Cleveland Joint Audit Meeting Record – OPEN SESSION

Date: Monday 29 June 2026

Time: 10:00 – 12:30

Venue: PCC Meeting Room, CPHQ, Cliffland Way, Hemlington, TS8 9GL and MS Teams

Meeting Attendance:

Committee Members
Stuart Green – Chair (SG)
Elizabeth Hall – Vice Chair (EH)
Catherine Dillon-Goodier (CDG)
David Chefneux (DC)
Jon Carling (JC)

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	
Lisa Oldroyd (LO)	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer
Michael Porter (MP)	Chief Finance Officer
Rob Cooney (RC)	Senior Business Support Officer
Elise Pout (EP)	Head of Standards, Scrutiny & Accountability

Cleveland Police	
David Felton (DF)	Deputy Chief Constable
Michelle Phillips (MPH)	Head of Civil Litigation
Nick Sutton (NS)	Health and Safety Manager
Gill Currie (GC)	HMIC/Governance Officer
Tara Holford (TH)	Business Transformation Manager
Graham Carter (GC)	Resourcing & Planning Sergeant

Internal Auditors – RSM:	
Matthew Stacey (MS)	Managing Consultant
Daniel Harris (DH)	Senior Manager - Public and Social Sector Audit

External Auditors – Forvis Mazars:	
Cath Andrew (CA)	Senior Manager
Mark Kirkham (MK)	Partner

Apologies:

Ian Wright	Assistant Chief Officer Enabling Services

Agenda Item:	Discussion / Action:	Action Owner:
1.	**Apologies for absence:** Ian Wright, Assistant Chief Officer Enabling Services	
2.	**Welcome and Introductions:** SG opened the meeting and welcomed members.	
3.	**Declarations of interests:** None raised.	
4.	**Open Minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th June 2025.** The Committee were happy that the minutes were a reasonable and accurate record. Minutes approved.	
5.	**Review of Action Log:** Action log reviewed and relevant updates added, this will be circulated alongside the minutes to members.	
6.	**Annual Health and Safety Report 2025/26:** NS report to Committee Members, highlighting statutory responsibilities under health and safety legislation, and the role he plays as the competent health and safety adviser. Health and safety matters are considered through established management structures, with regular updates provided to the monthly Senior Leadership Meeting, where health and safety is a standing agenda item. The majority of issues are addressed and resolved at this level; however, where matters remain unresolved or require strategic oversight, clear escalation routes are in place to the Executive Management Board. NS provides quarterly health and safety updates to the Board and attends meetings as required. NS outlined that safety risks within Cleveland Police result in nearly 400 injuries each year, the majority relating to violence at work, such as officers being injured when dealing with	

	violent offenders. Other risks include slips, trips, and falls, and injuries sustained while pursuing suspects. When police related injuries are excluded, the risk to the general workforce is comparatively low. All incidents are recorded via an incident reporting system. Reports are submitted to line managers, who are responsible for investigating them. More serious incidents are escalated to NS, and where applicable, must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR. NS monitors all reports and determines which cases require submission to the HSE. It was noted that CP is moving in the right direction regarding Health and Safety. The figures reflect an increased ability and willingness to report incidents, as well as improved awareness. Although the numbers appear high, this is largely attributable to better reporting practices. RIDDOR reportable incidents represent the most significant area of risk, though levels have remained stable in recent years. Overall incident rates have reduced slightly over the past few years. A new metric, non-injury assaults, including verbal abuse, is also being tracked, with 57 such incidents recorded last year out of 460 assaults, a significant proportion of which were categorised as abuse. CDG queried the statement that the risk of serious injury remains unchanged, asking what actions are being taken to investigate and reduce injuries. DF referenced Operation Hampshire, which includes robust scrutiny of incidents involving assaults on officers, including those involving racial abuse. All reported offences against officers are subject to a seven point plan to ensure they are treated as victims. DF confirmed there is an ongoing plan to reduce risk, with oversight provided through the Tactical Planning Group and the Strategic Workforce Planning Group. Updates on officer injuries and wellbeing are regularly reviewed. SG raised questions regarding changes to personal safety training. DF clarified that the College of Policing has offered forces a pilot approach, whereby training may be delivered over several days every other year, rather than annually. During the transition, some officers are not currently accredited; this is being managed through a gold group with associated risks being assessed. SG asked for reassurance that officer confidence will be maintained as a result of these changes. DF agreed to provide a written update and will bring a further report to the September meeting.	

	ACTION: DF to bring a written update to the September meeting around officer confidence following changes to the personal safety training programme. DC raised concerns regarding paragraph seven of the report, relating to the Cleveland Fire Brigade peer review. Of nine red rated issues identified, only one has been resolved, alongside 14 amber related issues. NS explained that the review focused on management structure rather than the day to day running of health and safety. Many recommendations were resource dependent and form part of a five year improvement plan, with progress being made as quickly as possible. Initially, NS worked alone but now has additional support, and the appropriate structure is in place. It was acknowledged that, if completed, the improvements identified would bring CP to a very high standard. DF added that following the recruitment of the Head of People Services, Cleveland Fire Brigade was asked to conduct the peer review, applying their own, more stringent standards, which is reflected in the findings. It was noted that the report wording does not fully reflect this context. An action was agreed for the force to provide a short briefing document to clarify this at the next meeting. **Action: The Force will provide a report to the next meeting clarifying the scope of Cleveland Fire Brigade Health and Safety Peer Review, together with an update on the actions taken and progress made in implementing the review's recommendations.** Members noted the Annual Health and Safety Report 2025/26.	**DF** **DF**
7.	**External Audit Progress Report.** CA advised that progress is being made. Nothing has changed as far as the plan for this year's audit is concerned. No questions from members, progress report noted.	
8	**Internal Audit** **8a – Risk Management Audit** The Committee received the Internal Audit report on the Force's risk management arrangements. Members noted that the audit found the Force's risk management framework to be well established, with clear governance arrangements,	

	effective controls, and good levels of compliance. Overall, substantial assurance was given, with no significant issues identified and one low level issue noted. Members noted the report. **8b - Follow Up of Previous Internal Audit Management Actions** Members received the Internal Audit Follow-Up Report, which assessed progress against agreed management actions arising from eight previous audits covering operational, financial, IT, HR, business continuity and data management processes. MS noted that nine actions are covered in the report and that good progress has been made. One action is partially implemented and is considered low risk, demonstrating a positive direction of travel. MS also highlighted the importance of a follow up audit to close the cycle, ensuring that agreed actions are acknowledged and implemented by management. Members noted the report. **8c - Out of Court Resolutions Audit.** Members received the Internal Audit report on the Force's management and use of Out of Court Resolutions (OoCRs), which examined governance arrangements, policy compliance, approval processes, monitoring arrangements and quality assurance activity. The review included sample testing of Community Resolutions, the DIVERT scheme, cautions and youth OoCRs. The audit found that clear processes were in place and operating effectively, supported by policies, training and monitoring arrangements. A gap was identified in relation to external scrutiny arrangements, with the Out of Court Disposal Scrutiny Panel having not met since early 2025. Members noted, however, that a panel meeting had been scheduled for later in the month and that work to address this recommendation was already underway. MS highlighted that changes had been made to the relevant policy since 2024, some of which were implemented during the audit period. Whilst the audit identified one high-priority and one medium-priority action, overall assurance remained reasonable, with no significant control weaknesses identified.	

	DF provided further context, advising that substantial scrutiny of OoCRs already takes place within the Force and noting that the matter had also been discussed at the PCC scrutiny meeting in May. Members were informed that the scrutiny panel was due to recommence shortly and that the policy had been updated within the previous month, with significant progress having been made since completion of the audit. In response to a question from SG regarding the necessity of the scrutiny panel, DF confirmed that while such panels are not a legal requirement, they are recognised as good practice, enhancing transparency and independent oversight. It was noted that this is particularly important in relation to Out of Court Resolutions due to the ethical considerations associated with their use. Members noted the report. **RSM Progress Report:** Members received an update on progress against the Internal Audit Plans for 2025/26 and 2026/27. DH referred to the Cleveland Police AGS paper (agenda item 13) and noted that, on page 34, there is a reference to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. This has now changed to the Global Internal Audit Standards, and the report will need to be updated accordingly. **ACTION: IW to update Cleveland Police AGS paper to reflect the correct name of the internal audit standards.** DH reported that four final reports have been issued since the last meeting in respect of the 2025/26 plan. One report remains in draft, with comments received, and a meeting will be arranged to discuss these. The 2025/26 programme is now complete, with Appendix C of the progress report noting one review on contract management that has been deferred to the 2026/27 plan. Finalisation of the draft report will not affect the opinions set out in the previous paper. In relation to the 2026/27 plan, one report is currently in draft, and two reviews are in progress, with one of these now also at draft stage. Overall, good progress is being made against the current year's plan.	**IW**

	DH highlighted the reference to the External Quality Assessment, within Appendix C. This is a requirement under the contract to ensure compliance with audit standards. The methodology must be reviewed every five years, and this section outlines the approach taken by RSM. Rather than undertaking individual EQA's for each client, RSM are adopting a methodology based review approach for organisations and multiple providers, whereby a single review of the methodology is undertaken and reported back to clients. EH asked whether the 2026/27 plan will be completed on time. DH confirmed that it has started well and raised no concerns, noting only a minor change to the sickness absence audit, with sufficient resources in place to manage this. EH also noted that she and JC had undertaken an FOI review and suggested that, given previous discussion around data protection, it may be beneficial to include a data protection audit in the current or next year's plan. DH noted this and confirmed that RSM will meet with IW and MP at the mid-year point, where this can be considered further. JC added that one or two issues had been identified and that a data protection audit had previously been included in the audit plan but was removed due to reprioritisation. There may therefore be a case for its reintroduction. MS advised that this area was last reviewed in 2024/25 and is currently scheduled for 2027/28 but would be open to discussions about bringing this forward if required. It was agreed that a further discussion between Internal Audit and management will take place at the appropriate time. Members noted the report. **RSM Draft Annual Report:** DH noted that the layout of the report remains unchanged. The report includes the year end opinions as of 31st March 2026 for both the OPCC and CP. Pages 3 and 4 set out the opinions, which are positive overall. The graphic in the report illustrates that, of the four possible opinion levels, two are positive and two negatives: however, the highest audit opinion is rarely issued due to the risk-based nature of the audit programmes. Section 2 summarises the work undertaken, with one draft report still to follow. Of the completed work, one review received partial assurance, four reasonable assurance, and six substantial assurances. Two advisory reviews also	

	resulted in actions being identified. Good progress has been made in implementing these actions. Positive feedback was also noted in relation to organisational culture and engagement with RSM, including the timely provision of information to support reviews. DH highlighted that section 3.2 references an additional engagement with CP regarding risk software, confirming that there is no conflict. Section 3.3 confirms compliance with the Global Internal Audit Standards, which has been undertaken by RSM. The final appendix provides a summary of all reviews completed and the associated actions agreed. DC commented that the report is encouraging, which was supported by SG, noting a positive and consistent direction of travel from the previous Chief Constable to the current. SG referred to page 12, under 'wider value added', and queried how the organisation can continue to maximise value from internal audit resources and ensure focus remains on the correct areas. DH advised that RSM will continue to develop its use of analytics and AI to enhance audit testing, allowing for broader assurance across larger datasets rather than smaller samples. RSM will also continue to provide client briefings to highlight emerging risks both within and beyond policing. DH confirmed that, at the request of IW and MP, an on-site presence will continue for certain audits where this is beneficial. MS added that the audit plan maintains a strong focus on risk, including macro risks identified through horizon scanning, balanced alongside coverage of key financial controls and major change programmes, which inherently carry higher risk. RSM remains flexible in adapting its approach to provide assurance in the most appropriate areas and acts as both an internal auditor and a strategic adviser. MP emphasised the importance of maintaining an open and mature approach to audit, noting that the organisation should not avoid areas of concern and must recognise that not all aspects will always be perfect. The current approach has been effective, with a clear willingness to address any issues as they arise. Members noted the report. **Emergency Services News Briefing June 2026:**	

	DH advised that this report provides a summary of the latest issues relevant to the sector and highlights a number of potential questions which Members may wish to consider. DC referred to page 7, noting that the pensions opt out rate is recorded as 10%, and queried whether there is any information specific to Cleveland to explain this. DC raised concern that this may indicate individuals are reducing pension contributions and queried whether this may be an awareness issue. DF responded that detailed information is not currently available; however, the opt out rate locally is understood to be higher than the national average, with the underlying reasons unclear. DF added that, for new recruits and existing staff, financial planning and resilience are emphasised. This is considered an issue both for individuals and at a regional level. MP noted that similar trends are being observed elsewhere, including in North Yorkshire, where opt out rates are also high. MP highlighted that the auto enrolment process re enrols individuals into the scheme periodically, after which they may choose to opt out again. It was also noted that the contribution rate of 13.8% may lead some individuals to focus on short term financial pressures rather than longer term benefits. CDG raised a further query regarding how the Force monitors and assesses the local impact of significant national policing incidents, referring to recent events in Southport and Southampton. DF advised that the Force has established oversight and monitoring arrangements in place, including community tension monitoring processes and appropriate command structures, to assess potential local impacts and coordinate any necessary response. Members noted the report. **RSM Emerging Risk Radar Spring 2026:** It was noted that both Members and Officers can use this report to support effective check and challenge, for example in relation to how AI governance is being rolled out and whether appropriate governance arrangements are in place. The report includes general considerations and references to surveys and related work. DC referred to section 4.4 on disinformation on social media, noting that this is an increasing concern and queried the scale of the issue. DF confirmed that this is a significant challenge	

	within policing. There is an NPCC lead for this area, and within the force the Head of Communications leads on a dedicated plan, providing weekly updates on social media monitoring. This activity is undertaken daily following incidents, enabling the force to respond proactively and manage outcomes. It was also noted that intelligence functions and Corporate Communications operate within a national framework, and that strong links exist within local media. Additional work is carried out to identify and address problematic social media content. DF advised that following major incidents, regular updates are issued, including learning for Forces to implement changes. This includes thematic inspections for HMICFRS, such as that undertaken in relation to the Southport enquiry, covering areas such as knife crime, reporting and wellbeing. Learning from such enquiries are applied locally within Cleveland. Oversight is maintained through existing governance arrangements, with DF chairing a monthly governance and assurance board. JC raised the use of AI within Cleveland. DF advised that initial work began in December/January, with action previously taking place in smaller areas. A Force Automation Board has now been established, with a programme of work to monitor the use of AI across the force. This is chaired monthly by DF. Work is ongoing and linked to the national police AI programme, funded by the Home Office, with a secondee at Superintendent level supporting this work. DF further noted that the force is working with Microsoft to explore integration with the NICHE platform. An event for approximately 90 police senior leaders is being held in Middlesbrough on 30.6 also, at which DF will present an overview of the Force's approach to AI. In response to a query from JC regarding the use of AI to generate intelligence, DF referenced a case in the West Midlands where AI had been used to produce a threat assessment. DF emphasised that, whilst such tools may be utilised, a human element remains essential to ensure appropriate due diligence and oversight. Members noted the report. **External Quality Assessment:** Report noted by members.	

9.	**9a - Cleveland Police Internal Audit Recommendations Tracker:** GC provided a summary, noting that the age profile of actions is similar, with many having been closed over the past 12 to 18 months. A number of actions remain open but are now at a stage where no further formal conclusion is required and are being managed as business as usual. GC advised that actions are being progressed to a point where evidenced change can be demonstrated before being presented for closure. Several actions are now ready for closure, with some due to be included in the August follow up audit. Overall, good progress is being made. Members noted the report and the progress that had been made. **9b - OPCC Internal Audit Recommendations Progress Report:** MP advised that all agreed actions had been completed. One action remains subject to ongoing monitoring, with an additional oversight mechanism introduced through the Senior Management Team (SMT) for additional assurance. Members noted the report and the progress that had been made.	
10.	**Code of Corporate Governance Update:** TH provided an update on the Code of Corporate Governance. It was noted that the framework is reviewed annually and updated to reflect changes in legislation and developments within the force. The review is undertaken in conjunction with Procurement and Finance, with amendments presented in the form of a table. It was noted that there are very few amendments this year. The update was submitted for noting and will be published on both the force and PCC websites. The members noted the report and proposed changes.	
11.	**2025/26 Budget Monitoring Outturn Report:** MP advised that this report had previously been considered by the PCC in June at the Joint Strategic Board. The report	

	reviews financial data and risk, providing members with a clear overview of financial activity within the organisation. It represents the closure of the financial reports for the year and informs the preparation of the Statement of Accounts. A small underspend of £476k was reported for the year, which has been transferred to reserves. A key area of focus remains the reserves. There was also a £1.5m underspend on the capital programme, which has been carried into the next financial year. EH queried the decision to increase long-term borrowing to fund the capital programme and create an insurance reserve, noting this appeared contrary to discussions at the previous meeting. EH also asked about whether the insurance reserve is sufficient to meet liabilities. MP advised that borrowing has reduced from £31m in 2019/20 to £18m, with corresponding reductions in interest payable and the Minimum Revenue Provision, now at approximately 0.5-0.6%. Given the future financial challenges, this approach was considered the most appropriate to maintain reserves at a reasonable level and avoid significant impacts on finances or service delivery in the short term. In relation to the insurance provision, MP confirmed that the reserve now stands at approximately £4.1m-£4.2m and is considered sufficient based on current claims and financial assessments. Earmarked reserves for insurance have also been increased, in line with recommendations from an actuarial review undertaken 18 months ago. It is anticipated that reserves will reach approximately 90% of the required level by the end of the financial year, at which point a further actuarial review will be commissioned within the next 12-18 months. The in-year revenue budget has also increased by £600k to support claims and ensure appropriate contributions to reserves. DC raised the implications of borrowing and sought assurance that provision has been built into future financial plans. MP confirmed that this has been incorporated into long term financial planning, including MRP and interest costs, and has not been deferred. Whilst challenges are recognised, these will be managed accordingly. DC also queried why £1.7m of capital receipts have been retained, as these are typically used first. MP explained that, in this instance, borrowing against the assets was considered more favourable.	

	SG asked about slippage within the capital programme and any associated operational impact. MP advised that this largely relates to fleet, noting that failure of a national supplier had impact on delivery. Members noted the report.	
12.	**PCC Statement of Accounts 2025/26 (Subject to Audit):** MP confirmed satisfaction with the unmodified audit opinion received in the previous year's accounts and expressed an intention to maintain this position for the current year. The accounts were noted as aligning with the relevant terms of reference. MP also confirmed that the documents will be published following the committee meeting and will be available for public inspection for a period of 30 days from 1st July. EH advised that any technical queries will be submitted to MP separately. EH also referred to the Chief Constable's Statement of Accounts, noting a reduction in public confidence since December 2024, and asked whether there were any views on this trend. DF advised that public perception was notably positive following the force's response during summer 2024; however, a decline has been observed over the past year. This has been identified as a strategic priority and forms part of the force's strategic plan and performance framework going forward. DF also highlighted the importance of scrutiny in this area over the next 12 months and beyond. EH further queried the position regarding the Private Finance Initiative arrangement for the Tactical Training Centre, specifically following the end of the contract, and sought clarification on both the operational and financial implications. MP confirmed that the 25 year contract has now concluded, with the asset transferring to PCC ownership. Staffing has transferred to the force, with additional contracts in place to support service delivery. Financially and operationally, services continue to be delivered as expected. DF noted some challenges relating to staffing within certain areas of the estate; however, these are being actively managed. Discussions are ongoing with external providers in relation to estate management, including security and cleaning services. These issues have not impacted the delivery of training at the facility.	

	DC commended both the force and the OPCC on the production of the accounts and the achievement of reporting deadlines. DC also highlighted the tighter deadlines for the following year, particularly in relation to the November publication requirement, and noted that queries may need to be raised with the external auditors. It was acknowledged that the November 2027 deadline will be particularly challenging. MP advised that Ged Gallagher undertakes the work in relation to the Statement of Accounts and the Chair requested that this contribution be formally recognised within the minutes. **PCC 2025-26 Unaudited Statement of Accounts:** To be taken as above. **Cleveland Police 2025-26 Unaudited Statement of Accounts:** To be taken as above. Members noted the reports.	
13.	**Capital and Treasury Management Outturn Report:** MP advised that the report provides information on treasury limits, prudential indicators, and performance against those indicators. It was noted that all limits have been maintained and operated within. Attention was drawn to section 7.3, which highlights the level of capital expenditure funded through borrowing. This stood at 92% for the current year. MP clarified that this level is not expected to continue, but it has contributed to an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement and will have an impact on the Minimum Revenue Provision going forward. EH queried the underspends relating to ICT and fleet. MP advised that delays within ICT delivery are due in part to geopolitical factors affecting supply chains, including the availability of components. The underspend in fleet relates to the previously reported issue of a supplier ceasing trading. EH asked whether the elements of the capital programme will be slipped into future periods. MP confirmed that the Quarter 1 position will be reported to the Joint Strategic Board, where any associated challenges will be identified and addressed.	

	The Committee expressed its thanks to MP, and it was agreed that this be recorded in the minutes. DF referred to paragraph 5.4 on investments and queried the reference to 'ASL'. MP confirmed that this refers to Aberdeen Standard Life, specifically a money market fund. The report was noted by Members.	
14.	**14a - PCC Annual Governance Statement (Draft):** MP advised that the executive summary at the start of the document reflects recent national governance changes. No significant issues were identified following the review; however, MP noted that section 8 highlights areas for consideration in the current year. Section 9 outlines proposed changes to governance arrangements for May 2028, linked to the anticipated abolition of the PCC role. The remainder of the document sets out the review process undertaken. The actions detailed within section 8 were noted, including a focus on data protection. MP confirmed that work will be undertaken within the office in advance of the 2027/28 audit cycle. In total, five actions are included within the statement, all aimed at strengthening governance arrangements. JC commented that the report is reassuring, with no significant governance issues identified, but queried the absence of a deputy or stand in for the Chief Finance Officer and what contingency arrangements are in place. It was confirmed that no formal contingency is currently in place and that this risk has been accepted by the organisation at this time – with the included action currently been considered. Members noted the report. **14b - Cleveland Police Annual Governance Statement (Draft):** TH presented the report, noting that it reflects the annual review process, which considers any legislative changes, removes outdated information, and incorporates new evidence to demonstrate the organisation's approach to good governance. It was noted that the principles of good governance will be subject to slight changes in the coming year. A small number	

	of governance issues have been highlighted in the current review, including the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, which has been carried forward as an area of continued focus. Members were asked to note the report, with the final version to be presented in September. EH acknowledged the significant work undertaken by the force and the progress made, particularly in relation to vetting, and welcomed reference to the Teesside Pension Fund. It was also noted that Appendix A had been included in the agenda to provide visibility of the changes. JC queried how openness and stakeholder engagement was ensured and evaluated. TH advised that business areas are consulted annually, with each area providing evidence of its approach. This is then summarised and assessed against the guidance set out within the document. SG raised a question regarding coherence, consistency, and how accountability is clearly articulated, including what sense checking processes are in place. TH confirmed that appropriate due diligence is undertaken, with consultation at Executive Management Board stage in draft form. Business areas are given the opportunity to review and amend the document before it is presented to the Audit Committee, then considered again by the Executive Management Board, and finally returned to the Joint Audit Committee in September. Members noted the report.	
15.	**Civil Claims Overview Report April 2026:** MPH advised that the report covers the period from 1st October 2025 to 31st March 2026. In relation to Employment Tribunals, there were two ACAS matters and two Employment Tribunal cases, with four cases across Evolve, including one from Cleveland, and one Employment Tribunal hearing taking place in Durham. It was noted that any learning arising from these cases is shared with HR colleagues and incorporated into policy and practice as appropriate. A total of 116 claims were received during the period, the majority of which were public liability claims, with false imprisonment being the most common category. Across the	

	full financial year, 236 claims were received, compared to 227 in the previous year, indicating no significant increase. During the period 148 claims were closed, with payments totalling just over £185k. A total of 102 claims were successfully defended or withdrawn, equating to a success rate of 69%. Assurance was provided that lessons learned are formally recorded for all settled cases and are fed into wider organisational learning mechanisms, including the Organisational Learning Board, custody groups and driver standard groups. The report was noted.	
16.	**Cleveland Police Business Continuity Overview:** GC referred to section 2.3 regarding actions arising from RSM. It was noted that the final action has now been completed. In relation to action 2.5, GC advised that a new manager is now in post, and the remaining training has been scheduled. Action 2.7 relates to ongoing work with the Tactical Training Centre in respect of planning arrangements. This is currently in hand, with a similar approach due to be implemented at Wynyard. Under point 4, relating to exercises, GC confirmed that a more robust schedule has been in place since May, with testing undertaken across seven departments. SG raised a question regarding the organisational culture surrounding business continuity. GC acknowledged that this is a difficult area to assess but noted that, whilst there has been a need to follow up on plans, colleagues have been supportive and responsive. Members noted the report.	
17.	**Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee Overview:** MP provided an overview of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee from a non-operational perspective, including funding considerations and other related areas. DC queried future funding arrangements and whether these would be incorporated into the base settlement. MP advised	

	that, whilst it had previously been expected that additional funding would be provided year on year, this now appears unlikely, and no further funding is anticipated. As such future requirements will need to be managed from existing resources. DC also asked how the visibility of neighbourhood policing aligns with the deployment of additional officers. It was noted that a number of promotions have taken place, and further movement of staff into different roles will be required during the year. Work is ongoing with local authority partners to secure additional capacity through alternative funding streams. In the absence of additional funding for 2026/27, all efforts will be made to maximise existing resources. JC queried the impact of redeploying offices from back office functions into public facing roles and what may be lost as a result. DF advised that it is not feasible to redeploy all such roles, although there are opportunities for some areas. For example, certain posts, require careful consideration due to their specific functions. The report was noted by members.	
18.	**PCC Holding to Account Mechanisms:** EP outlined the approach to holding the force to account for delivery against the Police and Crime Plan. The scrutiny programme has been developed over the past ten years and incorporates a range of mechanisms. The approach is designed to provide robust challenge whilst supporting improvement and organisational learning. It is not solely retrospective, but also forward looking, with a focus on understanding the drivers of performance. The approach is evidence based, drawing on public feedback, complaints data and partner input via the PPD team. Strategic governance is delivered through the JSB, aligning strategic intent with operational delivery. A thematic scrutiny programme is in place, informed by performance data, audit findings, independent scrutiny, HMICFRS reports and public engagement. Each scrutiny review concludes with an assurance rating. In terms of public accountability, information is published on the website with as much detail as possible. The scrutiny programme is aligned to the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan, with topics revisited where sufficient assurance has not previously been achieved. This was demonstrated in the case of out of court disposals, which progressed from a position of	

	no assurance to assurance. A diagram at section 4.6 sets out the programme for the coming year. Ongoing engagement and oversight arrangements were also noted, including regular meetings between the PCC and Chief Constable, engagement with HMICFRS and the IOPC, and a number of independent scrutiny panels. These include panels for complaints, out of court disposals, custody detention and stop and search, as well as an Ethics Committee. JC asked how delivery against each element of the Police and Crime Plan can be tracked. EP advised that reporting is provided to the Police and Crime Panel, and that a high level overview is available on the website, supported by detailed performance metrics and associated activity. It was agreed that a link to this information will be circulated. **ACTION: RC to circulate the website link to the PCC quarterly performance reports to members of the committee.** LO noted that AI has previously been considered at Joint Strategic Board, and that public confidence and trust are referenced within EP's report, recognising the current position of the Force and the links between these areas. DF referred back to the earlier discussion on scrutiny panels and queried whether these will be hosted from July. EP confirmed that the out of court disposals panel has been re-established, with the first meeting scheduled for the following day. This will take place quarterly and will revie a sample of 25 cases. Whilst not a statutory requirement, this is regarded as good practice. Members noted the report and strength of the PCC's accountability programme.	**RC**
19.	**Any other Business:** DF advised that the Home Office has introduced a new tiered performance system. Under this approach, each force will be graded by HMICFRS on a scale of 1 to 4 with 4 indicating serious performance issues and 1 representing the highest level of performance. It was noted that all forces and PCC's will be notified of their respective gradings on Monday 13th July, with the results being made public on Wednesday 15th July. DF highlighted	

	that the outcomes may have an impact on public confidence, depending on their results. DF confirmed that forces are not involved in the assessment process and provided this update for members' information.	
17.	**Date and Time of Next Meeting:** Thursday 24th September 2026: 10:00-12:30 Cleveland PCC Meeting Room, Central Headquarters, Hemlington	