delivery plan will be implemented and governed through Chief Officer oversight, the OPCC Estates Board, and the internal Property Steering Group. Sustainability considerations are embedded within future estates modelling, taking account of community needs, policing demand, environmental impact, and wider public-sector collaboration with county councils and partner agencies.
- Oversight of external inspection and assurance activity supports continuous improvement against outcomes. Governance and scrutiny of HMICFRS activity is led by the Deputy Chief Constable, with recommendations and findings from HMICFRS, the IOPC, and other reviews formally recorded, owned, and monitored through the Organisational Reassurance Board. Recommendations are tracked via the Force risk platform, ensuring accountability and delivery against areas for improvement identified in inspections such as PEEL.
- Sussex Police works closely with partner agencies, including local authorities

and councils, to facilitate effective information-sharing agreements that support early identification, safeguarding, and coordinated intervention for vulnerable people within communities, enabling better outcomes through joined-up, preventative, and sustainable approaches to public protection.

- The Force actively scans and prepares for emerging strategic developments that may impact outcomes for communities. This includes engagement with the Government's Devolution Priority Programme, with a designated Senior Responsible Officer ensuring organisational readiness for any changes arising from the potential establishment of a Mayoral Combined Authority and the associated implications for policing and public safety. The Force also considers risk management and horizon scanning in relation to the impact on policing and achieving required outcomes for victims and communities alongside challenges that partner agencies in the public sector are facing which could increase demand into policing.
- In addition, Sussex Police works with Blue Light Commercial and partner organisations to strengthen the consideration of social value, sustainability, and wider economic benefits within procurement activity. This includes encouraging diverse supply chains, small and medium enterprises, and voluntary, community and social enterprises, with future updates to governance arrangements and Contract Standing Orders as this work develops.

HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED

- Mid term priority delivery plan review undertaken.
- External audit of financial accounts and value for money.
- Internal audit regime including financial systems and controls.
- SIAP Internal Audit on governance and monitoring of collaborated arrangement.
- HMICFRS feedback on the force Management Statement.
- Change Delivery governance, any major changes to prioritisation are highlighted and addressed.
- OPCC Estates Board with regular reporting from the estate's transformation strategy programme.
- HMICFRS progress reports are featured in Chief Officer accountability boards and additional reporting is directed to the Force Organisational Reassurance Board (ORB). The force is also required to provide updates to the HMICFRS monitoring portal.
- The PCC will publish a response which is available on their website. HMICFRS reports often feature as a subject in the PCC's Performance Accountability Meeting (PAM) which is live streamed and publicly accessible.
- Annual risk assurance review includes horizon scanning on relevant themes which uses benchmarking activity from other forces and the National Police Chief Council strategic risk inputs.

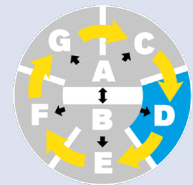
CHALLENGES: What can be improved?

No actions identified under this heading.

SUMMARY: Through these arrangements Sussex Police demonstrates that it defines desired outcomes clearly, aligns resources and investment to those outcomes, and takes a long-term, sustainable approach to delivering economic, social, and environmental benefits for the communities it serves, in line with CIPFA Principle C.



CIPFA Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.



CONTROLS: What is in place?

- Strategic planning
- Code of Corporate Governance
- Risk management strategy and policy
- Annual risk assurance process
- Performance framework
- Power BI advancements
- Change delivery
- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Organisational learning process

STRENGTHS: Demonstrating practical application

- Sussex Police has established clear governance arrangements to ensure that timely, proportionate, and evidence-led interventions are taken to optimise delivery of its strategic priorities and intended outcomes.
- The Strategic Planning Board alongside the Force Performance Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, provides senior leadership oversight of demand, performance, and resourcing by aligning the Medium-Term Financial Strategy with the Force Management Statement. Detailed demand and performance data is reviewed monthly to enable early intervention where pressures emerge. Annual Force Management Statement workshops support deeper challenge by Chief Officers and Department Heads, ensuring plans are adjusted in response to changing demand and performance evidence.
- Interventions to strengthen governance are supported by an annual review of the corporate governance framework, including the Code of Corporate Governance, ensuring continued alignment with CIPFA Delivering Good Governance guidance and enabling refinement where improvements are required.
- A mature risk management strategy and policy is embedded to ensure that threats and opportunities affecting delivery of organisational objectives are identified, evaluated, and managed effectively. This is supported by benchmarking and horizon-scanning activity with regional and national policing partners, and an annual risk assurance process that enables targeted intervention where strategic risks require further action.
- Performance management arrangements support timely corrective action. The Force operates a performance framework aligned to strategic priorities, incorporating qualitative assessment of behaviours, analysis of root causes, and exception reporting to enable focused interventions rather than reactive monitoring.
- Targeted improvement activity is coordinated through the Continuous Improvement Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, and supported at a tactical level by the Local Policing Unify Board, chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable. These arrangements ensure a phased and prioritised response to demand pressures using live data to support monitoring, intervention, and evaluation.
- Access to Power BI dashboards and performance insight packs provides leaders at all levels with regular visibility of performance, enabling earlier and more informed intervention decisions across operational and enabling services.
- The Portfolio Strategy Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, provides robust scrutiny of complex change programmes and business cases. A change planning cycle is in place, with business cases assessed through a prioritisation matrix to ensure programmes with the highest urgency, impact, and benefit receive appropriate resourcing. This includes oversight of the Force's transformation programme

which focuses on modernising and digitising processes to improve services and reduce cost. The prioritisation matrix was reviewed in 2025/26 to align weighting with the force priority delivery plan, strategic risk dependencies and national mandates.

- The force has introduced an AI Governance Board as well as an AI Policy. Designed to ensure technology is exploited to maximise benefits whilst mitigating significant potential risks.
- Organisational responsiveness is further supported through a fortnightly Senior Leader Meeting, ensuring leadership alignment,

communication of strategic priorities, and the ability to intervene promptly in response to emerging internal or external factors.

- Learning-led intervention has been refreshed through the revised Organisational Learning process and meeting cycle, which identifies improvement opportunities arising from internal activity and external sources such as HMICFRS, the IOPC learning the lessons, and the College of Policing. This ensures that insight from incidents, near misses, inspection, investigation, and innovation is translated into practical improvement activity.

HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED

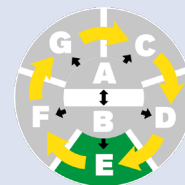
- Risk management strategy and policy review featured in Organisational Reassurance Board (ORB).
- Risk benchmarking and peer reviews.
- Risk strategy, policy and annual assurance process output is presented to the Joint Audit Committee (JAC).
- SIAP Internal Audit risk management audit.
- Risk assurance output shared in ORB, JAC and with national risk forum.
- Revised force performance framework and metrics - which aligns with national performance framework.
- 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.
- Change delivery prioritisation tool and Dashboard comprehensive assessment of the current and future change portfolio
- Annual production of Force Management Statement and submission feedback from HMICFRS.
- HMICFRS inspection reviews strategic planning and value for money. HMICFRS progress reports to ORB and HMICFRS monitoring portal.

CHALLENGES: What can be improved?

No actions identified under this heading.

SUMMARY: As a result of these arrangements Sussex Police aims to ensure it does not simply monitor performance and risk, but actively intervenes, prioritises, and adapts, enabling effective delivery of outcomes in a complex and changing operational environment, in line with CIPFA Principle D.

CIPFA Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.



CONTROLS: What is in place?

- Workforce plans
- Recruitment strategy
- Wellbeing strategy
- Focus performance management framework
- Promotions calendar
- Development, talent and leadership programmes
- Learning and development strategy
- College of Policing mandated curriculum
- Learning management system
- Training prioritisation
- Detective succession planning
- Coaching unit
- Staff surveys
- Operation Hampshire (reporting of assaults and support services)
- Command Oversight Board

STRENGTHS: Demonstrating practical application

- Sussex Police continues to strengthen its organisational capacity and workforce capability through structured leadership development, workforce planning, wellbeing provision, and targeted investment in skills, learning, and professional competence, ensuring the Force is equipped to meet current and future policing challenges.
- Clear roles and responsibilities are defined for senior officers, supporting effective leadership accountability and strategic direction. A comprehensive Workforce Plan is in place and reviewed regularly to identify future workforce mix, profile, and capability requirements. Workforce capacity and capability are monitored through the People Performance Meeting, supported by dashboards that identify skills gaps, diversity considerations, and emerging risks. Learning and capability oversight is further supported through reporting from the Learn system.
- Leadership capacity is strengthened through structured governance and development pathways. The We Are Sussex Leaders programme, launched in 2025, reinforces ethical leadership, professional standards, and behavioural expectations, supported by senior leader mentoring. First and second-line leaders are assigned to syndicates with senior leadership sponsorship, creating peer networks and consistent leadership support. Regular fortnightly Senior Leader Meetings further support leadership alignment and organisational responsiveness.
- The Force has invested significantly in learning, development, and specialist capability, including training in Senior Responsible Officer responsibilities, Managing Successful Programmes (MSP), financial qualifications, and CIPFA good governance diplomas. These investments ensure leaders and portfolio holders have the skills required to manage complex programmes, financial sustainability, and evolving governance demands. A dedicated coaching unit supports officers entering through the Detective Degree Holder route, reflecting best practice in ensuring investigators are equipped with the skills required for Independent Patrol.
- Workforce performance and development are supported through the Focus performance management process, enabling regular feedback and constructive challenge. Succession planning is embedded through the Future Focus framework, supporting career development, identification of talent, and planning for critical roles. Talent pools operate alongside this framework to develop future leaders and strengthen organisational resilience. The Detective Succession Planning Panel

and Investigative Improvement Board provide oversight of investigative capability, recruitment, retention, and wellbeing.

- The Force recognises wellbeing as a core enabler of workforce capability. A holistic Wellbeing Strategy is in place, covering mental health, physical wellbeing, leadership wellbeing, financial wellbeing, and workplace wellbeing. Dedicated intranet resources support access to wellbeing services, and the Wellbeing Board provides oversight of workforce challenges. Mental health first aiders, trauma-informed CPD inputs, annual wellbeing events, and defuse-trained staff are embedded across the organisation.
 - Targeted measures are in place to support staff affected by trauma or harm. A seven-point Operation Hampshire plan and dedicated intranet resources provide supervisors with clear guidance when staff are assaulted, with assault data routinely monitored through the Health and Safety Board. All new supervisors now receive Op Hampshire training to maximise our support to our workforce in this area.
 - Inclusivity and individual capability are actively supported. Officers and staff are offered neurodiversity screening to identify dyslexia or related needs and ensure appropriate workplace adjustments. The Force maintains strong staff networks and champion roles across protected and specialist areas, contributing to learning, engagement, and inclusive practice. Coaches and mentors are embedded across the organisation, with over 180 mentors and 40 coaches supporting professional development. Targeted leadership mentoring programmes are in place for officers and staff who are Black or of colour, supported by external mentors
- and supplemented by an executive sponsor programme.
- Capability is further enhanced through continuous professional development. The Leadership Training Team delivers regular virtual CPD sessions covering a wide range of policing and leadership topics, including resilience, inclusivity, neurodiversity, culture, fraud, professional curiosity, and leadership. The virtual format has increased accessibility, participation, and engagement, with recorded sessions available to support flexible learning.
 - Within Information Management, the Force has invested in additional training in FOI, data protection and AI Governance to ensure our capacity and resilience in these evolving areas remains strong.
 - The Force continues to strengthen its learning infrastructure. Work is underway to introduce structured identification of learning and skills gaps, with implementation planned in 2025. The Learn management system is being configured to provide comprehensive oversight of training, accreditation, and qualifications, improving assurance over essential skills and compliance. The apprenticeship scheme has also been expanded to support capability development across technical and specialist roles.
 - Organisational learning is embedded through governance arrangements that capture insight from internal reviews, HMICFRS inspections, IOPC findings, and College of Policing practice. This ensures learning is systematically translated into capability-building activity, training, and service improvement across the organisation.

HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED

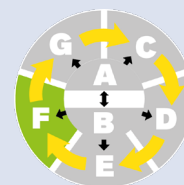
- HMIC PEEL Inspections, 2023/25 assessed Sussex as 'Adequate' for building, supporting and protecting the workforce; areas for improvement are tracked through to completion via Accountability Meetings and ORB.
- HMICFRS value for money profiles.
- National Recruitment, Retention and Wellbeing Meeting.
- SIAP Internal Audit on Workforce Planning.
- Joint Audit Committee receive reports on workforce, wellbeing, recruitment, training and health & safety and provide scrutiny.
- Ofsted inspections.
- SIAP Internal Audit on Health and Safety.
- Regional Pay & Conditions Meeting.
- Oscar Kilo – national award for creating a positive wellbeing environment. Oscar Kilo Blue Light Wellbeing Framework overseen by Wellbeing Board.
- Annual staff surveys and organisational health check results and team discussions.
- Continuous improvement ethos, for example Innovate Forum.
- Command Oversight Board (COB) is responsible for reviewing operational training and ensures consistency in the skills of Commanders alongside succession planning.
- 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.

CHALLENGES: What can be improved?

No actions identified under this heading.

SUMMARY: The combination of these arrangements provide assurance that Sussex Police has a skilled, supported, and resilient workforce, underpinned by strong leadership, effective wellbeing provision, inclusive development pathways, and robust learning systems. This enables the Force to sustain operational performance, manage change, and adapt to emerging demand, in accordance with CIPFA Principle E – Developing Capacity and Capability.

CIPFA Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.



CONTROLS: What is in place?

- Code of Corporate Governance and framework
- Integrated financial management, with planning, budgeting, reporting and control
- Internal Audit arrangements
- Counter fraud and anti-corruption policy
- Organisational Reassurance Board (ORB)
- Risk management strategy and policy
- Procurement training programme
- Business continuity
- Information management scrutiny

STRENGTHS: Demonstrating practical application

- Sussex Police has established strong arrangements for managing risk, performance, and financial resources, ensuring robust internal control, ethical decision-making, and sound public financial management in support of effective service delivery.
- Decision-making operates within the Force's Code of Corporate Governance, which sets out clear accountability and assurance arrangements. Chief Officers produce annual assurance statements for their portfolio responsibilities, providing transparency and senior leadership accountability. Ethical decision-making is embedded at all levels through consistent application of the National Decision Model (NDM), underpinned by the Policing Code of Ethics, ensuring that decisions are lawful, proportionate, and values-led.
- Arrangements to scrutinise and challenge performance are well established. The development of the Force Performance Board and enhanced Sussex Police performance dashboards enable comprehensive oversight of delivery against the Police and Crime Plan, including joint scrutiny with the Police & Crime Commissioner. Performance is benchmarked against peer forces using HMICFRS Value for Money profiles, enabling analytics and the identification of good practice and targeted improvement where appropriate.
- The Force's approach to financial management follows CIPFA best practice standards and the Force adopts a finance model aligned to the Achieving Financial Excellence in Policing (AFEP) principles and has been recognised nationally by CIPFA as demonstrating good practice. Core principles of integrity, ethics, and law underpin financial decision-making, supported by qualified finance professionals operating in line with CIPFA standards.
- Financial control is reinforced through targeted learning and capability development. Procurement training has been delivered to first- and second-line leaders to ensure understanding of procurement obligations, controls, and compliance requirements. A dedicated Transformation Accountant provides financial business-partnering support to the change portfolio, ensuring that transformation activity is affordable, controlled, and aligned to strategic priorities.
- Change programmes and projects are supported by comprehensive business cases, with clearly defined costs, benefits, and value-for-money expectations. Expenditure and progress are scrutinised by Chief Officers through programme and project governance boards. A formal process between Change Delivery and Finance enables the monitoring and delivery of agreed savings, which are incorporated into the budget-setting and in-year financial monitoring arrangements.
- Risk management is embedded within the governance framework through an approved risk management strategy and policy, enabling risks to be identified, escalated, and mitigated effectively. Risk information is actively used to inform decision-making and prioritisation at senior governance forums.

- Business continuity arrangements are in place to meet the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, with learning from audits and tests incorporated into improvement activity. Progress against internal audit actions is monitored through the Organisational Reassurance Board (ORB). This area has been subject to a considerable refresh project over the last year, with the introduction of a new more comprehensive policy, completion of in person training across departments and divisions, a new business impact analysis / assessment, implementation of a new task-card focused template, assurance process and increased engagement with Digital Data and Technology teams to support.
- Strong arrangements are also in place for the management of information risk. Data protection and information management policies and strategies are supported by structured processes for reviewing and updating Information Sharing Agreements (ISAs). The Force has proactively engaged with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) through a consensual audit process, with agreed action plans to strengthen Subject Access Rights performance. Additional engagement with the ICO and the DBS Police Performance Team has supported improvements in Freedom of Information compliance. Progress and assurance in these areas are reported through the ORB and the Security and Information Management Board (SIMB).
- The Force is reviewing the Policy Framework, seeking to refine it where possible by deferring to APP where available and reducing status of Policies to Summary on a Pages where the impact is on smaller teams only. In this way, the policy database will be easier to regulate, manage and navigate.

HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED

- Value for money, external audit cycle.
- Regular SIAP Internal Audit programme, with agreed process for monitoring.
- Benchmarking Internal Audit review with peer review in 2025 determining if any improvements can be made to programme.
- Internal Audit on risk management framework.
- Organisational Reassurance Board risk reporting.
- Strategic risk reporting presented to the Joint Audit Committee.
- Risk benchmarking with other forces.
- Membership of the National Police Chiefs' Council risk forum.
- Horizon-scanning activities.
- Overtime working group provides additional controls, monitoring and reporting with new monitoring metrics tool in Power BI.
- Business Continuity compliance reporting into the ORB scrutinises key aspects of the framework. Review of testing and exercise regime, performance and assurance metrics and continuous improvement through learning from audits, incidents and exercises.

CHALLENGES: What can be improved?

ACTION 02/25-26

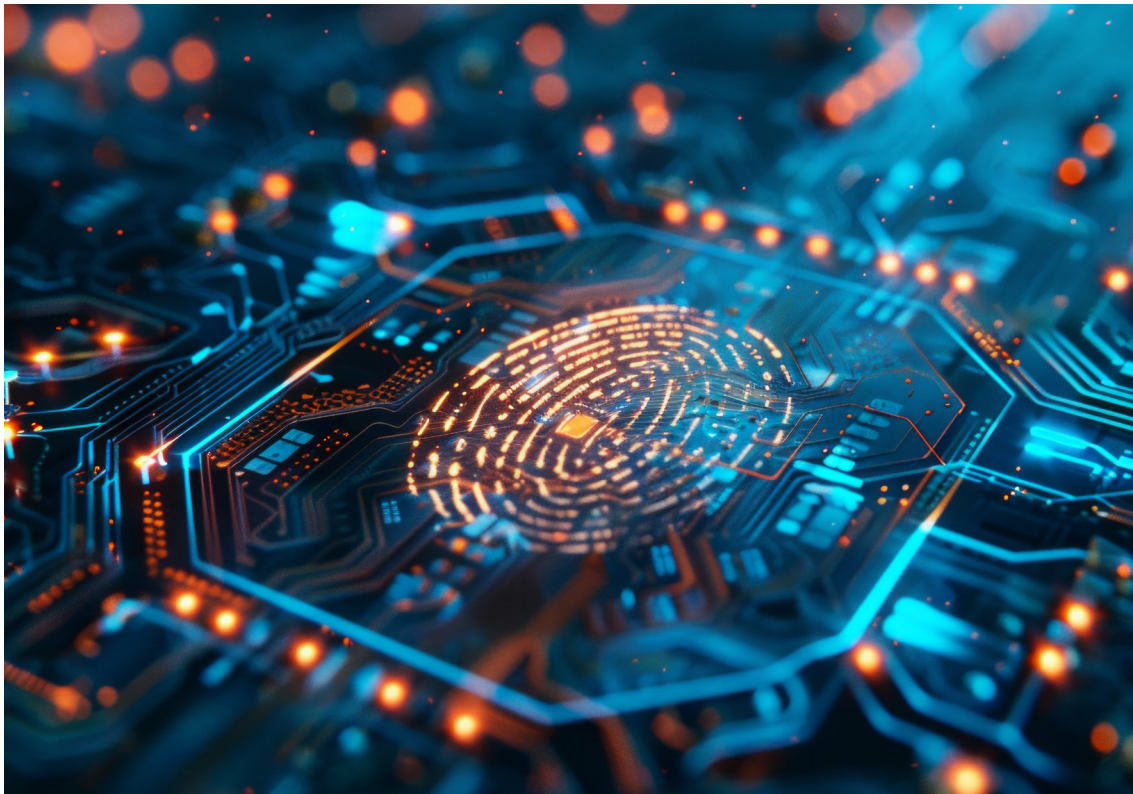
Continued from 07/24-25

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

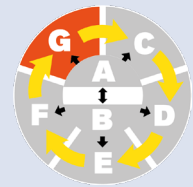
Effective and timely DBS checks contribute to public safeguarding in the context of allowing employers to effectively vet people in regulated activities.

DBS is an externally funded service which the force delivers on behalf of the Home Office – the Force works to ensure funding is used effectively and constantly analyses demand to ensure funding received is sufficient. 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.

SUMMARY: In practice, these arrangements provide reasonable assurance that Sussex Police manages its performance, risks, finances, and information assets within a strong and ethical control environment, demonstrating effective stewardship of public resources and compliance with statutory and professional standards, in line with CIPFA Principle F.



CIPFA Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.



CONTROLS: What is in place?

- Scheduled review of key regulations, codes and protocols
- Robust Internal and External Audit arrangements
- Adherence to statutory deadlines
- External scrutiny from third parties such as Joint Audit Committee
- External scrutiny from third parties such as Joint Audit Committee

STRENGTHS: Demonstrating practical application

- Sussex Police has robust arrangements in place to promote transparency, ensure clear and accessible reporting, and enable effective audit and scrutiny, supporting strong accountability to the public, partners, and stakeholders.
- The PCC and Chief Constable ensure that policing activity is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively. These responsibilities are underpinned by an overarching Scheme of Governance, which sets out clear arrangements for decision-making, accountability, financial management, and risk management.
- This framework includes a comprehensive suite of governance documents, including:
 - a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Schedule of MoU, which defines how the PCC and the Chief Constable work together and how support is provided across shared enabling functions such as estates, procurement, finance, HR, communications, and corporate development;
 - a Code of Corporate Governance, setting out how the core principles of good governance are achieved;
 - a Decision-Making Framework, detailing how the PCC makes and publishes decisions and holds the Chief Constable to account;
 - a Scheme of Delegation for both the PCC and CC;
- Financial Regulations, forming the framework for managing financial affairs;
- and a Contract Standing Orders, which govern the procurement of goods, works, and services. A comprehensive review of the Contract Standing Orders is planned following the enactment of the Procurement Reform Bill, ensuring continued alignment with legislative requirements.
- Information to support transparency and accountability is published routinely, enabling appropriate scrutiny of decision-making and governance arrangements. The Force continues to evolve the Annual Governance Statement, with the aim of improving clarity and accessibility for readers while maintaining compliance with statutory and professional requirements.
- Sussex Police is subject to extensive internal and external inspection, including HMICFRS and IOPC activity, with inspection findings and reports published openly online. Responses to national reports and recommendations are made publicly available, demonstrating openness and a commitment to accountability and continuous improvement.
- Internal Audit is provided through a managed service contract with the Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP). Internal audit findings, opinions, and progress against agreed actions are reported regularly to the Joint Audit Committee, providing independent assurance on the effectiveness of governance, risk management, and internal control arrangements.

- The Force complies with statutory requirements for the publication of accounts and works closely with External Audit to support the production of audited financial statements. Financial reporting, audit outcomes, and significant governance matters are subject to independent scrutiny through the Joint Audit Committee.
- The Joint Audit Committee plays a key advisory and monitoring role in relation to governance, internal control, financial reporting, and audit, providing challenge and assurance to both the PCC and the Chief Constable. The Force continues to support and strengthen the effectiveness of the Committee within the wider accountability framework.
- Newly introduced Community Advocates for Reconciliation and Engagement (CARE) regime providing breadth of voice, representation and engagement. These arrangements promote transparency, challenge, learning, and continuous improvement, grounded in Authorised Professional Practice and Force policy.
- Transparency is further reinforced through open justice and professional standards arrangements. The public are able to attend appropriate police disciplinary hearings to observe proceedings, supporting openness and confidence in misconduct and disciplinary processes.

HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED

- Accounts publication history.
- 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.
- Internal audit results and actions are tracked to completion internally via the Organisational Reassurance Board. Overdue actions presented to the Joint Audit Committee.
- HMICFRS publish inspection reports and provide status updates on their website.
- The PCC 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.
- Established Freedom of Information FOI Publication Scheme accessible via the website with regularly posted proactive 'super responses' on regularly requested information.
- Meeting agenda and minutes for the Joint Audit Committee are publicly available as is the effectiveness review.

CHALLENGES: What can be improved?

NEW ACTION 03/25-26

Organisational Learning mechanisms. Further expansion and implementation to capture Force wide internal and external learning opportunities that are identified ensuring appropriate grading, action and dissemination.

SUMMARY: The combination of these arrangements demonstrate that Sussex Police has effective systems in place for transparent reporting, independent audit, and public accountability. They provide assurance that governance arrangements are subject to appropriate scrutiny, information is reported openly, and accountability is clearly exercised, in line with CIPFA Principle G – Transparency, Reporting and Audit.

Governance actions and improvement plans

The Annual Governance Statement does not simply describe the governance framework in place but also identifies where additional actions are required to further strengthen governance arrangements and support continuous improvement. The actions set out in this Statement arise from the annual review of the effectiveness of governance, risk management, and internal control arrangements undertaken during 2025/26.

The identification of actions reflects the Force's commitment to openness, learning, and improvement. They are not indicative of fundamental control failures, but rather represent targeted opportunities to enhance governance maturity, consistency, and resilience in response to a complex and evolving policing environment.

Identification of Actions

Governance actions have been identified through a structured and evidence-led review process, drawing on:

- Self-assessment against the seven principles of good governance
- Ongoing governance and performance monitoring
- Internal audit findings, recommendations, and annual assurance opinion
- External audit observations and wider sector context
- Oversight, challenge, and advice from the Joint Audit Committee
- Management reviews and assurance statements

This approach ensures that actions are proportionate, risk-based, and aligned to the Force's strategic priorities and statutory obligations.

Nature and Scope of Actions

The actions contained are not intended to cover an exhaustive list of all activity being undertaken within the Force in terms of areas for improvement but rather outline actions focused on:

- Strengthening governance arrangements where further embedding is required
- Enhancing oversight, reporting, or assurance mechanisms
- Responding to emerging risks, external developments, or regulatory expectations

- Supporting continuous improvement in decision-making, accountability, and financial stewardship

The actions are clearly defined, with ownership assigned and timescales identified. Where appropriate, actions extend into 2025/26 to ensure that improvements are fully embedded and sustainable.

Monitoring and Accountability

Delivery of governance actions is subject to ongoing monitoring and review through established governance and accountability arrangements. Progress against actions is reported to senior leadership and is reported to the Joint Audit Committee, providing transparency and independent challenge. This ensures that actions are actively managed, and that learning from assurance activity is reflected in improved practice.

Future improvement areas continued from 2024/25 review

ACTION 01/25-26	Continued from 06/24-25
Action identified and objective	<p>Retention processes</p> <p>Risk identified: The force needs to improve processes in relation to legacy data, digital processing notice (DPN) and biometrics samples.</p> <p>Action: 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>Progress: Risk is monitored and managed via the force risk register STRSX3256.</p>
Owner	Chief Operating Officer (SIRO) and Head of Information Management
Status and target date	Open: Target 2026
Governance area and principle linkage	<p>Principle: A</p> <p>Monitored via: Security Information Management Board, and the Information Management reporting into Organisational Reassurance Board</p>

Commentary

The legacy CIS Crime and Intel database has now been archived and is no longer available to force users. The MoPI team are working with ETL to remove remaining data from the data warehouse and to then replace the force's upload to PND. The FRB Manager has been asked to liaise with National PND team to request bulk removal of legacy records in support of this upload. This will conclude the decommissioning process for CIS. The Records Management Unit have taken on additional staff to manage the disposal/ destruction of related paper records.

In the continued absence of automated Review/ Retention/ Disposal processes in Niche (from which there remains no firm national timescale), Sussex MoPI team are manually reviewing all MoPI 1 nominals. The key focus will be on retention as opposed to disposal, however there is a governance process in place to ensure MoPI, Information Governance Supervisor and DPO review prior to any retention / deletion decision. This will also factor in any Criminal Case Review Commission (CCRC) requests for extended retention.

The MoPI team now have an established RRD process for MoPI 2 reports which are now receiving time-based reviews as standard.

A paper has been approved by both the DPO and SIRO for a time-based disposal of legacy interview tapes on Indico. This work is now with Digital Forensics to progress.

Having set out clear direction for OICs regarding the acquisition and retention of data through Digital Processing Notices, work is now underway for an automated process to shift legacy data from on-premises systems into Azure, then allowing for automated triage and review. The process has been designed and currently awaits a Data Protection Impact Assessment.

The DPO has offered advice to Ops Command regarding the long term archiving of command documents relating to POPS and Firearms operation. This work will balance UK GDPR/ DPA compliance against APP requirements for archiving certain materials in the public interest.

The decommissioning of the S:Drive fileshare system remains a long-term challenge. DDaT currently has a strong focus on the forthcoming end-of-life for Sharepoint 2013 as that system supports others including parts of the Force Intranet. Once urgent work to move data from SP 2013 has been managed, the S:Drive working group will be reconvened.

The IPCO inspection of our management of Communication Data is complete and the force was graded REASONABLE. Information Management actions are complete with RIPCOM progressing the remainder.

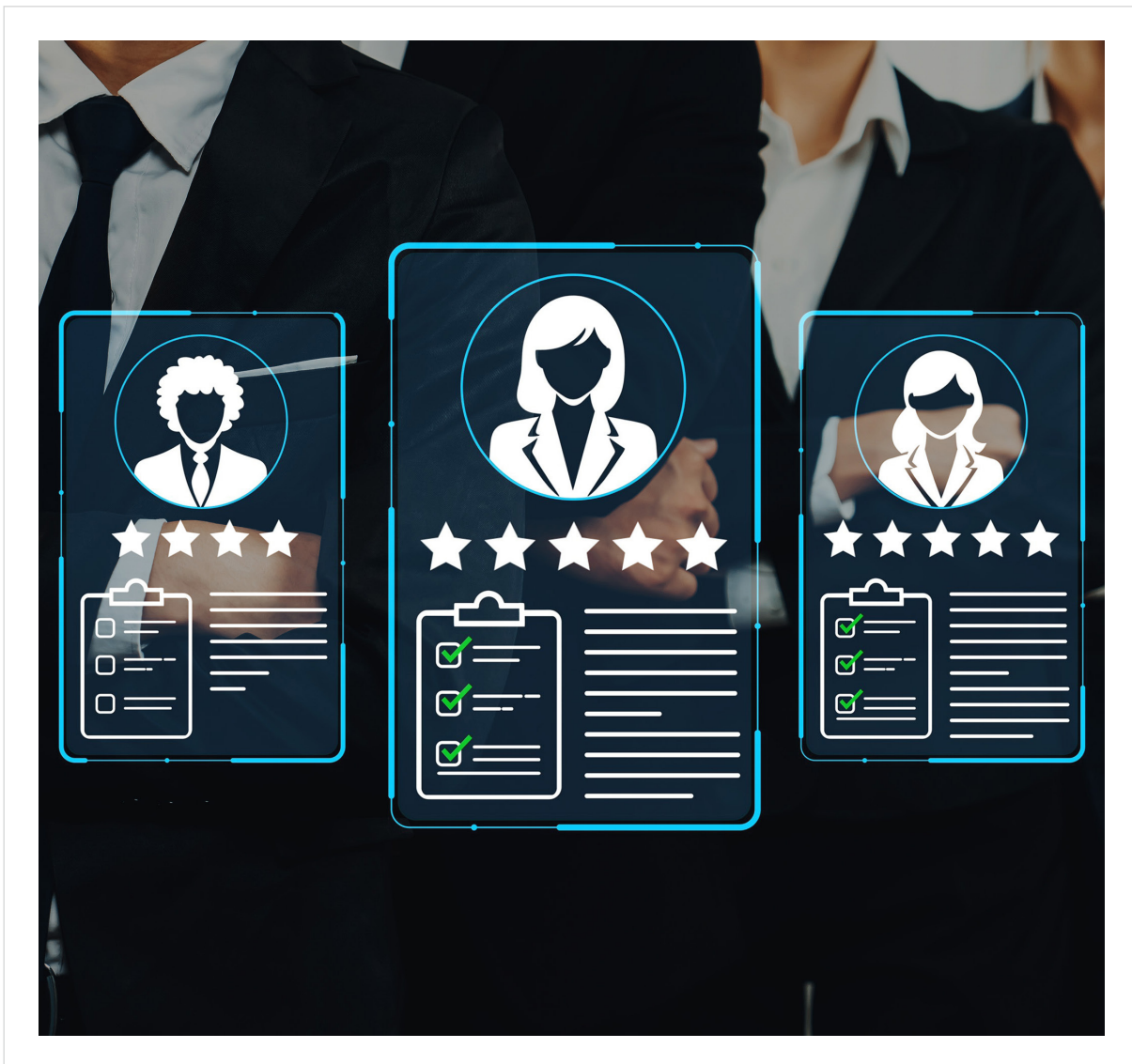
The s63G PACE biometrics retention process is established and embedded. However, although our processes have been commended by the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner, the power remains underused and Public Protection will undertake renewed messaging.



ACTION 02/25-26	Continued from 07/24-25
Action identified and objective	<p>Disclosure Barring Service (DBS)</p> <p>Risk identified: 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"> ▪ If the quality of work diminishes, there is a risk that inappropriate individuals may be accredited for work. ▪ 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. <p>Effective and timely DBS checks contribute to public safeguarding in the context of allowing employers to effectively vet people in regulated activities.</p> <p>DBS is an externally funded service which the force delivers on behalf of the Home Office – the Force works to ensure funding is used effectively and constantly analyses demand to ensure funding received is sufficient.</p> <p>Action: : Embed implemented action plan and delivery of project.</p> <p>Progress: Risk is monitored and managed via the force risk register STRSX5291</p>
Owner	Chief Operating Officer (SIRO) and Head of Information Management
Status and target date	Open: Target 2026
Governance area and principle linkage	<p>Principle: F</p> <p>Monitored via: Security Information Management Board and the Information Management reporting into Organisational Reassurance Board.</p>
<p>Commentary</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 DBS Unit is now fully staffed having benefitted from an uplift of 4 posts in 25/6. Funding has been secured for an additional 3 posts for this year and recruitment is ongoing. Staff retention has greatly improved and alongside an expedited training programme, the Unit has become stabilised and well-skilled.</p> <p>As a result of improved staffing and retention and the implementation of a raft of efficiencies and some secondment of other IM staff, total live cases have fallen from 13,000 in November 2024, to 9,000 in September 2025 and to 4,000 in mid-May. The period Sept 25-May 26 has seen the backlog of cases over 60 days old fall from 5,500 to 1,400 whilst at the same time, the Unit's ability to service new demand has been consistently at or around the SLA target of 65%. Based on recent performance averages, this remaining backlog can be cleared in 3-4 months.</p> <p>This improvement in performance is based on greatly improved output levels but has been offset against very high incoming demand with total cases for 25/6 exceeding DBS forecasts by over 3,000. Had the incoming demand been in line with forecast, the Force would have already achieved compliance. Future staffing levels now take account of this increased demand.</p>	

The Unit is now provenly able to produce consistently high output, delivered safely with a robust audit process in place.

A further efficiency may be achieved with the implementation of quality Case Management Software; Surrey and Sussex have secured funding from the DBS for a joint IT procurement with the project currently awaiting the appointment of a project manager.



Future improvement areas identified in 2025/26 review

ACTION 03/25-26	NEW
Action identified and objective	<p>Force-wide organisational learning</p> <p>Risk identified: Organisational learning process, to be strengthened to provide a sustainable framework systematically capturing learning opportunities, disseminating appropriately and informing service improvements and decision making.</p> <p>Action: Implement new structured process, with engagement across the organisation.</p> <p>Progress: Dedicated force lead who has presented initial proposal which the Force has approved and currently undertaking further scoping to identify Force subject matter experts to assist in roll out and continued delivery of framework.</p>
Owner	Learning Engagement Officer and Corporate Development
Status and target date	Open: Target 2026/27
Governance area and principle linkage	<p>Principle: G</p> <p>Monitored via: Organisational Reassurance Board and the Organisational Learning Meeting cycle</p>

Commentary

The Force has undertaken a review of Organisational Learning focusing on the purpose, breadth of learning sources, continuous improvement and a proactive transparent approach.

- **Strategic Oversight and Assurance**

The Organisational Reassurance Board provides strategic oversight for high and critical learning with senior leadership involvement.

- **Risk-Based Governance Structure**

Governance routes depend on assessed risk and impact, ensuring consistency with escalation for high-risk learning.

- **Local and Central Management**

Medium and standard learning are managed locally while central tracking prevents duplication and identifies trends.

- **Accountability and Escalation**

Learning sign-off reflects ownership and includes escalation to address stalled or ineffective progress.

- **Strategic Coordination Roles**

The newly appointed Prevention and Engagement Inspector leads strategic coordination and quality assurance of the Organisational Learning process. They will be supported by SPoC Leads to coordinate local triage, meetings, progress monitoring, and reporting to embed learning effectively at divisional levels. The Force is currently identifying and appointing these leads.

Divisional and Departmental SMT representatives provide leadership, oversight, and decision-making authority to prioritise and close learning actions.

Corporate Development and Strategic Support Officers offer liaison, audit trail support, and help maintain consistent delivery across departments.



Appendix A Completed areas of improvement from 2024/25 review

ACTION 01/24-25	BROUGHT FORWARD FROM 2023/24 REVIEW previous reference 03/23-24 COMPLETE
Action identified and objective	<p>Governance signposting</p> <p>Risk identified: 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>Action: Website information relating to governance information and signposting available, with a view to ensuring information is easy to locate and informative</p> <p>Progress: Complete with ongoing plans for continued enhancement.</p>
Owner	Chief Finance Officer & Corporate Planning Department
Status and target date	Complete: Target 2025/26
Governance area and principle linkage	<p>Principle: A</p> <p>Monitored via: Corporate Development Department input into Organisational Reassurance Board</p>

Commentary

The Force regularly publishes the following material via the the Publication Scheme [Accessing Information](#):

- Force Management Statement
- Annual Governance Statement
- Accounts
- Updated Policy reviews
- Gifts and hospitality information
- Business interests
- Misconduct hearing outcomes
- Complaints information
- FOI super responses

Alongside this, the [Governance and Processes](#) section of the website allows access to a variety of other public facing information:

- Code of Corporate Governance
- Chief Officer Assurance Statements
- Code of Ethics

To further deliver improved signposting and information relating to governance framework transparency the Force will continue to share Governance Structure information and quick access to the Annual Governance Statement via About Us once the final version is published – feedback and input from internal stakeholders, Independent Advisory Group members and HMICFRS force liaison will also be sought.

ACTION 03/24-25	BROUGHT FORWARD FROM 2023/24 REVIEW previous reference 05/23-24 COMPLETE
Action identified and objective	<p>Estates transformation strategy</p> <p>Risk identified: 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>Action: :Force to review, ensuring sufficient and appropriate governance measures in place with alignment to Transport strategy.</p> <p>Progress: A delivery plan is expected to be finalised and approved by early 2025.</p>
Owner	Estate Strategy Director
Status and target date	Complete: Target 2024/26
Governance area and principle linkage	<p>Principle: C</p> <p>Monitored via: Estates Accountability Board, specific Transformation Board and reported to the OPCC Estates Board</p>
<p>Commentary</p> <p>The Strategy setting out the Estate Transformation is completed and published on the PCCs website. The delivery plan for the strategy was also approved by the PCC on 28th January 2026.</p> <p>The estate transformation programme links in with other policy and strategy strands including (i) Environmental Sustainability (ii) Wellbeing and (iii) Operational Resilience. The delivery plan is now at RIBA 2 for all projects within the programme, moving into the start of the delivery phase.</p> <p>The key objectives of the programme will be to:▪ Strategic AI update – are current initiatives meeting business objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce our annual running costs per annum ▪ Reduce our capital liabilities over 10 year period ▪ Reduced our Carbon Emissions (on the journey to NET Zero by 2050) ▪ Reduce the size of our estate to better align with our operational needs ▪ Invest in the retained estate (within affordability limits) to improve our buildings to better support our people deliver the PDP ▪ Improve our efficiency in use of space <p>The programme will deliver over a phased period up to 2036 to ensure our operational resilience remains.</p>	

ACTION 04/24-25	COMPLETE
Action identified and objective	<p>Professional Standards Department (PSD) organisational learning and stakeholder engagement mechanisms.</p> <p>Risk identified: 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>Action: PSD organisational learning meeting to be implemented. Additional external stakeholder engagement is also to be arranged.</p> <p>Progress: 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>
Owner	Head of Professional Standards
Status and target date	Open: Target 2026
Governance area and principle linkage	<p>Principle: A</p> <p>Monitored via: Culture and Standards Board, and the PSD Performance Meeting</p>

Commentary

The Force now has a comprehensive process in place to capture, assess, action and monitor learning.

Through the Senior Management Team meeting, departmental team meetings and internal PSD communications, investigators have been reminded of the facility and expectation for learning to be recorded on Centurion, and to do so at the earliest opportunity.

In February 2025, to ensure governance and efficient allocation of learning, we established a PSD Organisational Learning meeting, which meets monthly and is chaired by the Head of PSD. There is a defined Terms of Reference for the meeting with a supporting process map. The meeting is attended by a cross section of PSD staff, and in addition to those in supervisory roles, is open to anyone in the department who wants to present learning (for example from an investigation). The meetings discuss learning identified from Investigations, Gold Groups, Court and Misconduct proceedings as well as any relevant publications such as the IOPC Learning the Lesson bulletins. The learning is discussed, and an appropriate division or department is identified for development. Each learning item is tracked for continued oversight and governance, as well as allowing auditing capabilities in future.

The meeting chair will determine when the learning is suitable for closure.

This process is now embedded, and the Force takes forward a new action around further developing this model to support the capture of learning across the Force with oversight and escalation into the Force Organisational Reassurance Board.

ACTION 05/24-25	COMPLETE
Action identified and objective	<p>Technology advancements and supporting structures.</p> <p>Risk identified: The force will have to consider how it evidences ethical considerations around data exploitation, particularly regarding Artificial Intelligence.</p> <p>Action: Implement the National Police Chief Council (NPCC) Artificial Intelligence (AI) Checklist to provide governance and assessment</p> <p>Progress: NPCC AI Ethics checklist incorporated into our governance and structure of relevant projects.</p>
Owner	Chief Operating Officer, Head of Corporate Development and Assistant Chief Constable for Specialist Crime Command and Forensics with support from LFR Project Director
Status and target date	Complete: Target 2025/26
Governance area and principle linkage	<p>Principle: A</p> <p>Monitored via: Strategic Planning Board, Force Performance Board and Portfolio Strategy Board</p>

Commentary

The force has stood up an AI Governance Board to ensure the we are able to actively leverage the value of AI to more effectively operate and protect the public by providing clear guardrails, policies and a secure structured environment that balances innovation with risk management and thereby builds the trust and confidence necessary for widespread adoption of AI at scale.

The Board has a standing Agenda which includes:

- Strategic AI update – are current initiatives meeting business objectives
- New project/use case proposals
- AI performance monitoring report(s) – KPIs and metrics for active AI models
- Risk management and compliance reviews – high priority AI risks, mitigation strategies, emerging threats, AI compliance audit findings
- Ethics, bias and transparency reviews – reports or concerns from public or staff, Force Ethics Committees, bias testing reviews
- Review of effectiveness of governance approach to AI The programme will deliver over a phased period up to 2036 to ensure our operational resilience remains.

The Force AI Policy is currently under review and will further align to the NPCC AI Covenant for Policing, and include the responsible AI Checklist, which will also be included as part of our AI Strategy going forwards.

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 2026 force Organisational Reassurance Board (ORB).
- Regular alignment meetings are held with the Office of the 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.
- The final AGS will be recommended for approval by the Chief Constable following accounts external audit completion.

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](#)
- [Policies publication scheme](#)
- [Gifts, hospitality, business interests and expenses](#)

Other useful links;

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

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

Framework sources

SCRUTINY

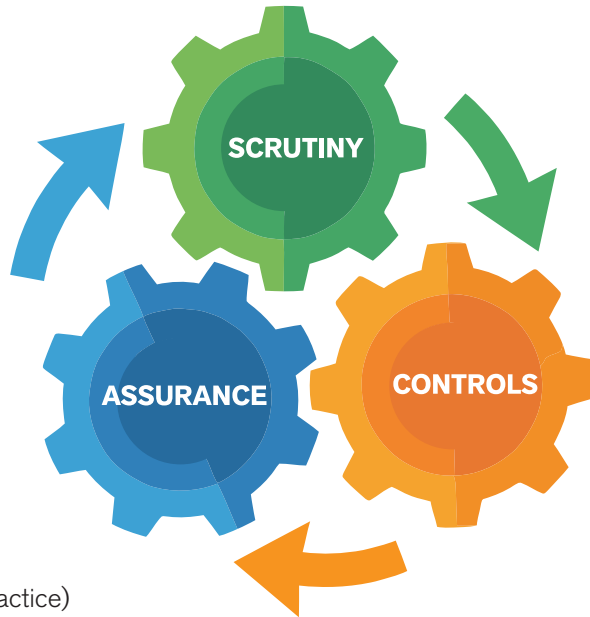
- Internal audit reports and actions
- External inspection recommendations
- Independent Advisory Groups, Scrutiny Panels and Ethics Committee contributions
- External audit reports and opinion
- Joint Audit Committee feedback and requests for information

ASSURANCE

- Organisational Reassurance Board
- Organisational Learning Board
- Annual governance review
- Accountability Meetings
- Chief Officer Assurance Statements
- Annual risk assurance review

CONTROLS

- Code of Corporate Governance
- Strategies
- Priorities Delivery Plan
- Policies Framework
- Codes / APPs (Authorised Professional Practice)
- Processes
- Training
- Change / Transformation



Conclusion on effectiveness and assurance

Overall assurance

The inclusion of governance actions within the Annual Governance Statement does not detract from the overall assessment of effectiveness. Taken together, the evidence reviewed demonstrates that governance arrangements during 2025/26 were adequate, effective, and fit for purpose, and that the Force has met its legal and statutory responsibilities. The actions identified reinforce the Force's commitment to maintaining strong governance foundations while recognising that governance arrangements must continually evolve to remain effective in a dynamic operating environment.

In summary

The Chief Internal Auditor concluded that the organisation's overall framework of governance, risk management, and internal control provides reasonable assurance, as referenced within the external assurance inputs set out in Section 2. This opinion, together with other sources of assurance considered as part of the review, supports the overall conclusion reached within this Statement. The arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

As would be expected in an organisation of this size and complexity, the review has identified a number of areas where there are opportunities to further enhance and strengthen governance arrangements. These areas have been detailed within the Future Improvements set out in Section 7. The Chief Constable and the Chief Officer leadership team are assured that appropriate plans are in place to monitor progress and to further embed effective governance practices. Progress against these actions will be subject to ongoing oversight and reported through the Force Organisational Reassurance Board and to the Joint Audit Committee.

The Chief Constable and her Chief Officer team remain fully committed to addressing the improvement actions identified, monitoring delivery, and continually strengthening governance arrangements. This commitment supports the Force's continued operation with integrity, transparency, and accountability, ensuring that it achieves its objectives and priorities and meets its statutory responsibilities, in line with the principles of CIPFA's Delivering Good Governance in Local Government framework and the seven principles of good governance set out by CIPFA/SOLACE (2016).



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