

Summary of the PCC Accountability Meeting

Date: Tuesday 8 July 2025

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 – Sarah Taylor, OPCCN
- Chief Constable – Paul Sanford, Norfolk Constabulary
- Temporary Assistant Chief Constable – Chris Balmer, Norfolk Constabulary
- Assistant Chief Officer – Peter Jasper, Norfolk Constabulary
- Director of Performance and Scrutiny – Sharon Lister, OPCCN
- Director of the Local Policing Delivery Unit – Ralph Jackman, Norfolk Constabulary
- Assistant Director of Performance and Scrutiny – James Stone, OPCCN
- Inspector – Lucy King, Norfolk Constabulary
- Sergeant – Richard Bell, Norfolk Constabulary
- Performance and Scrutiny Manager – Kirt Wilkinson, OPCCN
- Media and Communications Officer – Joshua Brown, OPCCN
- Staff Officer – Matthew Hillary, Norfolk Constabulary

1.1 Apologies for absence:

- Chief Executive – Mark Stokes, OPCCN
- Deputy Chief Constable – Simon Megicks, Norfolk Constabulary
- Chief Finance Officer – Simon George, Norfolk Constabulary
- 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 Wednesday 16 April 2025

- The minutes from the PCC Accountability Meeting held on Wednesday 16 April 2025 were agreed to be a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.
- Action updates can be found on pages 12 and 13.

4. Public Questions

Public Question	Constabulary Answer
<p>Shooting is worth £3.3bn to the UK economy and certificate holders are now charge full cost recovery fees for their license renewals and grants, yet new Grant applications in Norfolk are currently taking anywhere up to 12 months to process, causing an unreasonable delay to the public and impacting on local businesses. What is being done to reduce this backlog to more reasonable timelines, and how is the Norfolk PCC working with the Suffolk PCC in order to address this situation?</p>	<p>The Chief Constable (CC) confirmed that police forces receive a fee for every application they process. This fee, which is set by the Home Office, had not been increased for a number of years. However, following representations from policing there was a doubling of the fee earlier this year. The CC stated that even with the increase in fee, it does not cover the full costs incurred by the Constabulary for administering the licensing regime. It also does not help with clearing any of the backlog that has built up over a number of years. The CC stated that the licensing regime should be fully funded. He added that through the funding increase, Norfolk Constabulary (jointly with Suffolk Constabulary) has been able to recruit four extra people to process firearms applications. However, as a result of learning from the tragic incident that took place in Plymouth a number of years ago, the amount of work that needs to be undertaken for each licence review has increased. The training expectation for staff working in the Firearms Licensing Unit has also increased, resulting in more abstractions. The CC stated that firearms licensing efficiency isn't just about more staff, there is a need to speed up the testing of new technology, process automation and bots which should improve the efficiency of some of the administrative tasks. The CC confirmed that good progress is being made in this area. He added that some of the delays are caused by necessary medical checks. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) stated that she and the PCC for Suffolk have made representations into the funding settlement.</p>
<p>What is Norfolk Police doing to support the governments knife surrender scheme in July?</p>	<p>The CC confirmed that there is a national knife surrender scheme that focuses on ninja swords which Norfolk Constabulary are supporting. The scheme is due to run throughout July 2025 and anyone can come forward and surrender these types of weapons, however the CC is not anticipating many surrenders of these swords. The CC stated that the Home Office has another scheme specific to</p>

Public Question	Constabulary Answer
	<p>London, Manchester and West Midlands which involve the use of a mobile van with a knife surrender capability, along with a number of bins which will be sited in areas of high knife crime incidents. The CC stated that research into the impact of knife bins is not compelling and further research to understand any benefits they could have in Norfolk would be helpful. The CC confirmed that previous knife surrender campaigns have taken place in the county, and we do see knives handed in, however it is difficult to determine if these are knives that would have been used in crime. The challenge with knife crime is that if someone is so motivated, they can get a knife from anywhere and it does not need to be a big knife to inflict lethal injury. Any decision about knife surrender bins in Norfolk would need to be a partnership one, it is not for the police to say yes or no alone. The CC stated this would be a helpful discussion point at a Community Safety Partnership meeting at some point in the future.</p>

5. Police and Crime Plan 2025-29: Priority 1 – Preventing Crime

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
<p>Preventing Crime introductory comments.</p>	<p>ACC Balmer introduced the paper and confirmed that Violence With Injury offences have reduced by 8% compared to the long-term average. ACC Balmer stated that a significant portion of these incidents are Domestic Abuse (DA) related. Given these reductions, the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Delivery Group (DASVG) priority to reduce overall volumes of domestic abuse and sexual violence through prevention and supportive interventions in communities, and by raising awareness, seems to be having an early positive effect. Following the 'Joint Targeted Area Inspection of the multi-agency response to children who are victims of DA in Norfolk' report, there is now a greater focus on recognising the voice of children which was a topic addressed within the report findings. ACC Balmer mentioned that the Constabulary established Operation Oilman which is a targeted piece of work in Norwich</p>

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	<p>which aims to reduce harm, increase public confidence, and prevent further escalation of youth related serious violence. Norfolk Constabulary has seen some positive movement in that direction. ACC Balmer commented on Project Vigilant where plain-clothes officers from the Community Policing Team patrol night-time economy areas and community spaces to identify concerning behaviours which has led to number of individuals being identified. ACC Balmer stated that neighbourhood crime is a challenging area and Norfolk Constabulary have seen an increase in the volume of neighbourhood crime overall compared to the previous 12 months and is now level with the long-term average. Furthermore, the charged rate percentage has decreased against the previous 12 months.</p>
<p>In regard to Retrospective Facial Recognition (RFR), what does the Constabulary define as RFR?</p>	<p>ACC Balmer confirmed that RFR is a technique that uses facial recognition technology to identify individuals from images or video footage after an event has occurred as part of a criminal investigation, comparing images against a library of images of people taken on arrest. This is different to live facial recognition, which identifies individuals in real-time.</p>
<p>Regarding Norfolk Constabulary supporting improvements to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), what are the timescales for completion? What will the changes mean in practice for victims/survivors going there in future? Does the fact that these improvements have to be made indicate a shortfall in provision currently against best practice?</p>	<p>Improvements to the SARC have been made due to the Forensic Service Regulator requiring nationally that all SARC facilities are accredited to a specific standard by October 2025 (ISO accreditation), not as a result of any shortfall in local provision. ACC Balmer stated that in terms of timescales the refurbishment work has now been completed but the Constabulary will not consider the improvements finished until the facility is visited by the regulator later this year. For victims visiting the centre, this will not affect their experience. The improvements consist of additional steps taken during the forensic evidence collection process to provide greater assurance. The PCC summarised by stating the improvements, in order to meet International Organisation for Standardisation forensic accreditation standards, will ensure</p>

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	that victims at the SARC can take comfort in the fact that the material is being assured in how it is being collected. ACC Balmer agreed that this was a fair summary.
The dashboard being created by the Horizons Team which will support the identification and targeting of repeat RaSSO (Rape and Serious Sexual Offences) suspects and offenders, is there a timeline as to when this will be integrated into the force, and will there be any training facilitated to ensure officers are using the dashboard effectively?	ACC Balmer confirmed that the dashboard is now live and available to RaSSO Police Sergeants. In terms of training, it is more of an enhancement on what they are already doing, so no specific training is required.
In relation to the Norfolk Investigations Improvement Board, what sort of impact is it expected that this Board will catalyse? How long is it anticipated before the impacts are felt more widely or become in some way tangible?	ACC Balmer stated that this is a board structure that enhances the work that Norfolk Constabulary has been doing under the 'Operation Investigate' investigations improvement programme for some time. They will be working around the five pillars of overall quality of investigations standards, making sure that the victims remain at the centre of the force approach. ACC Balmer added that the Constabulary will be making sure that they've got the appropriate learning and development for officers to draw from. ACC Balmer stated that work has already been done in making sure that the force has increased governance and accountability and ensure these mechanisms keep up with other changes made within the Constabulary, for example the introduction of District Crime Units which have seen some significant improvements in crime outcomes for victims. The force is already seeing benefits and are continuing to detect crime at a level that other forces would be envious of.
How is the Constabulary currently promoting Neighbourhood Watch (NW) across the county? How does NW support or otherwise assist policing operations in Norfolk?	ACC Balmer stated that Local Communications Officers promote the scheme through all of Norfolk Constabulary's social media sites and other communications channels. The Neighbourhood Watch Team hosted an engagement stand at the Royal Norfolk Show. ACC Balmer confirmed that all Norfolk Constabulary Safer Neighbourhood Officers have been trained in how to

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	use the NW system and what it can bring to the force. Beat Managers are asked every time they have a local priority setting meeting to keep talking about Neighbourhood Watch and to keep selling the benefits of it because the Constabulary knows that people who are members of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme feel safer in their communities. The PCC stated that the benefits are so well demonstrated and that is exactly why it is included within the Police and Crime Plan.
What is uptake like for wellbeing workshops? Has any work been done to understand how great latent demand is and to what extent it is being met?	<p>ACC Balmer confirmed that the uptake is pleasingly high considering these are not mandatory sessions. There is good engagement and questions generated within sessions. ACC Balmer commented on how the Constabulary does not have latent demand figures, however the force is trying to upscale what they currently have in place and will continue to assess it.</p> <p>The PCC commented on how there has been a huge effort in this area, especially with the recruitment of wellbeing officers.</p> <p>The CC stated that he is aware there are a number of departments under immense workload pressure, including those that deal with sex offenders and the indecent images offences. The CC commented on how there is a two-pronged approach to this, and one is making sure the Constabulary has got a good safety net that has proactive initiatives in place for officers and staff working in these areas for a better welfare service. Furthermore, additional staff have been put into those departments as well to try and boost their resilience.</p>

6. Police and Crime Plan 2025-29: Priority 2 – Cohesive Communities

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
Cohesive Communities introductory comments.	The Director of the Local Policing Delivery Unit, Mr Jackman, started by commenting on the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, and confirmed that the

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	<p>Government's ambition is an increase nationally of 13,000 neighbourhood officers. He confirmed that with the available funding, 17 police officers and 14 members of police staff are being allocated to Norfolk Constabulary. Mr Jackman stated that there should be no time-lag in this growth as Norfolk Constabulary have anticipated recruitment at this level. On the 10 April 2025 the Home Secretary wrote to all Police and Crime Commissioners asking them to ensure that in support of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, immediate steps were taken by the police and their partner agencies to maximise opportunities for visible action to tackle anti-social behaviour and increase the safety of town centres and high streets this summer.</p> <p>In relation to road traffic collisions resulting in fatal or serious injury, Mr Jackman added that there is a myriad of joint operations to try mitigating such collisions, however these have increased against the long-term average but have decreased compared to the previous 12 months. In this reporting period 411 vehicles were stopped during planned Commercial Vehicle Unit (CVU) operations. He added that the Road Casualty Reduction Team continue to contribute to 'Fatal Four' enforcement through their daily deployments at collision hotspots and by supporting the Roads and Armed Policing Team (RAPT) days of action and other road safety operations. He added that the Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership operates several fixed site and mobile safety cameras at locations across the county.</p> <p>Shoplifting reports have increased by 28.6% compared to the previous 12 months and 60% against the long-term average, however Norfolk Constabulary has a high solved rate at 43.5%. He added that the Constabulary uses Out of Court Resolutions to help in this area. Mr Jackman stated that the force continues to develop the retail crime toolkit. There has been a decreasing trend in the recording of Hate Crime in Norfolk, however this reflects the national picture and continues to be an under-reported crime type. Mr Jackman stated that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team respond to community tensions,</p>

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	<p>with Great Yarmouth being the focus recently. In relation to rural crime, there has been partnership working with RSPCA and the Environmental Agency.</p> <p>Mr Jackman finalised by saying that the Constabulary has added an Appendix within the papers which details Keeping Towns Safer this Summer. There has been significant work in partnership with lots of organisations in this area.</p>
<p>If I were to ask the RAPT teams about their mission, what would they say?</p>	<p>The CC started by saying that the RAPT team would consider their number one priority to be to reduce the number of fatal and serious injury collisions on Norfolk roads. This includes a focus on the 'Fatal Four' offences (speeding, mobile phone use, not wearing a seatbelt, drink and drug offences). They also have a strong focus on tackling criminality on the Norfolk road networks.</p> <p>The PCC commented on how this was interesting as the public opinion seems to differ.</p>
<p>Regarding the retail crime action days, what do these constitute and how is success measured? To what extent are they successful and how will they be improved in future?</p>	<p>Mr Jackman stated that Norfolk Constabulary deliver Safer Business Action events through a partnership approach, which focus resources for the Constabulary in its responses to high visibility patrolling, tracking and providing a return to the Business Crime Centre. Outcomes are fed back into the community and these events have a prevention focus which impact on confidence and satisfaction.</p> <p>The PCC commented on how partnership working is well articulated.</p>
<p>It is noted the challenges regarding the roll out of Stop Hate in Norfolk (SHiN) training in Norwich, how long is the SHiN training and what is the uptake to date?</p>	<p>Mr Jackman confirmed that the training course is 2 to 2.5 hours long and 119 individuals have received training since 2024. He confirmed that the Constabulary would like to expand the provision.</p>
<p>In regard to organised crime, the link between fly-tipping and organised crime has been established for some time now. When I asked about this connect previously, it is fair to say that the Constabulary was at a very early stage of</p>	<p>The CC stated that there are other opportunities that are connected and operate across boundaries, such as heritage crime. The CC confirmed that Norfolk is a metal detecting hotspot. The Rural Crime Team carried out a number of regional operations and had success in deterring and catching</p>

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
understanding that relationship. How has the Constabulary been able to take account of this link in its work to address this issue, both with local councils and with landowners?	<p>nighthawkers. Norfolk Constabulary have a police officer who has specialty in this area who promotes correct practice of metal detecting. In terms of fly-tipping, the CC sees it as organised crime as there is profit to be made.</p> <p>Mr Jackman added that there is an agreed way of working in principle which is being managed through the countywide Places and Spaces Working Group and the Community Safety Partnership. This has not been finalised as of yet.</p> <p>The PCC commented on how fly-tipping is such a waste of landowner's time, so is keen to see progress at pace. Action – have sight of progress please.</p>

7. Neighbourhood Policing Update (Cohesive Communities Appendix 1)

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
Regarding Operation Dynamo, why is this work important to the Constabulary and how are locations for this successful work identified?	The CC commented on how this links back to roads safety. The Constabulary has concerns of e-bikes and e-scooters at varying levels of legality and the Constabulary have no interest in targeting legal owners and users. He added that some of the speeds of these e-bikes are concerning but what the force are seeking to do is encourage legal and safe use. Too often e-bike/e-scooter users are not considerate to pedestrians. Operation Dynamo has been a Norwich specific operation, however the approach has expanded eastward. The CC stated that there needs to be significant educational piece in regard to this, and retailers play a part in this. Communications will be done by Norfolk Constabulary again around the Christmas period.
Will there be increased demand in the Constabulary Communications Team due to the amplification of outputs and outcomes of the 'Summer Plan' and, if so, what is the plan to deal with this increased demand?	The CC confirmed that this will not be problematic for the Constabulary as they are always looking to promote visible patrols and other activity, and communities want to know when officers are present.

8. Police and Crime Plan 2025-29: Priority 3 – Reducing Harm

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
Reducing Harm introductory comments.	ACC Balmer started by commenting on Operation Orbit which has led to a lot of disruptive work in regard to Serious and Organised Crime (SOC). Seizures have been good, however the Constabulary is experiencing challenges with recording disruptions. ACC Balmer confirmed that a lot of work has been done in response to the areas of concern highlighted by HMICFRS and addressing their recommendations. He added that the SOC Local Profile will be signed off later this year. ACC Balmer confirmed that the force consistently remained over 90% for answering 999 calls in 10 seconds or under, and there was also an increase in the volume of 999 calls. ACC Balmer confirmed that there has been an increase in the volume of charges on DA and added that RaSSO performance continues to improve, citing Operation Soteria implementation as helping with that. In regard to value of service and additional workload, making sure there is adequate support for victims is crucial. Restorative Justice has seen a 700% increase in referrals, this underpins the value of that team. ACC Balmer finished by stating that the Victims Code of compliance continues to improve.
In relation to SOC threats in Norfolk, what is being done across agencies in Norfolk and out of county to tackle upstream threats and risks?	ACC Balmer stated that the Constabulary works closely with the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) and other law enforcements agencies to deal with upstream threats and risks. He added that lots of work has been done in this space within the last five years, so they are well joined up here.
It is encouraging to see solved rates for DA, stalking and harassment, and RaSSO increasing, is there anything specific that is contributing towards this? From a victim angle there appears to be a disconnect, specifically with stalking.	The CC stated that the Constabulary's work here is far from done and further improvements still need to be made. He added that it is startling to see the volume of violent crime that is DA related. The CC confirmed that Norfolk Constabulary does not have a dedicated Stalking Unit so there is a need for more upskilling across the workforce on how stalking is perpetrated, including non-DA-related cases.

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	<p>ACC Balmer stated that in relation to stalking, force-wide development work continues as part of the VAWG Action Plan. He added that Norfolk Constabulary have a network of Vulnerability Champions, and he has asked that a recent stalking related training offer is explored to further upskill them. At monthly meetings, Area Commanders set priorities and identify the highest harm DA and stalking offenders for targeted activity.</p> <p>The PCC stated that it would be helpful to have it set out plainly and would like an update on the victim's perspective of stalking (non-DA related). She added that there need to be continued reflection in this area.</p>
<p>In relation to the RaSSO training, how is the victim's experience being brought into the lessons learned and continuous improvement of this approach in the Constabulary?</p>	<p>ACC Balmer confirmed that the victim's experience is absolutely brought into the lessons learned and continuous improvement, however he stated that this is always a sensitive issue due to the risk of re-traumatisation. The Constabulary has recently identified victims to help with this. These victims praised the Constabulary, however they also identified some areas for improvement. A recording of a victim talking about her experience of contact with the police has been utilised within first responder training so that police officers understand that this isn't just an evidence gathering process. ACC Balmer confirmed that there is also an existing Rape Scrutiny Panel which doesn't include any primary victims but has members who work directly with victims.</p>
<p>In relation to the 12 month reported outcomes, 50% of those 'harmed' and who participated in Restorative Justice (RJ) say that RJ increased their feelings of safety and wellbeing. What about the other 50%? Do these tend to feel no difference or are there measures of harm being identified in those reported outcomes?</p>	<p>ACC Balmer confirmed that the other 50% either didn't respond to the survey or gave a neutral position.</p>
<p>With the efficacy of RJ, have the Constabulary got a sense of the counterfactual?</p>	<p>ACC Balmer confirmed that the Constabulary does not have a sense of reoffending rates following an RJ intervention to that level of detail as what you</p>

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
	<p>would get from a randomised control trial, however there does appear to be lower levels of reoffending against other areas seen.</p> <p>The CC added that as a Chief Officer Team there have been early discussions about the Independent Sentencing Review, and they are expecting more detail soon to be able to take a considered position. Norfolk Constabulary are ready to respond. The CC stated that there are time-saving benefits to be made and the sentences that are sometimes given have a sanction that is of less utility than some of the things that can be achieved through RJ.</p>

9. Emerging Operational/Organisational Risks

- Sentencing Review – The CC stated that there will be a need to monitor this very carefully. Norfolk will see more offenders being managed outside of prison as a result of this. The CC mentioned that there will be a £300 million transfer of costs to the police as a result, and it could impact on crime levels within the county. Success will be dependent on alternatives being resourced appropriately.
- Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee – The CC confirmed that the spending review has been announced, however they are yet to understand Norfolk Constabulary's allocation over the next three years. The CC stated that the settlement needs to come as soon as possible.
- The CC mentioned that the police officer pay settlement is due to be announced at the end of July, so this will need monitoring.

10. Any Other Business

- There were no items raised.

Actions

Description of Action	Action Update/Decision
Action 16 (16 April 2025): The CC is to look to refresh the Constabulary communications on Road Safety specifically linked to the Highway Code changes implemented in 2022.	Activity has been completed and shared on social media platforms. Action closed.
Action 17 (16 April 2025): DCC Megicks is to provide the PCC with a report on the progress being made to recruit an additional resource in the Restorative Justice Team with OPCCN funding.	DCC Megicks confirmed with the PCC in April 2025 that the post within the Restorative Justice Team has been filled. Action closed
Action 18 (16 April 2025): The Performance and Scrutiny Manager is to confirm from previous PCC Accountability Meeting summaries whether there was mentioning of the DA Matters Training force-wide roll-out now being complete and is to report back to the PCC.	The CC confirmed that 832 first responders have been trained along with 75 Domestic Abuse Matters Champions. The training has been paused for the summer as that is the peak abstraction period, so a lot of training gets paused over that period of time. The CC confirmed that the training will commence again in September with an aim to train another 600 officers and 60 more DA Matters Champions. Action closed
Action 19 (16 April 2025): The CC is to incorporate a Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee update into the summer PCC Accountability Meeting reports.	Details included in the appendix of Cohesive Communities paper. Action closed.
Action 20 (8 July 2025): The Constabulary is to include updates on fly-tipping and the victim's perspective of stalking (non-DA related) in the next PCC Accountability Meeting papers.	New action.

Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 22 October 2025

Signatures



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Sarah Taylor
Police and Crime Commissioner



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Paul Sanford
Chief Constable