To: Chair and Members of the Joint Independent Audit Committee
Date: 25th September 2026
Status: For Information
Executive Officer: Lisa Oldroyd, Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland

Monitoring Officer Annual Report 2025/26

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Chair and Members of the Audit Committee with an annual update on the discharge of the statutory Monitoring Officer function for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

1.2 The report also provides assurance on the arrangements in place to support lawful and transparent decision-making, high standards of governance, ethical conduct and accountability within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

2. Recommendation

2.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report.

3. Statutory Role and Governance Framework

3.1 As prescribed by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC's) must appoint a Chief Executive to be the Head of the PCC's staff.

3.2 The Chief Executive post also encompasses the role of Monitoring Officer, by virtue of Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

3.3 The function of the Monitoring Officer is to report to the PCC, if it appears that any proposal, decision or omission by the elected Policing Body or by any person holding any office or employment under the PCC, constitutes, has given rise to or is likely to or would give rise to a contravention of any enactment or rule of law or any code of practice; or any such maladministration or injustice.

3.4 The Monitoring Officer must send a copy of that report to the Police and Crime Panel.

3.5 The Monitoring Officer is required to work closely with the PCC's Chief Finance Officer to ensure compliance with organisations regulatory rules (as set out in the Code of Corporate Governance) and is in a position to influence matters of

integrity, professional ethics and propriety in all aspects of the exercise of the PCC's business.

3.6 To ensure resilience of the role of Monitoring Officer, in the absence of the Chief Executive the Head of Standards, Scrutiny and Accountability acts as Deputy Monitoring Officer.

4. Monitoring Officer Activity 2025/26

4.1 Lawfulness, Governance and Decision-Making

4.1.1 In accordance with the PCC's decision-making framework, the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Monitoring Officer continue to review decisions of significant public interest made by the PCC, providing assurance that decisions are lawful and aligned with the principles of good corporate governance. Statutory Officers have access to specialist legal advice and support on corporate decision-making through the Evolve Legal Services Collaboration, including the ability to seek external legal opinion where required.

4.1.2 Unless subject to an exemption from publication, records of key decisions made by the PCC are routinely published on the PCC's website and reported to the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel for scrutiny. Supporting documentation is retained as part of the decision-making record and is available where appropriate, subject to any applicable exemptions. During the reporting period, no decisions were subject to an exemption from publication due to their sensitive nature.

4.1.3 The Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer maintain membership of the Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives and the Police and Crime Commissioners' Treasurers' Society respectively. These professional bodies provide access to specialist advice, sector developments and peer support. The Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer are also members of Lawyers in Local Government (LLG), providing access to professional advice and networks relating to legal and governance matters.

4.1.4 Good governance and robust decision-making arrangements remain firmly embedded within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The Monitoring Officer continues to maintain oversight of these arrangements to ensure that they remain effective, transparent and consistent with the principles of good governance.

4.1.5 A review of the PCC's Decision-Making Policy will be undertaken during 2026/27. The review will ensure that the policy remains current, proportionate and aligned with the wider governance framework, statutory requirements and established good practice, while identifying any opportunities to further strengthen transparency and accountability in the PCC's decision-making arrangements.

4.2 Anti-fraud and corruption

4.2.1 The PCC and OPCC are committed to upholding the highest standards of honesty and integrity and to preventing fraud, corruption, dishonesty, unethical behaviour and unprofessional conduct.

4.2.2 The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, published on the PCC's website, sets out the arrangements for preventing, identifying and responding to suspected fraud and corruption. Preventative measures include robust policies and procedures, effective contract management, regular internal audit activity, staff vetting and arrangements for public interest disclosure.

4.2.3 The Financial Regulations establish the framework for internal financial control and set out the OPCC's approach to fraud prevention and compliance. They also specify the procedures for responding to suspected fraud, theft, irregularity and the misuse or misappropriation of property or resources.

4.2.4 As part of the 2025/26 Internal Audit Plan, an advisory review of the OPCC's fraud prevention arrangements was undertaken with reference to the Home Office guidance on the corporate offence of failure to prevent fraud under section 199 of the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023.

4.2.5 The findings and suggested actions arising from the review will be considered by the OPCC during 2026/27 as part of the ongoing development and strengthening of its fraud prevention, risk management and governance arrangements.

4.2.6 In accordance with the College of Policing's Vetting Authorised Professional Practice, all OPCC staff are subject to appropriate police vetting processes. Statutory Officers hold enhanced Security Check (SC) vetting clearance.

4.2.7 The OPCC maintains an up-to-date register of the PCC's disclosable interests and a register of offers of gifts and hospitality made to the PCC and OPCC staff. These registers are published on the PCC's website in accordance with the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011.

4.3 Complaints against the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

4.3.1 The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has established transparent and accessible arrangements for raising complaints and whistleblowing concerns.

4.3.2 The PCC's website provides clear guidance on the different types of complaints that may arise and directs individuals to the appropriate route for raising their concerns. It also explains how the OPCC handles complaints that fall within its remit and includes a copy of the OPCC Complaints Policy. During the reporting period, ten complaints against OPCC staff were recorded and concluded..

4.3.3 Statutory whistleblowing provisions apply to OPCC staff, as well as Cleveland Police officers and police staff, enabling individuals to make protected disclosures in accordance with relevant legislation. The PCC's Public Interest Disclosure Policy reflects these statutory protections and sets out the procedures to be followed in respect of qualifying disclosures.

4.3.4 Where concerns raised by third parties fall outside the scope of the PCC's policy, the Monitoring Officer will, where appropriate, direct the individual to the relevant prescribed body.

4.3.5 During the reporting period, no qualifying disclosures were brought to the attention of the Monitoring Officer.

4.4 Complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner

4.4.1 In accordance with the Elected Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012, responsibility for handling complaints against the PCC rests with the Police and Crime Panel. Any such complaints received by the OPCC are referred directly to the Panel for consideration in accordance with its established procedures.

4.4.2 During the reporting period, the Police and Crime Panel considered five complaints in accordance with its established procedures.

5. Priorities for 2026/27

5.1 During 2026/27, the focus will be on maintaining and further strengthening high standards of governance, accountability and decision-making across the PCC and OPCC. Priorities will include:

- continuing to strengthen oversight of the PCC's governance and decision-making framework, ensuring that arrangements remain robust, transparent and fit for purpose;
- delivering a programme of review of key governance policies and procedures, including consideration of relevant findings and suggested actions arising from internal and external audit activity, including the advisory review of fraud prevention arrangements;
- reviewing and scoping the potential governance implications of the Government's police reform programme, and supporting the PCC and OPCC in understanding and preparing for the transition to any new or revised policing governance arrangements;
- continuing to strengthen transparency and accountability arrangements, including appropriate arrangements for complaints, whistleblowing, interests, gifts and hospitality;
- monitoring and responding appropriately to legislative, regulatory and wider governance developments that impact upon the PCC and OPCC; and
- maintaining appropriate resilience and professional development arrangements for the Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer functions.

6. Implications

6.1 Finance

There are no known financial implications arising directly from this report.

6.2 Diversity and Equal Opportunities

There are no specific diversity or equal opportunities implications arising directly from this report.

6.3 Human Rights Act

There are no specific Human Rights Act implications arising directly from this report.

6.4 Sustainability

There are no specific sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

6.5 Risk

The effective discharge of the Monitoring Officer function supports the management of legal, governance, regulatory and reputational risks by promoting lawful and transparent decision-making, maintaining appropriate standards of governance and ensuring that any areas of concern are identified and addressed appropriately.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Overall, during the reporting period, there were no occasions on which the Monitoring Officer had reason to believe that the PCC or a member of the OPCC was likely to take a decision that would be unlawful or give rise to maladministration. Consequently, no reports were issued to the Police and Crime Panel under section 5(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.