

OCTOBER 2025

EXECUTIVE & PRESENTING OFFICER:

STATUS: FOR INFORMATION

PURPOSE

This is a report covering the period of 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025 (6 months) and its purpose is to advise members of the number and types of civil and employment claims against the Force received during the period and the amount paid out for those claims finalised during the period. The report also includes the current legal activity for Cleveland, Evolve Legal Services and the continued development of the collaborated Legal Service.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 It is recommended that Members note the content of the report.

SUMMARY OF LEGAL SERVICES COLLABORATION

1.2 Evolve Legal Services (ELS) is a policing collaboration that delivers legal services on behalf of 6 corporations sole (the YNYCA/Commissioners and Chief Constables of North Yorkshire, Durham and Cleveland).

1.3 The service provides in-house legal advice and representation across a broad range of legal matters and has expertise in civil litigation, employment litigation and conduct, corporate, commercial and operational law.

1.4 The service has 66 permanent and temporary staff comprising barristers, solicitors, legal executives, paralegals and apprentices. 8 of these posts are currently vacant. The service is delivered out of three hubs located at Peterlee, Middlesbrough and Northallerton but legal staff are expected to work across all clients. All staff are equipped to work remotely.

1.5 The service records legal activity using the new case management system, Iken and more activity is being recorded, the focus will now be on improving accuracy. Reports are produced to manage trends in demand and skills gaps.

1.6 As of October 2025:

1.6.1 The teams are led by a professional head with a business and legal portfolio, each reporting to the Deputy Director of Evolve Legal Services. Each professional head has responsibility for the quality, costs and efficiency of the service delivery in their portfolio areas. Risk management is undertaken by each Head of Portfolio with the Director of Evolve Legal Services reporting to each executive on high-risk cases.

- 1.6.2 Costs are attributed to each corporation sole as a 'client' so that reporting on costs, forecasts and performance can be delivered to each client Chief Finance Officer.
- 1.6.3 Legal Services provides external legal services using the National Legal Services Framework (NLSF) and CLEP Framework which are nationally agreed fee structures for external law firms and Chambers. The NLSF has been renegotiated, and this has been adopted as of 31 May 2024. External legal fees are managed by individual lawyers who use the National Legal Services Framework and CLEP Framework to achieve the best value for money across a range of external legal providers. The CLEP framework is subject to periodic review with a 20% increase in hourly rates as from 1 January 2025. We instruct external law firms and Chambers to act on our behalf to provide the services in accordance with NLSF and CLEP Framework when required.
- 1.6.4 Financial, risk and corporate management of legal services are delivered between the Director and Heads of Portfolio and relevant statutory officers within the relevant Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioners and police forces. This is managed internally in compliance with the ELS governance and performance management arrangements. These arrangements preserve local, trusted relationships, specifically legal services provided direct to the Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables.
- 1.6.5 Legal work continues to be delivered across force boundaries. There continues to be a sustained increase in demand in all teams, notably I corporate work, conduct and civil orders.
- 1.6.6 Single processes have been designed by practitioners and are in place. ELS are now working to Lexcel accreditation and the introduction of the new case management system has enabled a key step forward in alignment and process improvements.

EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL STATISTICS

- 1.7 The summary below sets out the number of employment tribunal claims received and finalised within Cleveland including total spend on cases finalised.
- 1.7.1 3 Employment Tribunal claims received 01/04/2025 to 30/09/2025 (including ACAS early reconciliation matters).
- 1.7.2 No Employment Tribunal claims were finalised 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025.
- 1.7.3 Learning from employment matters is shared via a professional legal digest, the Knowledge Hub and via case outcomes for the specific clients.

Ongoing Employment Tribunals

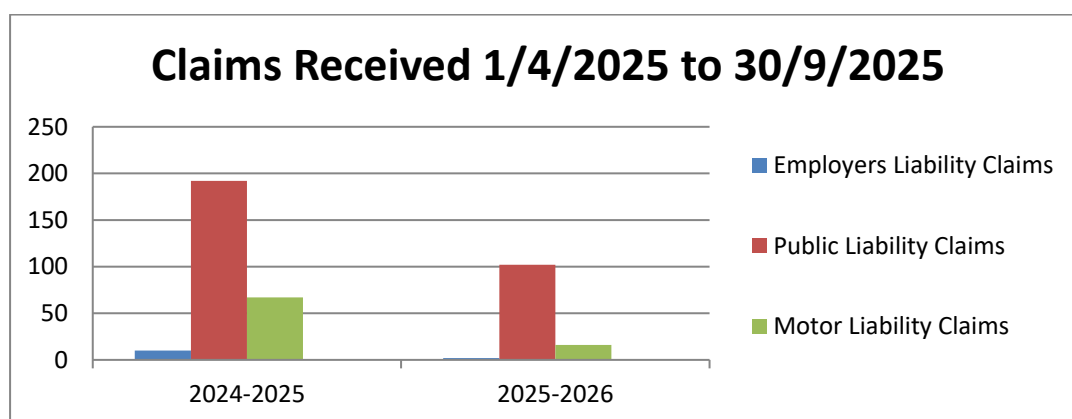
- 1.7.4 Evolve Employment Team are as whole dealing with 9 on-going Employment Tribunal Claims (claims that have progressed beyond early conciliation period) and one Employment Appeal

Tribunal Claim across the three forces (4 within Cleveland as of 28 October 2025). This is in comparison to the last report of May 2025, where we were dealing with 10 on-going Employment Tribunal Claims across the three forces (2 within Cleveland).

CIVIL CLAIM STATISTICS

Number & Types of Claims Received

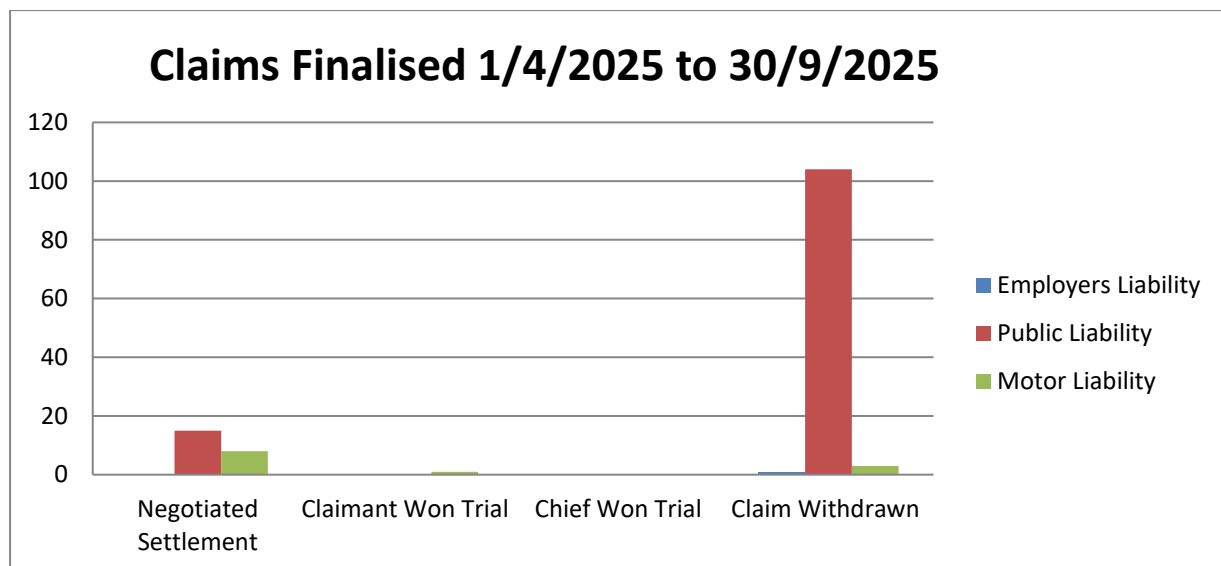
1.8 There were 120 claims received during the period 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025. During the financial year 2024/25 269 claims were received.



- 1.8.1 Please note that the public liability figures now include small claims, which were previously handled by Finance and relate to claims for damage to property following a forced entry, and low level property claims for damages to/loss of/destruction of property.
- 1.8.2 Evolve Legal Services have dealt with these claims since April 2023. These were not previously included in these reports or provided to insurers historically. However, to provide full claims experience they are now included.
- 1.8.3 Employers Liability claims are those made by Force employees and police officers following injuries sustained at work.
- 1.8.4 Public Liability claims include those made by members of the public who are accidentally injured or whose property is accidentally damaged / lost as a result of police activities. They also include those made by arrested persons alleging false imprisonment, assault, malicious prosecution, misfeasance and trespass to property. (This is not an exhaustive list.)
- 1.8.5 Motor Liability claims are those made by members of the public and police officers following damage and injuries sustained in road accidents involving a police vehicle.
- 1.8.6 The time limit for bringing claims involving injury is three years and, for those not involving injury, it is six years. The Court can sometimes extend the time limit.

Numbers of Claims Finalised & Results

1.9 During the period 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025 of the 132 cases finalised, 107 were successfully defended/withdrawn (81%).

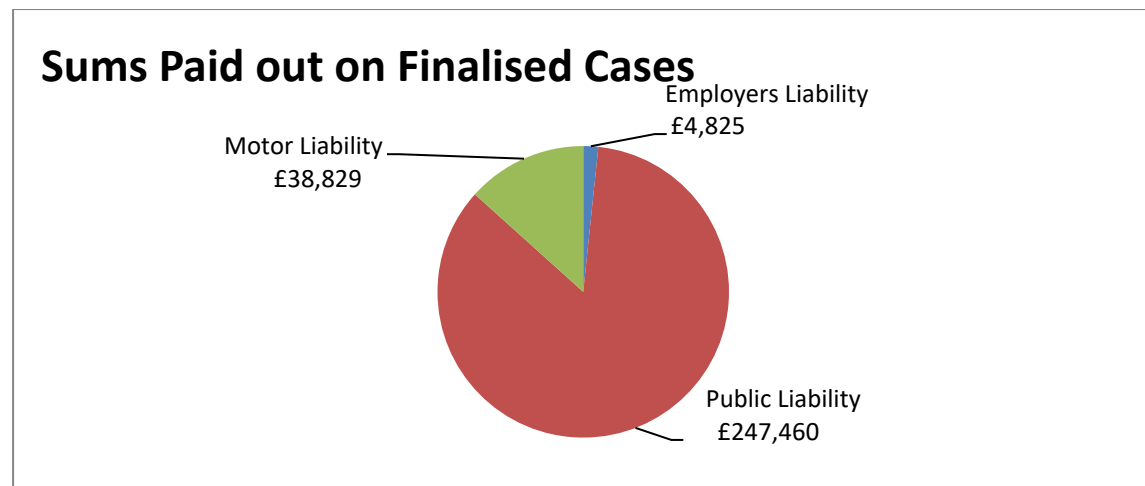


1.9.1 During the period, 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, 255 cases were finalised, and 167 were successfully defended/withdrawn (65%).

1.9.2 Feedback is provided on a case by case basis to ensure assistance is given in managing risks. For example, lessons learnt from motor claims can be referred to the Driver Standards Group and any claims arising from Custody are taken to Custody Management to cascade. Lessons learnt is also given to individual officers/staff; individual Departments or force wide through Executive leads, when necessary.

Sums paid out on Finalised Cases

1.10 The Chart below summarises the payments made on claims finalised during the period 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025.



Exception Reports

1.11 The Chief Constable previously agreed to provide the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) with an exception report following the settlement of a civil claim case which meets either of the following criteria:

- The case has been defended by the Force but has been lost at trial
- The amount payable in finalising the case is above the insurance 'excess' for that claim.

1.11.1 In addition, it was agreed that the exception reports submitted to the PCC would be appended to the Civil Claims report presented to the Audit Committee for their information. There are two exception reports for claims during this period.

Implications

Finance

1.12 In relation to insured risks, one of the claims finalised exceeded the 'excess.'

1.12.1 Although the sums paid out for insured risks outweigh the sums recovered, savings (in terms of potential damages) have been made in those cases successfully defended and savings (in terms of solicitor's costs) have been made by dealing with claims in-house.

Diversity & Equal Opportunities

1.13 There are no diversity or equal opportunities implications arising from the content of this report.

Human Rights Act

1.14 There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from the content of this report.

Sustainability

1.15 There are no sustainability implications arising from the content of this report.

Risk

- 1.16 There are reputational and financial risk implications arising from this report as clearly enforcing the law, i.e. exercising statutory powers to arrest, search, detain and prosecute, has inherent risks that should be mitigated against through effective training, review, risk management, 'lessons learned' activities and peer review/inspection.
- 1.16.1 The Force has detailed policy and procedures that govern and direct the activities of individuals in areas of risk i.e. police use of motor vehicles, detention in custody, the police use of force and our operational firearms response. In all these areas the regular review of litigation cases and other high profile operations takes place within policy forums to improve professional practice, led by respective chief officers.
- 1.16.2 Finally, our responsibility as an employer is also an area of litigation and cost where we seek to minimise risk and discharge our duties as a lawful, responsible and diligent employer.

Conclusions

- 1.17 Whilst Legal Services have no control over the number of claims received, feedback is provided on a case by case basis to ensure assistance is given to Service Units in managing risks. At the strategic level, the Force takes its 'risk' around civil litigation very seriously and works tirelessly to ensure that 'liability' is reduced wherever possible and that the 'lesson learnt' from finalised cases are integrated into operational and organisational planning and delivery.

Originator of report

Julie Shuttleworth and Michelle Phillips