



POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR CLEVELAND

Risk Management

Final report: 14.25/26

6 May 2026

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CONTENTS

Audit outcome overview 3

Summary of management actions 7

Appendices

Detailed findings and actions 9

Appendix A: Categorisation of findings 11

AUDIT OUTCOME OVERVIEW

In line with our scope, the overview of our findings is detailed below.

Background / Why we did the audit

We undertook a review of the Force's risk management arrangements and assessed how effectively these are aligned to the achievement of organisational priorities. As part of our audit, we examined the Force's risk management guidance and approach to risk identification, governance, use of the risk matrix, horizon scanning, the consideration of opportunities, risk escalation processes, and the operation of controls and assurances.

The Force has a Risk and Insurance Manager in place who is responsible for the overall governance of the risk management process throughout the organisation. Heads of Department appoint risk champions from within the Management Team. Risk champions report directly to the Risk and Insurance Manager and are responsible for the day-to-day management of their departmental level risks. Risk champions meet with the Force's Risk and Insurance Manager on a quarterly basis to provide updates on existing departmental risks and discuss any new/emerging risks that may affect the relevant department. Departmental risks are also regularly reviewed at Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meetings.

The risks identified are recorded at either the strategic level, in a strategic risk register or at an operational level, in departmental risk registers. Risks are assessed and plotted on a 5x5 risk scoring matrix in line with their relevant impact and likelihood. Following the rating process, the subsequent score allocated to the risk will determine where the risk sits within the matrix and the level of attention the risk required. The Force's current risk appetite puts strategic risks at a residual risk score of 12 or above.

We reviewed the most recent versions of the Force's operational and strategic risk registers.

Conclusion: Our review has found that the Force has well designed controls within the risk management process. As a result of our testing, we have identified findings which resulted in only one low priority action being agreed with management. The action is regarding gaps in recorded assurances, primarily due to the assurance recording process not yet being fully embedded following the transition to 4risk version 2, with the Risk and Insurance Manager now engaging with risk owners to address this. A number of well designed controls were identified throughout the audit, and compliance testing found good levels of adherence to the controls.

Internal audit opinion:



Minimal Assurance



Partial Assurance



Reasonable Assurance



Substantial Assurance

Taking account of the issues identified, the board can take substantial assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this risk are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective.

Audit themes: Our review identified the following issues resulting in the agreement of one low priority management action:

Assurances

We reviewed the Assurance Sources document within the risk guidance and confirmed that it defines 22 graded assurance sources, with requirements for their use and recording within the 4Risk system, which provides fields to document assurance details and ratings against each control. However, we identified gaps in recorded assurances, reflecting that assurance recording has not yet been fully embedded following the transition to 4Risk version 2, with the Risk and Insurance Manager now working with risk owners to address this. **Low**

Our review identified the following controls to be adequately designed and operating effectively:

Risk Management Strategy and Procedures

We obtained the Force's Risk Management Guidance and confirmed the procedure sets out the Force's approach to risk management. The risk guidance states that the Force's current risk appetite puts strategic risks at a residual risk score of 12 or above. We noted the guidance was last reviewed in January 2026 and next due for review January 2029. The Risk and Insurance Manager confirmed that upon the last review of the guidance, there were no material changes which warranted it being circulated for approval, so it was uploaded directly to SharePoint by the policy overseer. We obtained a screenshot of the Force SharePoint site to confirm the Risk Management Guidance is available to staff.

Risk Identification

Our review identified that the Risk and Insurance Manager undertakes baseline risk assessments with departments to understand objectives, controls, compliance obligations, and key risks. In addition, effective arrangements are in place to support periodic updates to the strategic risk register, with risk owners required to review and confirm the accuracy of their assigned risks ahead of reporting to the Joint Audit Committee (JAC). This included reviewing risk descriptions, controls, mitigations, scoring, and progress against agreed actions.

Risk Matrix

The Force has an approved risk matrix, which is documented within its Risk Management Guidance. Through review of the Force strategic risk register, we confirmed that for each risk, there was an assigned inherent, residual and target risk score. We confirmed this was in alignment with the Force risk matrix.

Horizon Scanning

As part of the wider risk management process, the Risk and Insurance Manager routinely undertakes horizon scanning activities. These are informed by local and national news, relevant literature and articles, and professional forums covering policing-related and wider socio-political developments. Additionally, through review of the report of the Chief Constable to the Chair and Members of the JAC from December 2024, June 2025 and December 2025, we confirmed horizon scanning is reported, including key areas of concern.

Opportunities

We identified that during discussion on baseline risk assessment, the Force Risk and Insurance Manager discusses opportunities. Through review of the risk descriptor document, we noted that it outlines that risks can be phrased as opportunities, rather than threats that need to be avoided and focus on opportunities when assessing the merits of different possible solutions.

Risk Registers

We obtained a copy of the most recent strategic risk register and confirmed there was 12 risks outlined. We also obtained a sample of four risk registers, Specialist Support and Matrix, Legal Services, Human Resources and IT. We confirmed there were eight risks. For all 18 risks we identified that risks had been updated, including risk owner, date risk last reviewed, risk scores in line with the risk matrix and mitigations.

Risk Escalation

We reviewed the Force's risk escalation process and confirmed that risks are scored and documented by Risk Champions, with those scoring above 12 escalated for ratification and, if approved, added to the Strategic Risk Register. Our review of Senior Leadership Team and Executive Management Board agendas and decision logs confirmed that risks are regularly reported and discussed, with strategic risks formally categorised based on residual risk scores of 12 or above.

Controls

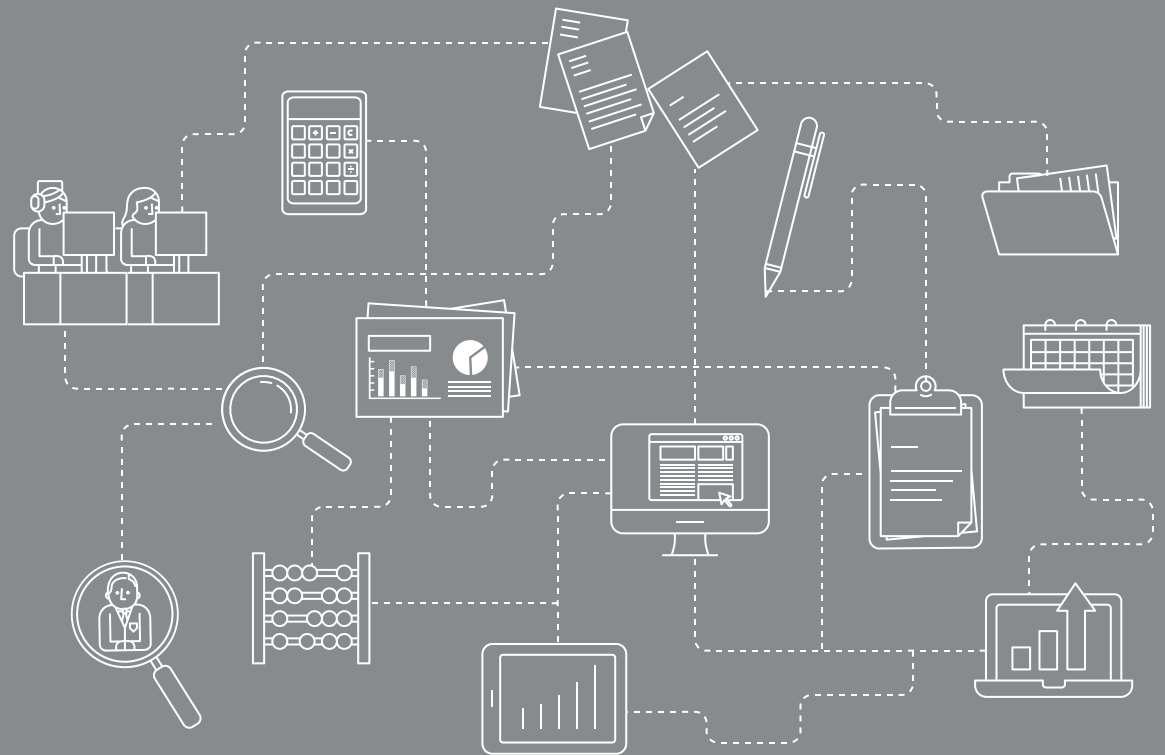
We selected a sample of three risks from the strategic risk register. We also obtained a sample of three risk registers, Specialist Support and Matrix, Legal Services, Human Resources and selected three risks across the departmental risk registers. For all six risks, we confirmed controls to manage risks had been documented, actions were assigned to nominated persons and a timescale for completion had been agreed.

Reporting

Across the JAC, Executive Management Board, SLT, national forums and the IMPACT Board, we confirmed that risk management is routinely reported, scrutinised and discussed through standing agenda items, risk registers, action and decision logs, and horizon scanning activity. We noted that attendance by the Risk and Insurance Manager at key governance forums, alongside structured escalation and monitoring arrangements, provides consistent oversight of strategic and operational risks at force, regional and national levels.

Summary of Actions for Management

01



SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The action priorities are defined as*:

High
Immediate management attention is necessary.

Medium
Timely management attention is necessary.

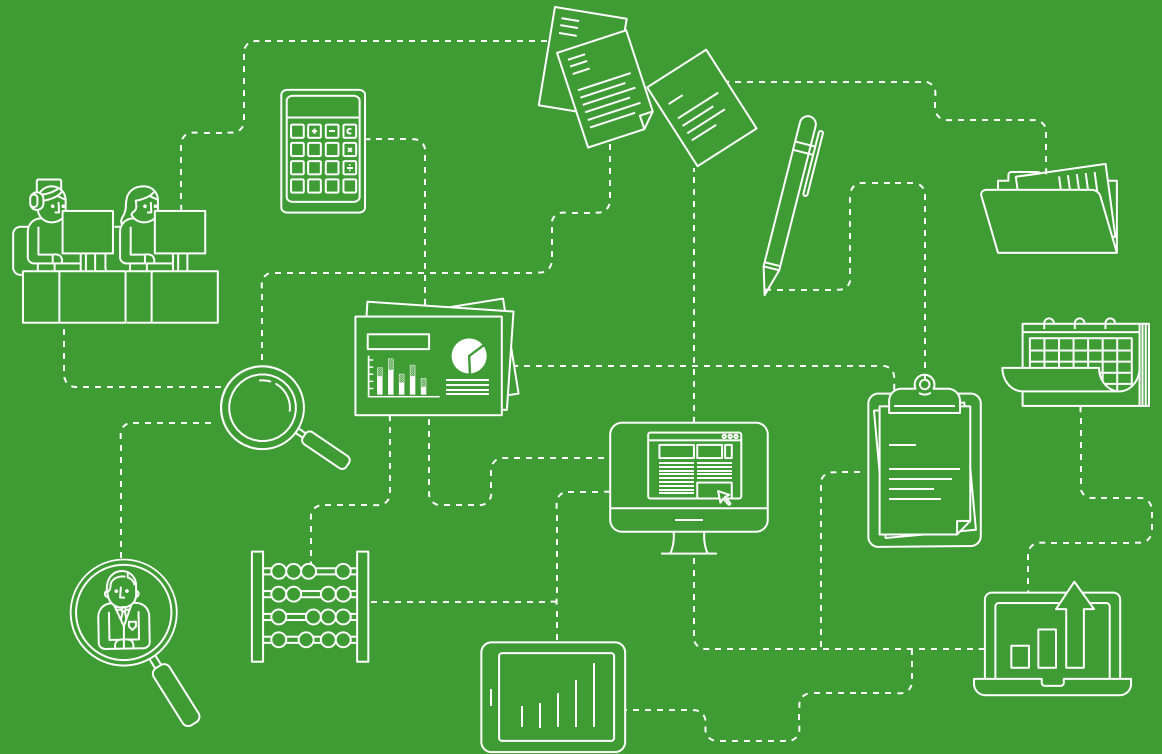
Low
There is scope for enhancing control or improving efficiency.

Ref	Action	Priority	Responsible Owner	Date
1	The Force will evaluate the method of documenting assurances to ensure an approach is adopted that enables assurances to be kept up to date. Once the evaluation is complete, this will be formally documented and communicated to relevant individuals.	Low	Risk and Insurance Manager	1 August 2026

* Refer to Appendix B for more detail

Detailed Findings and Actions

02



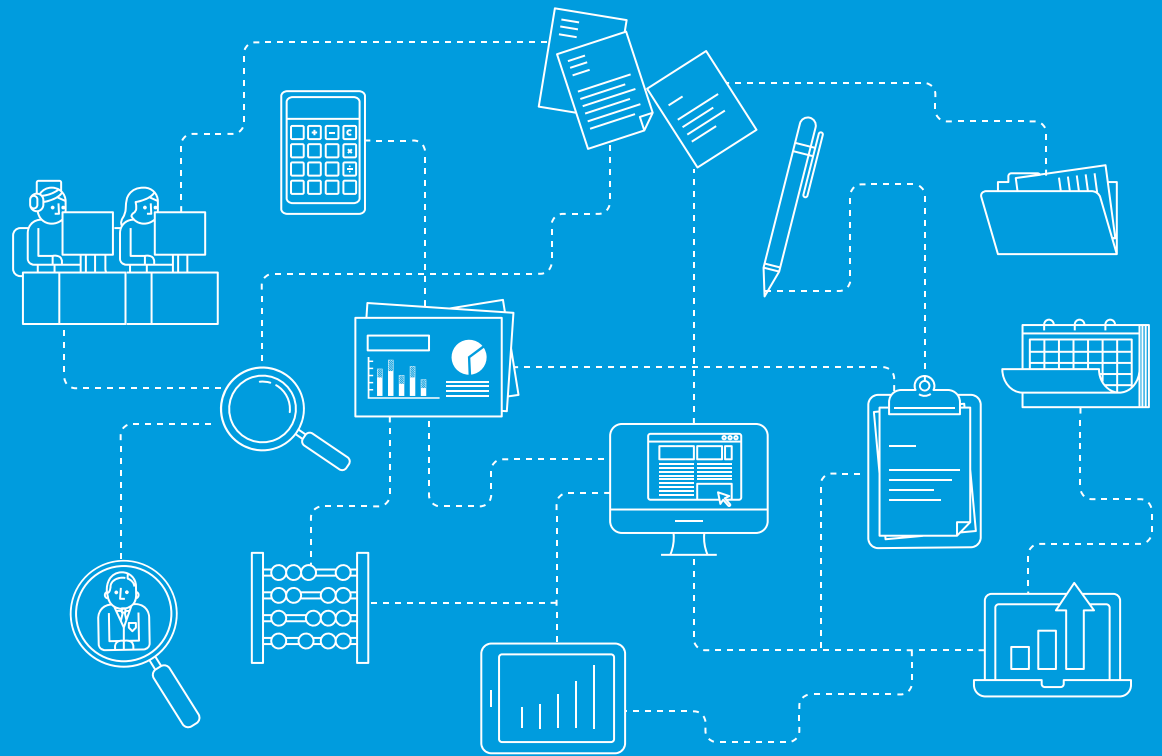
DETAILED FINDINGS AND ACTIONS

This report has been prepared by exception. Therefore, we have included in this section, only those areas of weakness in control or examples of lapses in control identified from our testing and not the outcome of all audit testing undertaken.

Area: Risk Management				
Control	Assurances and assurance gaps are documented within 4Risk.	Assessment:		
		Design		✓
		Compliance		×
Findings / Implications	We obtained the Assurance Sources document enclosed within appendix 5 of the risk guidance document. We confirmed that it records 22 assurance sources and states that the precise details of the assurance source should be considered and these are to be added in descriptive format, or documents can be uploaded onto the 4Risk Risk Management software system. We noted the assurances are listed by strength. From our review of the control assurance report generated by the 4Risk system, we confirmed that fields are available beside each control within the strategic risk register to the assurance title, a description of the assurance, and the last recorded assurance score. We noted assurance scores are categorised as substantial, adequate or limited. However, we noted that there were currently gaps in recorded assurances. This was discussed with the Risk and Insurance Manager, who confirmed that while risk owners had previously been asked to provide assurance against controls, this has not yet been fully implemented following the transition to version 2 of the 4risk software. As such, the bulk of the responsibility to update the assurances falls to the Risk and Insurance Manager, who has acknowledged this issue and is in the process of meeting with risk owners to ensure that assurances are properly recorded. To ensure a consistent approach is adopted going forward, the Force could evaluate the most effective way to record assurance sources, enabling risk owners to take responsibility for maintaining them whilst taking a proportional response to the volume of assurances.			
Management Action 1	The Force will evaluate the method of recording assurances to ensure an approach is adopted that ensures completeness of risk information per the Assurance Sources requirements. Once the evaluation is complete, this will be formally documented and communicated to relevant individuals.	Responsible Owner:	Date:	Priority:
		Risk and Insurance Manager	31 August 2026	Low

Appendices

03



APPENDIX A: CATEGORISATION OF FINDINGS

Categorisation of internal audit findings
Low There is scope for enhancing control or improving efficiency.
Medium Timely management attention is necessary. This is an internal control risk management issue that could lead to: Financial losses which could affect the effective function of a department, loss of controls or process being audited or possible reputational damage, negative publicity in local or regional media.
High Immediate management attention is necessary. This is a serious internal control or risk management issue that may lead to: Substantial losses, violation of corporate strategies, policies or values, reputational damage, negative publicity in national or international media or adverse regulatory impact, such as loss of operating licences or material fines.

The following table highlights the number and categories of management actions made as a result of this audit.

Area	Control design not effective*	Non-compliance with controls*	Agreed actions		
			Low	Medium	High
Risk Management (Force)	0 (9)	1 (9)	1	0	0
Total			1	0	0

* Shows the number of controls not adequately designed or not complied with. The number in brackets represents the total number of controls reviewed in this area.

Debrief held	2 April 2026
Draft report issued	9 April 2026
Revised draft report issued	30 April 2026
Responses received	6 May 2026
Final report issued	6 May 2026

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