

DRAFT NOTES - SCRUTINY MEETING (OUT OF COURT RESOLUTIONS - PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT ON REOFFENDING AND REHABILITATION) - 19 MAY 2026

Question	Brief Summary of Evidence	Decision of PCC
<p>1. What do the latest performance data and organisational insights show about changes in OoCR performance since September 2025, including the key factors behind these trends, which teams or districts are driving improvements, and what learning can be shared across the Force?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of Court Resolutions (OoCRs) refer to any crime finalised using one of the following outcomes (including all sub-categories): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Caution (Outcome 2) • Adult Caution (Outcome 3) • Taken Into Consideration (TIC) (Outcome 4) • Penalty Notices (Outcome 6) • Cannabis/KHAT Warnings (Outcome 7) • Community Resolution (Outcome 8) • Educational/diversionary intervention (Outcome 22) • In the 12 months to April 2026, 2,159 crimes were finalised via an OoCR (2.9%), representing a 39% increase (606 more resolutions) compared with the previous year. The highest performance level during this period was recorded in February 2026, when the rate rose to 4.4%. Last year, the OoCR rate was 1.4%. • For victim-based crime, OoCRs increased from 676 in 2025 to 826 in 2026. For non-victim-based crime, the number rose from 877 in 2025 to 1,333 in 2026. The largest increase was seen in drug offences, rising from 712 in 2025 to 1,062 in 2026. Taken together, these figures show totals rising from 1,553 in 2025 to 2,159 in 2026. • Community resolutions (Outcome 8) increased significantly, from 445 in 2025 to 1,172 in 2026. Although community resolutions have increased, educational/diversionary interventions have seen a slight decrease (from 931 in 2025 to 760 in 2026). This demonstrates a growing confidence in the use of Outcome 8, with officers increasingly assured that it provides a proportionate, timely and effective response for suitable cases. • The Force is making strong progress and is clearly moving in the right direction, underpinned by a significant cultural shift. • There has been substantial proactive activity around drug-related offences, with officers consistently identifying opportunities to intervene early, apply OoCRs, and direct individuals into support services. This increased focus has driven the significant rise in drug-related OoCRs and strengthened pathways into treatment through quicker, more effective referrals. • Arrest remains an important and well-used tactic within the Force. The Force ranks among the highest nationally for making arrests. However, this strength has also highlighted the need for a cultural shift and a significant amount of work has been undertaken to ensure officers increasingly recognise that arrest is not always the 	<p>Assured</p> <p><i>The PCC was assured by the evidence submitted by the Force and commended the substantial work undertaken to deliver an increase in OoCR rates. The PCC noted that performance is demonstrating a positive direction of travel, supported by a sustained focus on ethical, appropriate and proportionate use.</i></p> <p><i>The PCC will revisit this topic next year to ensure that progress is maintained and the positive trajectory continues.</i></p>

most effective or proportionate first choice. Continued work is underway to broaden officer mindset, emphasising the value and legitimacy of OoCRs and reinforcing that these outcomes can deliver swift, meaningful justice for victims while reducing unnecessary demand.

- The OoCR framework sets out clear criteria, including the specific offence types for which these outcomes are appropriate and the requirement for a clear, unambiguous admission of guilt. This ensures officers apply OoCRs consistently, lawfully and proportionately.
- In the 12 months to April 2026, all local policing areas recorded increases in OoCRs, with Hartlepool showing the largest rise - peaking at 6.0% in January 2026. Hartlepool response officers consistently achieved the highest rates, reaching 8.8% in January 2026, while the highest rate achieved by any team at that time was 14.9% (D Relief). Good practice identified in Hartlepool will be shared across the Force.
- The Force is making incremental progress, ensuring OoCR decision-making remains fair, proportionate, and ethical. Crime types and harm scores must be carefully considered when applying an OoCR.
- Cleveland continues to record the highest crime rates and the highest crime severity nationally, meaning there are limits to the extent to which the Force can further increase its use of OoCRs.
- The Force has undertaken a complete overhaul of its approach to driving the use of OoCRs, introducing streamlined processes and returning to traditional policing methods after a previous strong drive toward charge.
- A “go-to guide” has been introduced to support consistent decision-making.
- A more interactive training package has been launched, including several Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) led briefings, to strengthen officer knowledge and confidence.
- Cultural and behavioural issues are being addressed by emphasising the positive impact OoCRs can have on both victims and offenders.
- A range of supporting literature (including information booklets, information sheets and business cards) has been introduced to aid officer learning and reinforce key messages.
- QR codes have been introduced to allow officers to refer individuals to drug treatment services quickly, creating a direct referral mechanism. In October 2025, no OoCRs had been applied for drug possession. By April 2026, no drug possession offences were being finalised as No Further Action. Drug treatment services report frequent disengagement, and the Force is taking proactive steps to support re-engagement and sustained involvement.
- Scrutiny has increased, with daily monitoring via Power BI to ensure managers and senior leaders are alerted early to any decline in performance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force is actively seeking missed opportunities, with proactive reviews identifying cases where an OoCR could have been applied. These are directed to supervisors for learning and corrective action. • The highest and lowest performing teams and individuals are being identified. Hartlepool has emerged as a positive outlier, with its good practice informing wider organisational learning. • A Problem-Solving Plan for OoCR, developed using the OSARA methodology and presented at this year's Problem Solving Conference, reinforces the Force's focus on quality, rehabilitation and safeguarding. • Improvements are cyclical, continuous and sustainable, reflecting the Force's long-term commitment to embedding effective OoCR practice. • The Tactical Out of Court Resolutions Performance Group, chaired by the Chief Inspector of Prevention, feeds into both the Prevention Governance Group and the Crime Governance Group, chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable. OoCR performance is considered at every level of governance, from strategic to tactical. Use of OoCRs is monitored through local performance frameworks, with scrutiny and accountability applied at both team and individual levels. 	
<p>2. What evidence can the Force provide to demonstrate how changes in OoCR performance are affecting rehabilitation outcomes and reoffending rates?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force continues to monitor reoffending rates for people who complete the DIVERT scheme. The local reoffending rate is 11%, which is closely aligned with the national average of 12%. The national figure is based on the April 2026 reoffending rate for the April 2023 - March 2024 cohort and is measured two years after intervention. • Locally, the Force also collects 6 month and 12 month interim reoffending data to provide a more timely and detailed understanding of emerging trends. For the October 2024 - September 2025 cohort, the six-month reoffending rate was 3.8% in September 2025, rising slightly to 4.4% by April 2026. These local figures offer an up-to-date picture of reoffending trends and patterns ahead of national reporting cycles. • The Force is increasing the use of community resolutions for drug-related offences, referring individuals into treatment services. This approach has a strong academic evidence base demonstrating a positive impact on reducing reoffending. It is too early to assess the local impact of this approach, but the Force will continue to promote it proactively and will undertake a formal evaluation at a later stage. A recent example illustrates this approach in practice: on 24/04/2026, a response unit in Hartlepool attended a disturbance in a town-centre flat. Several individuals were detained and searched, and one was found in possession of a small quantity of drugs. They were interviewed under caution via body-worn video, admitted the offence, and were dealt with by community resolution, including a referral to drug services. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reoffending rates can be influenced by a range of external variables, and the Force currently has access only to quantitative outcome data. To fully understand the impact on reoffending, a commissioned research project or independent evaluation would be required. 	
<p>3. What evidence assures the PCC that recent changes in the use of OoCRs since September 2025 are appropriate, ethical, victim-centred, and linked to improved rehabilitation and reduced reoffending?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ethical use of OoCRs is embedded throughout the Force’s new training offer and all supporting materials. This ensures officers remain focused on the positive impact these outcomes can have for both victims and offenders, including the provision of support aimed at preventing re-offending. The Force’s messaging provides clear direction to avoid creating a performance-driven culture, i.e. hitting the target but missing the point. • Although funding for RedSnapper ended in March 2026, the benefits of the approach are widely recognised. The Force has introduced an ‘offender pays’ model, supported by a hardship fund for individuals where cost may be a barrier. While this provides an alternative route to issuing a community resolution, the options previously available through RedSnapper were highly victim-centred. The full impact of this change is yet to be realised. • The Force acknowledges that further work is required to maximise the use of OoCRs for victim-based crime. The Force is applying the learning and successful approaches used in non-victim-based crime to strengthen its performance and outcomes in this area. 	
<p>4. What do dip-sampling or audit findings show about decision-making quality, victim engagement, and intervention suitability?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions around the appropriate use of OoCRs are now firmly embedded within the Force’s local performance frameworks. These conversations reinforce accountability, help identify barriers to effective use, and highlight examples of good practice and innovation across teams. • Internal audit activity continues to demonstrate significant improvements in the appropriate application of OoCRs. A recent audit reported 90% compliance for Outcome 22, compared with 95% compliance across other OoCRs. Outcome 22 has shown steady improvement over time, increasing from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 52% in March 2025 • 78% in June 2025 • 90% in April 2026 • This trend demonstrates that the work undertaken by the Force has led to sustained and measurable improvement. • The Force is also working with the OPCC on the re-launch of an OoCR Scrutiny Panel. This will provide an additional layer of scrutiny and quality assurance, as well as a further opportunity to identify ‘what works’ and capture organisational learning. • In February 2026, the Force underwent an independent audit of its use of OoCRs conducted by RMS, with a draft report and provisional grading received in early 	

	<p>March. The draft conclusion found that Cleveland Police has a clear and well-established process for the use of OoCRs, supported by training, reporting mechanisms and a formal policy, with sample testing of community resolutions and youth OoCRs showing no instances of non-compliance. The auditors issued a Reasonable Assurance rating with two management actions. Once finalised, the report will be submitted to the internal GAIN Board for sign-off and allocation of actions before being presented to the Joint Audit Committee in September.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This external challenge, combined with internal performance frameworks, ensures the Force’s improvement activity remains focused in the right place and on the right things. 	
<p>5. What evidence shows how victims currently feel supported and informed about the use of OoCRs, including any changes since September 2025?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victim engagement is key when considering the use of an OoCR. Ensuring that victims feel supported, heard and meaningfully involved is essential to delivering a real-value victim contact approach. This includes actively listening to victim voices, understanding the impact of harm, and shaping outcomes that reflect what victims say matters most to them. • Dedicated police officers within the OoCR team continue to contact every victim where the offender has been dealt with through the DIVERT team. This consistent contact ensures victims feel supported and heard throughout the process. • The Force recognises the importance of Restorative Justice, acknowledging that many victims value opportunities for explanation, accountability and meaningful steps to repair the harm caused. The Force has developed strong, positive relationships with Restorative Justice and other partners to further enhance victim engagement and ensure their voices shape appropriate outcomes. • This includes promoting the use of OoCRs and restorative approaches amongst Care Workers in Roseberry Park. This work is now being expanded into the custody environment and across the retail sector, where challenging interactions and low-level incidents occur. By embedding restorative options in these settings, the Force aims to strengthen victim confidence while ensuring proportionate, constructive responses to offending behaviour. • Diversionary schemes, structured interventions and referral pathways piloted in Hartlepool are now being rolled out across the Force, demonstrating a clear focus on addressing offending behaviour. This provides reassurance to victims that meaningful action is being taken, while ensuring offenders are dealt with proportionately and effectively. 	
<p>6. What activity does the Force undertake to promote victim support and strengthen victim</p>	<p><u>Please refer to the information provided in response to Question 5 above.</u></p>	

confidence in the use of OoCRs?		
<p>7. What process or framework governs the repeated use of OoCRs and what safeguards prevent repeated use when earlier OoCRs have not reduced reoffending or achieved the intended rehabilitative impact?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force continues to adopt a problem-solving approach as it works to further improve the use of OoCRs, ensuring they are applied appropriately, proportionately and in line with local crime profiles. This includes recognising the complexities of dual cognisance offences, where careful consideration is required to ensure the right outcome is reached for both victims and offenders. • Following a review of the findings from the Independent Review of Criminal Courts (2025) by Lord Leveson, changes have been made to the Force’s local OoCR policy. In Cleveland, an offender can now receive an OoCR up to five times a year, reflecting the findings of the national Sentencing Review and the current drive to maximise the use of OoCRs where they provide a credible alternative to formal court proceedings. This decision ensures that positive, structured alternatives remain available for low-level offences, particularly where there is limited likelihood of securing a charge or where a caution is not appropriate. • The use of multiple OoCRs is promoted as a constructive alternative to ‘no further action’, but officers must still ensure that decisions are well-managed and based on a full understanding of an individual’s offending history. This includes checking for repeat behaviour, ensuring the right people are considered for diversion, and maintaining a careful balance between rehabilitation opportunities and the need for accountability. • The application of OoCRs is monitored through local performance frameworks, with scrutiny and accountability conversations taking place at both team and individual level. This ensures consistent decision-making, supports professional judgement, and maintains public confidence in the appropriate use of OoCRs. 	
<p>8. What risks could affect the sustainability of recent improvements, including cultural or operational barriers to effective rehabilitation and reduced reoffending, and how are these risks being identified and mitigated?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force continues to adopt a problem-solving approach as it aims to further improve the use of OoCRs, ensuring decisions remain proportionate, evidence-based and aligned with local demand. For example, April saw a drop in the use of OoCRs linked to a fall in the number of stop searches carried out and the number of drug-related offences recorded. Early identification of this trend through the OoCR Governance Group has enabled timely challenge, and remedial actions are now being developed. • As the Force moves towards the summer months, when demand increases and crime levels can rise disproportionately, there is a recognised risk that officers become more reactive, potentially impacting the high levels of performance achieved in February and March. This risk is being actively managed through Operation IVY. • The summer period often stretches capacity, requiring a more agile approach to resource deployment. Without this, the Force would face significant criticism if response times and call-handling performance were to deteriorate. Maintaining a 	

	<p>balanced approach is therefore essential, ensuring OoCRs continue to be used appropriately while still meeting frontline demand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support continuous improvement, the Force continues to horizon-scan and learn from high-performing forces to ensure its improvement activity remains focused on the right areas. • Whilst stronger governance and performance oversight have been introduced, the key to maintaining momentum is the Force's ability to identify and remove inhibitors, understand what works, and continue to progress cultural change and behaviours. A second staff survey on the use of OoCRs will be launched later this month to identify the key barriers, enablers and behaviours that affect the effective use of OoCRs. 	
<p>9. What are the next steps to strengthen OoCR practice, particularly in improving rehabilitation outcomes and reducing reoffending, and what milestones or indicators should the PCC expect over the next six months?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the Force has not set a formal performance improvement target, its aim is to achieve an OoCR rate of around 5%. This benchmark, aligned with the national average, will help the Force monitor progress and ensure that improvement happens incrementally, in the right way and for the right reasons. The Force's focus remains on embedding a problem-solving approach so that improvements are sustainable rather than short-term or reactive. • The Force will continue to monitor and review the use of OoCRs to ensure they are applied appropriately and consistently, with high levels of compliance providing reassurance that the balance is right. This includes drawing on findings from audits and internal scrutiny to maintain confidence in the Force's processes. • Work will continue to standardise the approach across the Force, learning from what works and identifying opportunities for further improvement, particularly in relation to victim-based crime, where use of OoCRs can increase. • The Force will progress and promote the use of Community Remedy, ensuring it sits hand-in-hand with the wider OoCR approach, and explore options for introducing a more systematic method of capturing victim feedback. • Collaboration remains central to the Force's progress. The Force will continue to work with partners to explore all appropriate opportunities for the use of OoCRs, including those that extend beyond policing, recognising the potential for wider community outcomes and the role of collaborative funding opportunities in supporting this work. • Finally, work will continue to develop and refine Force policy and its application in light of the Sentencing Review and its implications, including ongoing work with the OPCC in relation to DIVERT Plus. 	

Action

1.	That the PCC revisits the topic of Out of Court Resolutions (OoCR) next year to ensure that progress is maintained and the positive trajectory continues.
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