Summary of the PCC Accountability Meeting

Date: Tuesday 20 October 2026

Venue: Hybrid meeting held on Microsoft Teams and in the Conference Room, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (OPCCN), Wymondham

1. In attendance:

- Police and Crime Commissioner – Colin Sutton, OPCCN
- Chief Constable – Paul Sanford, Norfolk Constabulary
- Chief Executive – Mark Stokes, OPCCN
- Chief Finance Officer – Simon George, OPCCN
- Deputy Chief Constable – Dave Marshall, Norfolk Constabulary
- Assistant Chief Constable – Dave Buckley, Norfolk Constabulary
- Assistant Chief Officer – Peter Jasper, Norfolk Constabulary
- Director of Performance – Sharon Lister, OPCCN
- Director of Delivery Unit – Ralph Jackman, Norfolk Constabulary
- Assistant Director of Performance and Scrutiny – James Stone, OPCCN
- Sergeant – Hannah Wright, Norfolk Constabulary
- Performance and Scrutiny Manager – Kirt Wilkinson, OPCCN
- Communications and Engagement Manager – Susan Starling, OPCCN
- Project Delivery Administrator – Jay Alexander, OPCCN
- Performance and Scrutiny Intern – Milly Walker-Kwantreng, OPCCN

1.1 Apologies for absence:

- Assistant Chief Constable – Julie Dean, Norfolk Constabulary
- Director of Policy, Commissioning and Communications – Dr Gavin Thompson, OPCCN

2. Declarations of Personal and/or Prejudicial Interests

- There were none declared.

3. Confirm the Minutes and Actions of the Previous Meeting Held on Tuesday 21 April 2026

- The minutes from the PCC Accountability Meeting held on Tuesday 21 April 2026 were agreed to be a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.
- Action updates can be found on page 14.

4. Public Questions

Public Question	Constabulary Answer
Norfolk's firearms licensing service is a statutory public protection function affecting 16,942 certificate holders, approximately one in every 54 residents of the county. However, your Police and Crime Plan contains no specific reference to firearms licensing, no performance measures, no improvement objectives and no indication of how this area will be scrutinised, despite NPCC data showing that only 48% of firearms licensing applications are currently completed within national service standards, with grant applications achieving just 17% compliance. Given the scale of the licensed community and the impact that licensing delays are having on certificate holders, rural businesses and public confidence, how are you satisfying yourself that Norfolk Constabulary is providing an effective and efficient firearms licensing service, and how are you holding those responsible to account, to show specific and measurable improvement over the next 12 months?	The Chief Constable (CC) acknowledged that firearms licensing performance was below the standard the Constabulary expected to deliver and recognised the impact that delays were having on certificate holders and the wider community. The CC explained that the national requirements governing firearms licensing had become more rigorous, with enhanced scrutiny and safeguarding checks introduced in response to learning from previous firearms-related incidents nationally. The joint Norfolk and Suffolk firearms licensing service manages approximately 30,000 certificate holders, representing a significant and complex area of statutory public protection demand. A 27%workforce uplift, equivalent to 13 additional posts, had been approved to increase service capacity and support the reduction of outstanding applications. It was anticipated that the additional posts would be filled by November 2026. Nationally, the police service needs better technology. The CC would like to see better compliance in Norfolk with National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) guidelines, and reduced reliance on temporary permits. The total cost of the regime across both counties is roughly £2.2 million, and though the government has recently doubled the fee for a firearms licence, the forecasted income is around £1 million. There are a number of areas where the policing system is under strain, and managing competing needs for resources. The CC apologised that the service isn't where it needs to be and expressed that he and the Constabulary are looking to improve, but this remains a difficult task. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) said Norfolk Constabulary are completing more than 640 decisions a month (around 30 a day) but need

Public Question	Constabulary Answer
	around 820 a month to clear the backlog. One obstacle was the amount of licence extensions granted during covid-19. The CC added that the Constabulary are awaiting a new product from the Home Office for firearms licensing. Without knowing what the budget will be for the next financial year, Police Chiefs across the country cannot allocate for future resourcing without more financial certainty, both in firearms licensing and a number of other obligations.
How does Norfolk Constabulary involve people with lived experience of crime, victimisation or the justice system in designing and reviewing its services for victims and vulnerable people, and how does it measure whether that involvement changes anything?	The Chief Constable explained that the Constabulary used a range of complementary engagement and review mechanisms to understand victims' experiences, recognising that no single source of feedback provided a complete picture. The Safeguarding Hub's Victims Service Coordinator undertakes services satisfaction interviews (primarily with Domestic Abuse victims), allowing the Constabulary to analyse and improve their service accordingly. They also undertake safeguarding adult reviews, child safeguarding practice reviews, and Domestic Abuse-Related Death Reviews as well. These statutory and multi-agency review processes draw on the experiences of victims, survivors and bereaved families, enabling agencies to identify learning and strengthen safeguarding practice. New approaches are informed, tested and refined through engagement with victims and survivors. For example, in the last two years, the Constabulary have piloted Rapid Video Response calls to Domestic Abuse victims who would prefer not to have a police car near their property. Victim/Survivor Focus Groups help the Constabulary to understand what that technology would ideally look like for victims, training officers using the feedback.

Public Question	Constabulary Answer
	Vulnerability and Public Protection Champion events allow victims with direct experience with the Criminal Justice System to speak to officers about the services they have received. With over 500,000 calls per year, the Constabulary receives some complaints and aims to ensure the Police Complaints regime is focused on learning and improving. Looking ahead, the Constabulary hopes to introduce "My Victim's Journey", a victim survey whereby anyone who contacts the police can immediately give feedback on the service they have received throughout any criminal proceedings. The Chief Constable reaffirmed the Constabulary's commitment to ensuring that the voices and experiences of victims and survivors inform service design, workforce learning and continuous improvement.
Within the last five years in Norfolk, 34 motorcyclists have died and this year alone there have been nine deaths. A section of motorcyclists scream across the Norfolk countryside with open, loud exhaust systems, that are illegal and would fail any MOT or decibel check. They like to say that loud pipes save lives, when actually riding at the speed limit is what saves lives. This group of riders have no regard for speed limits or the Highway Code. Academics who study social behaviour say that if you leave a street with broken windows and rubbish on the pavements, more people will be likely to break windows and drop litter. So I'd like to ask the Commissioner and members of the Norfolk Constabulary if it's time this behaviour was nipped in the bud.	The CC confirmed the figures quoted. There have been nine motorcycle fatalities on Norfolk roads in 2026, and 31 road-related fatalities overall. He acknowledged that each fatality is an absolute tragedy. The CC acknowledged that he expected most attendees would have experienced motorcycles overtaking or otherwise driving at high speeds, dangerous, careless and anti-social riding is unacceptable and would be addressed through targeted education, engagement and enforcement to prevent avoidable deaths on the roads within Norfolk. The Constabulary does undertake activity to try and reduce these fatalities, but more miles are being driven on Norfolk roads now than ever before and motorcyclists are particularly vulnerable, which is why targeted activity is necessary. Specialist roads policing motorcyclists undertake targeted enforcement activity focused on the Fatal Four offences: speeding, drink and drug driving, mobile-phone use and failure to wear a seat belt. They participate in the national BikeSafe education programme, an initiative which provides motorcyclists with

Public Question	Constabulary Answer
	advanced training on safe riding. The CC confirmed this training is a very good product. The NPCC runs a calendar of events around road safety, including national motorcyclist-specific campaigns. A fatal Road Traffic Collision review panel, chaired by the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, reviews each fatal collision to consider preventative measures. This year the Constabulary have issued 8,995 traffic offence reports, 427 involving motorcyclists; and 65,000 speeding offences, 526 involving motorcyclists. Exhaust levels are a challenge as they cannot accurately be tested with conventional roadside kit, which cannot differentiate between exhaust noise and engine noise. However, specialist road policing officers are trained to identify illegal exhaust modifications and prosecute when able to.

5. Police and Crime Plan: Priority 1 – Preventing Crime

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) Dave Marshall began by addressing Serious Violence. The DCC reported 44 fewer violence-with-injury offences than in the preceding 12-month period and a reduction of just over 0.5% in the proportion that are Domestic Abuse-related. Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) offences have increased by 2.7%, to a total of 21. Domestic Abuse-related GBH has unfortunately also increased, by 1.7%. Actual Bodily Harm offences have reduced by 2.2% over the last year, and the proportion that are Domestic Abuse-related has also reduced slightly. The DCC highlighted a significant change to safeguarding arrangements. In April 2026, the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Team relocated from

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	Wymondham to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, strengthening co-location, information sharing and multi-agency decision-making. Operation Focus involved Home Office-funded "hotspot" patrols. The funding concluded on 31 March 2026, after over 14,000 hours of high-visibility patrols across 21 hotspots, and 11 problem-solving plans. A significant number of reports of incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour are set out in the papers. Although the Home Office funding has ended, the pilot's principles will continue, supported by enhanced performance-tracking measurements in these areas. Domestic Abuse is key to delivery. Issuing of Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) has increased, a key tool for enhancing the safety of victims for 28 days. The Constabulary have also increased the number of Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) issued, from 111 in 2024, to 161 in 2025, and 142 so far in 2026. The Deputy Chief Constable also referred to the introduction of Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPO). The new framework provides a broader range of protective requirements and prohibitions, and, unlike a DVPO, a DAPO is not limited to a maximum period of 28 days.
	Through strengthened response, neighbourhood crime volumes have reduced by 13% compared to the previous 12 months, and by 14.5% against the ongoing long-term average. Solved rates have increased to around 22%. Recorded residential burglary remained comparatively low and continued to reduce against the preceding 12-month period, and the Office of National Statistics reports Norfolk as having the third-lowest figures in the country for the past 12 months, with an average of just over three recorded residential burglaries per day. Vehicle offences have also decreased against the previous 12 months and the long-term average. Robbery volumes remain low, averaging fewer than one report per day – also decreased from the last 12 months reports by 42 offences.

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	Digital fingerprint capability captures fingerprint data electronically and sends it remotely, significantly increasing results delivery speed. In some cases, fingerprint search results could be returned while the forensic practitioner was still at the scene, supporting faster investigative decision-making. The DCC referred to further good examples of enhanced technology in the papers.
	The Constabulary continue to invest in staff welfare. A healthy workforce means better public delivery, and improved staff resilience. A number of activities and initiatives supporting this can be found in the papers. The DCC summarised that this has been a positive period, with a decrease in overall crime and a continued upward trend in outcomes.
Can the Constabulary provide an approximate timeline on the upcoming rollout of Project Vigilant outside of Norwich (i.e. in King's Lynn and Thetford), on the next stages of countywide Operation Makesafe implementation, and detail what these will look like?	The DCC spoke first to Operation Vigilant, a proactive night-time economy operation designed to identify and disrupt predatory behaviour, with a particular focus on violence against women and girls, currently embedded within Norwich and Great Yarmouth. Dedicated training will take place in King's Lynn on 27 November 2026, with rollout thereafter supported by the central Norwich team. Suitable locations and premises are currently being assessed. Officers have come from other police forces to see how this is being done. The Constabulary hope to look at increased communication with partners and members of the public, making sure people are aware of what's going on. The implementation date for Thetford will depend on rollout in King's Lynn. Operation Makesafe focuses on information gathering and partnership work to identify vulnerable people. Since launch, the Constabulary have conducted 140 visits, engaging with hotels, accommodation, taxi drivers and companies, and hope to increase consistency with continued mapping and assessment of places of potential risk. The CC added that most of this work is undertaken by officers on the back of Neighbourhood Policing: the government aims to increase the number of

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	officers during their term by 13,000. 4,500 have so far been recruited nationally, with Norfolk taking their share locally. The operations described are excellent, but the Constabulary's ability to truly roll them out will depend on the 4,500 increasing to 13,000; how this will be funded beyond April is unclear, and it would be operationally incoherent to increase the number of officers carrying out these operations at this time without considering the impact on resources in other parts of the force due to competing operational priorities.

6. Police and Crime Plan: Priority 2 – Cohesive Communities

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Dave Buckley spoke to the above targets, with a growth of 31 designated policing officers in Norfolk under the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee having been achieved by 31 March 2026. The current target is for 20 more officers by March 2027, with 17 appointed and in post and three more to be enrolled before this date. The ACC stated that the paper also highlights work on the Public Voice survey, following a briefing received by the PCC from Dave Harris and the Public Voice team; within the pack are the survey findings, with survey numbers increasing and being pushed. This survey gives a clear steer around local policy setting, which is then picked up by local Beat Managers through coordinated meetings with local groups.
	Killed and Serious Injury (KSI) collisions have increased by 9.3% in this rolling 12-month period. Collisions involving Serious Injury alone have increased by 6.7%. There were 41 fatalities in the period, compared by 27 in the previous 12 months. This continues an upward five-year trend in KSIs. Nationally, serious collisions are increasing, but fatal not so much; the paper draws on the activities

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	undertaken by the Constabulary's Roads and Armed Policing Team, particularly collision hotspot activity. It also summarises positive work this period around commercial vehicle unit activity and Operation Foxtail, targeting criminality on the roads, showing high numbers of arrests and other activity, more broadly undertaken around vehicle safety, education, and enforcement.
	Although recorded shoplifting continued to increase nationally, Norfolk's positive outcome rate for retail crime had improved to 49.5 per cent at the end of September 2026. This places Norfolk as the highest performing force nationally for solving retail crime. In September 2023, Norfolk's Solved rate was 40.9%. Software highlighted in the paper includes DIS and Aurora, intelligence-sharing platforms that support timely information exchange with retailers, identification of repeat offenders and more effective investigative and enforcement activity. The Offender Recovery scheme targets individuals with drink or drug addictions to try and find other routes, address the prison "revolving door" issue and address the underlying substance misuse and other vulnerabilities associated with repeat offending. The change to the Sentencing Act calls for more work in this space, as well as reducing peak criminality in city and town centres.
	Hate crimes have increased in this period, albeit marginally and not out of trend with recent years. The highest proportion remains race-related, which has been consistent over time. The Constabulary's outcome rate has increased to 23%. Though forces record this slightly differently, the national rate would be about 13.9%. Last week's Hate Crime Conference in Norfolk, focused on Stop Hate in Norfolk (SHiN) and third-party reporting, brought together statutory agencies and third sector partners. The ACC recognised that hate crime remained significantly underreported and that further work was required to improve confidence, accessibility and reporting. One route for the police to improve reporting is trusted third parties. The Constabulary also continue to work with

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	communities on reassurance and building confidence in the police after protest activity related to asylum seekers and Houses in Multiple Occupation.
It is noted that partnership work has been conducted to tackle the issue of fly-tipping across the county. Please could you bring some of this work to life and detail whether the Constabulary intend to continue or expand these workings? I have spoken to Norfolk County Council and discussed making it easier to book an appointment at the waste recycling centre, which they have said they will try to look into.	The ACC spoke to the activities of Community Safety Unit officers with a particular expertise around rural crime – wildlife crime, heritage crime, unauthorised encampments, and broader activity around the continual challenge of fly-tipping. The papers also demonstrate multi-agency work with a number of key partners, often hosted through the Community Rural Advisory Group. The OPCCN has some involvement as well. The ACC confirmed he had also recently spoken to the Country Land and Business Association. The papers show that the Community Safety Unit have undertaken a lot of activity with different district councils around enforcement and identifying prolific offenders. The Force are doing their best to try and mitigate fly-tipping, but it is an ongoing challenge.

7. Police and Crime Plan: Priority 3 – Reducing Harm

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	The DCC presented key headlines on crime. The Constabulary have seen a good increase (31%) in overall tactical disruptions for Serious and Organised Crime, and disruptions against registered Organised Crime Groups up by 83% in the last period. Driving this is a new Serious and Organised Crime Board, chaired by ACC Julie Dean. This has strengthened overall governance, and local activity is driven by links with local communities and reinforced accountability of local police.
	Additionally, the Constabulary have seen a continued effort under Operation Kilovolt, making progress with investigations of group-based Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation with a strong focus on victim safeguarding and offender

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	prosecution. One suspect was remanded for Rape offences, and a further eight suspects were charged with a total of 44 offences against two child victims. The Constabulary have also established the Phoenix Project, a dedicated multi-agency safeguarding team bringing together police, health, and children's services to respond to children's needs by providing trauma support, information sharing, and dedicated victim support to the highest risk children.
	Data on response times is provided in the papers. Call-handling performance had improved, with an increasing proportion of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds and performance moving towards the national 90%standard. This comes after a period of increased summer demand, with about 20% increase in call volumes overall across the control room and 3.4% increase in 999 calls (taking them to around 35,000 in that period). Performance and call handling have increasingly improved, and the mean answer time is decreasing. This data is all to June 2026, and as of the end of September, the Constabulary have tipped over the 90% target for the rolling 12-month period and continue to invest with additional call handlers and capacity. The Constabulary had joined a national pilot involving 14 other forces to assess whether natural-language technology could improve call routing and reduce avoidable demand reaching force control rooms.
	Recorded rape offences had increased by 4.4 per cent compared with the preceding 12 months. The DCC noted that changes in recorded volumes could be influenced by a range of factors, including reporting behaviour and victim confidence, but that the increase required continued scrutiny. Other sexual offences have seen an increased volume as well, though outcomes have also increased, meaning better results for victims. The Constabulary have increased activity on DVPNs to provide better public protection. A key innovation is the development of an Investigations Dashboard that identifies

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	sexual offenders, allowing understanding of previous history and more flexible disclosure, potentially pre-empting some safeguarding measures and investigative decision-making.
	The DCC emphasised the value of restorative justice as part of an effective out-of-court resolution framework, particularly where it could support rehabilitation, victim participation and reductions in reoffending. The DCC thanked the PCC for the funding obtained to support establishment of a Norfolk and Suffolk Restorative Justice Hub, confirmed for another two years until March 2028. This is significant in delivery of Restorative Justice. As a result, the Constabulary have seen a significant increase in conditional cautions with Restorative Justice elements, from 19% to 50%. The Constabulary hope to continue to enhance Victims' Codes of Compliance, service to victims, and the Victim Witness Care service, which is under increasing pressure due to court delays, with at least 500 cases now being listed for court appearances in 2030.
The PCC asked how the Constabulary has been impacted by the Prisoner Early Release scheme, how many cases of early release we have had so far, and how many we are expecting.	The PCC explained that realism is required around the implications of sentencing reform: the early release of a greater number of offenders is already having consequences on policing, including the demand of offender management, with intensive community management needed due to a cohort of prolific offenders. The Constabulary is likely to see an increase in breaching activity. When electronic monitoring tags are breached, the police are responsible for tracking down offenders, and it is concerning to see there are delays in the fitting of monitoring tags at point of release from prison. In response, the Chief Constable explained that the early release arrangements were creating additional operational demand for policing and partner agencies, particularly in relation to offender management, enforcement of licence conditions, apprehension following breaches and victim safeguarding.

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	The second phase of releases has taken place, with phases planned over several months. While the CC emphasised his understanding that problems within the prison system made this release necessary, it has transferred those problems onto other agencies, mainly the probation service, who have had limited uplift in resourcing to deal with the additional demand. It is evident that the changes are not cost free, and this is happening at a time when other financial strains are facing policing. It is a real challenge for the Constabulary. The CC assured attendees that the Constabulary will do their absolute utmost to respond robustly to any crimes perpetrated by those offenders, as well as monitoring very closely what happens to crime. Chief Constables across the country are rightly held to account for crime levels, but the whole system impacts on this, and it stands to reason that if you release more offenders from prison, there is more chance for offences in a community.

8. Emerging Operational/Organisational Risks

- The CC confirmed that the Prisoner Early Release scheme is one of the main operational risks at this time. The Constabulary also anticipates an announcement regarding Police Reform (a review of police structure), understanding that this review is complete and awaiting the review of the Home Secretary. The outcome of this review is not yet known, but it is becoming increasingly challenging to sustain a 43-Force model, certainly with the funding Constabulary's have at the moment, as well as the changing face of crime, more cross-border criminality, and more requirement for specialist capabilities like digital forensic units given the volume of cyber-enabled crime.
- One option set out in the review may be the creation of larger regional forces, though smaller mergers may also be suggested. The CC explained that in any circumstance, policing will still be delivered in local communities by locally based people. Norfolk Constabulary have worked in collaboration with Suffolk Constabulary for 16 years now, delivering tens of millions of pounds of taxpayer savings, already sharing more resources than we locally own. Ultimately the decision belongs to the Home Secretary, but in terms of delivering the best policing for our counties this would be a strong option. Financially, larger regional forces may be attractive, but the CC

emphasised the need for evidence on how this will deliver a locally relevant police service, as the Constabulary are yet to see that this can be done at a regional level.

- The PCC agreed and emphasised that to deliver policing locally, "mega-forces" are not the way forward.

9. Any Other Business

- None raised.

Actions

Description of Action	Action Update/Decision
Action 22 (22 October 2025): T/ACC Balmer is to brief the PCC on the new trauma tracker once embedded with specifics on the efficacy of that.	As the last meeting was with the previous PCC, the CC provided some background for the PCC. Police officers find themselves exposed repeatedly to crime scenes and incidents where they observe a lot of negative imagery. Trauma Trackers will monitor how many potentially traumatic scenes officers have been exposed to, which allows the force to try and make the appropriate welfare checks. An equivalent programme exists already for forensic officers, and the Constabulary are looking to roll out more broadly in the form of an application, development of which is currently being finalised. The CC expressed his hope that this will be live by the next meeting, with the motivation being to keep on top of the wellbeing of officers and staff. **Action ongoing.**
Action 26 (21 April 2026): The PCC is to meet with a Norfolk Constabulary representative who can show her the statement making process.	Considering the appointment of the new PCC, The CC explained he did not feel that such a meeting was necessary at this time. The PCC agreed. **Action closed.**

Date of Next Meeting:

Tuesday 13 April 2027.

Signatures



Colin Sutton
Police and Crime Commissioner



Paul Sanford
Chief Constable