

MEETING NOTES

Title: Performance & Delivery Board

Date and time: 25 February 2026 @ 10am

Venue: County Room, Kent Police HQ, Sutton Road, Maidstone

Attendees: **Office of the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner**

- Matthew Scott – Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
- David Paul – Chief Executive (CE)
- Rob Phillips – Chief Finance Officer (CFO)

Kent Police

- Tim Smith – Chief Constable (CC)
- Peter Ayling – Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)

1.	Welcome and Introduction
• The PCC welcomed the CC and his team. He expressed his thanks for the meeting papers.	
2.	Notes of previous meeting – 26 November 2025
• The notes were agreed as a true and accurate record, and the following action updates noted: ○ Outside of meeting explore development of contextual update on rural crime for inclusion in report – Police & Crime Plan performance and delivery paper includes broader contextual information on rural crime. ○ Outside of meeting provide update on benefits of / savings achieved from Proportional File Build pilot – update received.	
3i.	Cut Crime, Support Victims, Build Trust
<i>Police & Crime Plan performance and delivery: October to December 2025</i>	
• For the purpose of this report, the data reflected the rolling year (RY) comparison January to December 2025 vs January to December 2024, and quarter (Qtr) comparison October to December 2025 vs October to December 2024.	
Protecting People	
• The CC reported a continued reduction in victim-based crime (VBC) with a 4.5% decrease in the Qtr, equating to 1,543 fewer victims. He also noted the solved rate increased by 1%. • Whilst reporting a decrease in violence against women and girls (VAWG) for the RY and Qtr, the CC drew attention to a 3.7% increase in domestic abuse (DA)-related offences in the Qtr and advised this was being reviewed. He also noted a 0.4% reduction in the victim withdrawal rate for the RY. • The CC advised of a 7.2% increase in serious sexual offences in the Qtr, and an 18.4% reduction in rape. He also highlighted the rape solved rate had increased in the Qtr, as well as the victim satisfaction rate. • Referring to the breakdown of reports for the new 'sharing or threatening to share intimate photograph/film' offence, the CC advised a richer understanding would develop over time. • The CC noted the increase in DA in the Qtr was largely driven by high volumes in December. While acknowledging this reflected seasonal trends, he advised the increase went beyond historic patterns and further analysis would inform future planning. • While DA victim satisfaction in the Qtr had decreased, the CC noted it was an improvement on the previous Qtr. • The PCC asked how levels of recorded stalking and harassment compared to previous years. The CC reported 4,401 offences were recorded in the most recent Qtr: a 4.5% reduction on the previous, and a 6.2% decrease on the same Qtr the previous year. • Welcoming the increased use of Community Resolutions (CRs), the PCC asked how effective they were in reducing and preventing future offending. Acknowledging that longer-term data was required to fully assess impact, the CC advised national evidence suggested restorative approaches supported victim reparation, reduced reoffending, and improved victim satisfaction rates, while offering a more cost-efficient alternative to court processes. The CC	

emphasised the importance of ensuring only appropriate cases were directed to CR pathways and expressed satisfaction at the Force's use of CRs and the Making Time Count app.

- The PCC sought an understanding as to why VAWG victim withdrawal rates remained high. The CC advised it was a position replicated nationally, with withdrawals commonly linked to the nature of relationships involving DA. He confirmed the Force was focused on strengthening its response to VAWG.
- The PCC asked whether there were any common themes as to why DA victims were not satisfied and if so, how they were being addressed. The CC advised themes included feeling they were not being listened to, a perceived lack of empathy and not being appropriately updated. He explained the findings were fed into divisional and force-wide performance meetings, and informed Victim Needs Assessments and Force training.

Protecting Places

- The CC advised of a higher 999 call volume in December compared to the previous year, driving a 2.9% increase in the Qtr (+2,583 calls), and a 0.6% increase for the RY.
- The CC highlighted a 1.6% increase in digital contact in the Qtr and decreasing trend in 101 call volumes.
- Reporting the median attendance time to all emergencies had continued to decrease in the Qtr, the CC advised there was a focus on ensuring resources were in the right place to deliver a robust response.
- The CC noted antisocial behaviour (ASB) increased by 32.2% (+1,857 incidents) in the Qtr. Advising changes in recording had impacted confidence in comparative analysis, he confirmed this was expected to improve by June 2026, enabling a fuller understanding of trends.
- Confirming the Force worked to the NPCC Rural Crime Strategy, the CC reported a reduction in non-DA related offences for the RY and Qtr based on 85 defined rural wards. He also noted a 2.3% increase in the solved rate for the RY.
- While advising the number of people killed or seriously injured on Kent roads had reduced for the RY, the CC reported the Qtr had seen a significant increase. He noted December's ten reports represented the highest volume since August 2025 and the highest December for over five years. Noting no single factor stood out, he stated the Force's focus remained on the 'fatal 4' and vulnerable road users.
- Commending the FCR's sustained strong performance, the PCC asked whether it could continue to absorb rising levels of digital contact. Confirming it could, the CC advised reductions in 101 demand enabled greater flexibility in the allocation of staff. He also highlighted ongoing IT developments, including Salesforce, which would further support demand management and enhance public access to services.
- The PCC asked for an update on the implementation of Salesforce. The CC advised implementation, particularly the use of AI and automation, was being approached cautiously in light of recent failings. He stressed the priority was to ensure new tools improved public service and outlined the expected timeframes:
 - Victim Journey (sending information and updates to victims automatically) - Spring 2026.
 - Chat bot (opportunities around Live Chat function) - 40% functionality early Summer 2026.
 - Customer relationship, transcription, AI summation, and risk assessment - late 2026/early 2027.
 - Full system portal and digital public contact – mid-2027.
- In light of planned national response time targets, the PCC asked about expectations that would be placed on Kent officers. Although cognisant of the national measures, the CC emphasised he was accountable to the PCC and the people of Kent and that would remain his priority. He was confident the Force was appropriately resourced and stressed improvement would come from analytical work, not an expectation that officers exceed their training or adopt unsafe driving practices.
- The PCC asked about action to address nuisance motor vehicles. The CC advised each Community Safety Unit (CSU) had its own plan based on local demand. He also noted significant activity had taken place during the Winter of Action campaign, including the seizure of 25 vehicles and Op Daily which resulted in arrests, seizures of e-scooters and the issuing of several Community Resolutions. Confident activity was business as usual, the CC offered to report back on the results of operational activity when available.

Protecting Property

- The CC reported a reduction in residential burglary for the RY, but an increase in the Qtr. With 231 offences recorded in December, he noted it was the highest month since September 2024. He advised work was underway to understand the increase and identify preventative opportunities for the future, with a focus on repeat offenders. He offered to provide further detail on plans to tackle residential burglary outside the meeting.
- Reporting a 3.1% decrease in shoplifting in the Qtr, the CC also noted the solved rate increased by 6.3%.
- The CC advised increases in recorded business robbery were attributable to revised recording practices and confirmed performance was closely monitored.
- The CC reported a continued reduction in vehicle crime which encompassed theft of and from a vehicle.
- While acknowledging a spike in recorded personal robbery in December, the CC reported an overall reduction in both the RY and Qtr.
- The CC reported an increase in online offences for both the RY and Qtr.

- The PCC asked whether the decrease in shoplifting could be linked to the revised business robbery definition and sought detail on the Force's response. The CC advised the decrease reflected both revised recording practices and an improved operational focus. He highlighted that shoplifting and business robbery offences were both below the average for April to December indicating true reductions, but acknowledged confidence would improve as more data became available.

Productive Partnerships

- Noting the 3.4% reduction in concern for welfare incidents resourced in the Qtr, the CC also highlighted the 16.4% increase in Section 136 detentions and 9.2% increase in misper/absconder incidents resourced. He said further work was required in order for Right Care Right Person (RCRP) to pay full dividends. He confirmed close monitoring, with the aim that all key partners assumed their organisational responsibilities, thus alleviating inappropriate demand on Kent Police while ensuring individuals were safeguarded.
- The PCC sought assurance as to how the Force ensured individuals received the right care, from the right agency at the right time. The CC reaffirmed RCRP remained the correct approach and noted that of the 2,104 incidents flagged as RCRP in January 2026, ~21% required police deployment. With 1,657 incidents resolved by partners, the CC said he was confident the Force was largely achieving the intention of RCRP. He added performance would continue to be closely monitored.

Action

- Provide an update on the results of operational activity relating to nuisance vehicles (when available), outside of the meeting.
- Provide further detail on plans to tackle residential burglary outside of the meeting.

3ii. Winter of Action Initiative

- Noting the report provided a comprehensive summary, the CC highlighted the range of preventative and enforcement activity, including the use of covert operations, Op Makesafe visits to hotels, and VAWG education inputs reaching over 1,000 young people in Thanet.
- The CC advised that in December and January the Force made a total of 660 arrests for retail, business, and property crime.
- Highlighting the Force's strong commitment to the initiative, the CC noted that while December carried significant operational focus, January was typically a period of lower demand requiring fewer resources.
- The PCC asked whether additional resources were deployed during the initiative. The CC advised there was no significant expansion of resource as the initiative carried no additional funding and plans for the period were already in place. Nevertheless, he reported that a demand assessment by DCC Ayling had identified and enabled supplementary activity, particularly in December but stressed that levels of service were maintained throughout the year despite seasonal variations in demand.
- The PCC asked how local councils, business groups, charities, and community organisations were engaged in the planning and delivery of the scheme. Through the work of CSUs and Neighbourhood Policing teams, the CC reported all groups were engaged throughout to ensure a full understanding of local concerns. He also advised involvement included partnered deployments during the initiative.
- Applauding the breadth of work undertaken, the PCC asked about promoting the activity and results achieved. The CC advised activity and results were promoted throughout the initiative, and the report to this meeting added further detail and context that was now publicly available.

4. Inspections, Audits and Reviews

HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) and HMICFRS report: The effectiveness of diverting children from the criminal justice system - meeting needs, ensuring safety, and preventing reoffending

- Noting Kent Police was one of the forces inspected, the DCC highlighted it received positive commentary with regards to the support provided to help children access education, and recognising cultural background, heritage, and values in engagement.
- The DCC advised the report identified fragmented and inconsistent practices across forces due to the absence of a national framework and made 18 recommendations primarily for the Home Office, Ministry of Justice, NPCC, College of Policing and the Youth Justice Board. There was one recommendation for CCs centred on ensuring proper use of disposals, safeguarding, and staff training.
- Summarising Kent's perspective, the DCC advised youth justice was central to, and well embedded within Child-Centred Policing and the Force Control Strategy.
- The DCC emphasised the Force's commitment to Continued Professional Development (CPD) and joint training with partners. He also highlighted the role of the County Youth Justice Board in preventing the unnecessary criminalisation of young people, as well as the Force's effective joint decision-making panels and outcome clinics. However, he stated there was no room for complacency.

- The PCC asked whether the CC was confident in the Force's use of disposals. Advising he was confident, the CC also noted enhancements had been made following the review. In particular, the introduction of a more intuitive referral form providing clearer guidance; investment in the Youth Justice team to facilitate post-custody visits; and an increased focus on swifter interventions aimed at diverting persistent offenders.

HMICFRS report: Inspection of the police response to group-based child sexual exploitation - progress report

- The DCC advised Kent Police was one of the forces inspected and had received positive feedback regarding the work of the Child Exploitation (CSE) Task Force and the correct application of the Independent Inquiry's group-based definition.
- While observing notable progress, the DCC advised the report found further work was required to provide the comprehensive, coordinated response that victims need and deserve. A delay in the Department for Education adopting the Independent Inquiry's group-based definition had also made data consistency challenging.
- The DCC reported forces with dedicated exploitation teams were found to provide valuable advice to investigators and ensured specially trained officers investigated child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- Noting the report made six recommendations, four of which were for police forces, the DCC advised that Kent Police's Public Protection Strategy was aligned with the National Vulnerability and Public Protection Strategy providing an overarching delivery plan for all public protection matters. He also highlighted the work of the CSE Task Force, problem profiles using the Op Hydrant template, and Op Makesafe as a well embedded and frequently used tactic.
- The PCC asked how the Force ensured victims were believed, supported, and protected; and also, how community intelligence was encouraged and acted upon. The CC advised Kent's approach to CSE was victim-centred, child-focused, and trauma-informed, and this in turn supported policies, training, and quality assurance processes. Highlighting HMICFRS' positive feedback, he also noted frontline and CSE specialist officers received mandatory CPD, including targeted training to avoid victim-blaming language, and were supported by strong supervision and regular quality checks. In relation to community intelligence, he advised the Force prioritised early intervention, timely information-sharing and close partnership working, including with commissioned services and community-based charities.

The Angiolini Inquiry – Part 2 First Report: Prevention of sexually motivated crimes against women in public

- The DCC advised Part 1 of the report made 16 recommendations, with six for Chief Constables. He noted the force immediately put in place a response plan and the recommendations were discharged, with confirmation of closure provided by the National Police Chiefs Council.
- Noting Kent Police was not one of the forces inspected, the DCC advised the report focused on the prevention of sexually motivated crimes, highlighted their widespread and harmful impact, and noted their often-underreported nature made understanding the true scale challenging.
- The DCC highlighted commentary referring to fragmented police prevention activity and a continued emphasis on advising women how to avoid harm rather than preventing perpetrators from offending. He noted it identified promising practice such as Project Vigilant and Op Soteria and called for improvements in data collection, public awareness campaigns, better use of civil orders, strengthened Designing Out Crime roles, and expansion of early-intervention options for men at risk of harmful behaviour.
- Noting the report made 13 recommendations, one of which was for CCs, the DCC reiterated VAWG was a priority within the Force Control Strategy and outlined activity to enhance intervention and harm reduction. He also noted much existing work, including CPD for Designing Out Crime officers, Op Soteria activity and the use of Proactive Orders, aligned strongly with best practice.
- Reporting that Kent Police were working to support recommendations outside of a force's direct remit, the DCC outlined a project with Canterbury Christchurch University into vetting 'red flags' and building the evidence base for non-contact based sexual offending and its links to future vulnerabilities.

HMICFRS PEEL Inspection

- The DCC advised the Force was awaiting formal publication of its PEEL Inspection 2025/27 report, but noted initial feedback had been positive.

5. People

- Reporting no new intakes or joiners from other routes since the last update, the DCC noted the recruitment plan remained on track to meet the March 2026 headcount requirement.
- The DCC highlighted the relatively low officer turnover rate of 4.75%, representing 196 leavers. He advised analysis of the 104 resignations had identified reasons for leaving were consistent with previous updates, namely for personal/professional development/training, and work/life balance and wellbeing.
- For staff, the DCC reported the lowest turnover rate (6.72%; 162 leavers) for over a decade.
- Noting the PCSO strength stood at 90.25 fte, the DCC advised the next intake was scheduled for July 2026.
- The DCC advised the Force was exceeding the required number of officers in neighbourhood policing roles, and with further intakes, was projected to maintain this through to March 2026.

- With the release of national absence data up to March 2025, the DCC reported that Kent's percentage of contracted hours lost was 4.38% for officers compared to 5.00% nationally, ranking Kent 10th out of 43 forces (1 being the lowest level of absence). For staff (including PCSOs), contracted hours lost was 5.00% compared to 5.17% nationally, ranking Kent 23rd out of 43 forces. He also advised of ongoing work to identify and apply good practice within the Force.
- The DCC emphasised the strong Occupational Health (OH) offering which had also received positive commentary during the PEEL inspection. He highlighted a bespoke training package to support attendance management for frontline leaders and senior leadership teams and confirmed an ongoing focus on areas with higher absence levels.
- The PCC sought to understand what proportion of leavers were departing during their probation period. Of the 196 leavers, the DCC reported 57 were in their probation, equating to 29%. Noting Kent's position ran slightly higher than other forces, including its Most Similar Group, the DCC advised there was no singular underlying reason. As a follow up, the PCC asked whether any particular entry route saw more leavers. Advising attrition was fairly consistent across all entry routes at 27-29%, the DCC noted analysis since 2022 showed no consistent pattern; he added the position was closely monitored.
- The PCC asked for an update on OH's referral waiting times. The DCC reported a recent increase from 10 to 12 working days, partly due to an increased level of referrals. Noting some OH staff had been supporting recruitment activity, he advised recent investment in the recruitment team would remove this requirement thereby helping to bring referral time back to 10 working days.
- The PCC sought assurance the Force was complying with the Police (Vetting) Regulations 2025. The CC acknowledged previous challenges with enhanced vetting but highlighted the significant investment in staffing to clear backlogs and strengthen processes. He explained the new Authorised Professional Practice had also been embedded which increased the number of roles requiring enhanced vetting and advised that quarterly reviews provided ongoing quality assurance.

6. Finance

- The CC reported a revenue underspend of £0.5m and a capital budget underspend of £12.3m.
- Referring to table 1, the CC highlighted income associated with Op Lockstream and commended work, led by DCC Ayling, aimed at policing organised immigration crime.
- With regards to the forecast capital position, the CC advised that the movement between Q2 and Q3 was largely attributable to a revised forecast for the North Kent project, associated with lower-than-anticipated tender costs for lifecycle works.
- The CC noted the revenue savings were detailed in the report.
- The CC advised the Chief Finance Officer actively worked to manage financial risks and ensure opportunities were optimised but acknowledged this could not always be achieved.
- Reporting little change in the police attrition and leaver costs for Q3, the CC highlighted the Government's plan to remove uplift rules would significantly change the risk profile for the coming financial year.
- The CC stated that while a natural vacancy level would be preferable, the vacancy factor was currently an unavoidable requirement for budget control. He also advised that future savings work would seek to reduce the overall rate, while maintaining the right balance between workforce vacancies and financial savings.
- The CC highlighted the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which provided insight into the likely future financial challenges.
- The PCC thanked the CC for his update and acknowledged the scale of future challenges. The CC stressed the significant long-term financial challenge presented by the MTFP and highlighted the difficulties around strategic workforce and resource planning within a funding environment largely driven by annual settlements. He also advised of ongoing uncertainty around central government funding, including Counter Terrorism and the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.

7. Topical Issues & Update on Significant Operational Matters

- No topical issues or significant operational matters were raised beyond those discussed in the papers.

	Status	Owner	Due Date
Provide update on results of operational activity relating to nuisance vehicles (when available).	Open	Force	04.06.26
Provide further detail on plans to tackle residential burglary outside of meeting.	Open	Force	04.06.26

Date of next meeting – Thursday 04 June 2026, 9:45am