



Norfolk's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) response to inspections published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

Section 55 of the Police Act 1996 (as amended by section 37 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017) requires local policing bodies to respond and publish comments on all inspection reports pertaining to your force within 56 days of report publication.

Inspection Title:

The Policing Response to the Investigation of Online Child Sexual Abuse and the Management of Registered Sex Offenders

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All local forces in England and Wales

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[The policing response to the investigation of online child sexual abuse and the management of registered sex offenders - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services](#)

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Key Findings

This report focuses on the police response to both the management of registered sex offenders and the investigation of online child sexual abuse material.

During His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) 2021/22 and 2023–25 Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspection cycles, they assessed police forces' investigations of online child sexual abuse and the management of registered sex offenders. The Inspectorate published their inspection findings for each force in the 'managing offenders and subjects' section in each report. During both inspection cycles, HMICFRS found the same themes for improvement. While many forces made progress between inspection cycles, issues remained in some forces.

Many of those issues could be resolved at individual force level. However, others required more strategic national focus and development. Towards the conclusion of their 2023–25 inspection cycle, HMICFRS made the decision to pause their inspection of investigations into online child sexual abuse and the management of sexual offenders. Instead, the Inspectorate are publishing this spotlight report to highlight more broadly what is working well and what needs to improve at both the local and national level.

Annual data shows that in the year ending 31 March 2025, there were 73,047 Category 1 multi-agency public protection arrangements offenders. This is an increase of 2,995 (4%) compared to the previous year. Over the ten years since the year ending 31 March 2015, the number of registered sex offenders increased by 23,581 (48%).

The National Crime Agency informed HMICFRS that in the year ending 31 December 2023, forces collectively received 12,469 referrals from the agency for online child sexual abuse. In the year ending 31 December 2024, this rose to 20,704 referrals, a 66% increase.

Registered sex offenders remain on sex offender registration for at least two years and can remain on registration indefinitely. This means that the number of offenders recorded will increase as there are more new registered sex offenders identified than there are registered sex offenders ending their sex offender registration periods. Forces' staffing numbers aren't sufficient to meet the increasing demand they are facing. And legislation changes, such as those proposed by the Sentencing Bill 2025, are likely to add to this demand.

Between the Inspectorates two PEEL inspection cycles, they found that many forces had improved their performance in the management of sexual offenders.

During the inspections, HMICFRS found that many forces didn't consistently follow national guidance when managing registered sex offenders. Some Management of Sexual Offenders and Violent Offenders (MOSOVO) teams also lacked centralised oversight, which prevented forces from achieving consistent performance across all teams. The Inspectorate found that some forces failed to use the Violent and Sex Offender Register effectively. In these cases, this was because officers and staff lacked sufficient training in both the system and the expectations for recording their activities with offenders. The Inspectorate found that forces with the most effective MOSOVO teams had dedicated, centralised senior leadership oversight. This approach makes sure that all teams operate consistently, allows for accurate performance comparisons and makes it easier to move officers and staff between teams during high-demand periods.

During the inspections, HMICFRS found that some forces lacked effective performance data for the management of registered sex offenders. Some forces didn't record enough details to monitor risk.

HMICFRS found that some forces needed to increase their number of MOSOVO offender managers to improve the ratio of offender managers to registered sex offenders. If MOSOVO offender managers have high caseloads, it can lead to ineffective offender management due to them not having enough time to complete all tasks thoroughly. The Inspectorate also found that some forces didn't have enough supervisors, which led to high supervisor

workloads. This can result in poor supervisory oversight and review of important risk-reducing documents, the Inspectorate found that a supervisor could be responsible for 500 registered sex offenders.

Forces should follow the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP) for MOSOVO to make sure that they assess and manage the risk of registered sex offenders robustly. HMICFRS found that some forces were using single-crewed visits, which is where one person carries out the visit alone. The APP for MOSOVO is clear that visits should be carried out by two people as this allows them to use their observations to assess the risk. The APP for MOSOVO also outlines that visits should be unannounced. HMICFRS found that some forces carried out announced visits to registered sex offenders without clear policies on when this should be done, who should authorise visits and what rationale should be recorded.

Some forces aren't using the Police National Database to check their registered sex offenders on a regular basis. The database holds intelligence gathered from forces and services across the United Kingdom. Forces should be using it to understand the intelligence that exists for offenders at all levels of risk in the community and to assess and manage the risk appropriately.

At the time of the report, there was no national digital course for the management of sexual offenders. HMICFRS found that some forces didn't provide sufficient digital training to give officers and staff the confidence in the use of technology. This can lead to missed opportunities to identify further offending.

Adequate well-being provision for MOSOVO and Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (OCSAE) teams is essential. The National Police Wellbeing Service commissioned the 2025 national police wellbeing survey. The results outlined the need for welfare provisions to be mandatory for high-risk roles such as those in MOSOVO and OCSAE teams. This is because they are frequently carrying out emotionally demanding work. People who need support may not self-refer for welfare provision or recognise there is an issue. A mandatory referral for an annual psychological health screening would normalise and standardise initial access and remove any the perceived stigma from an opt-in process.

Forces can't safeguard victims and successfully manage the risk posed by offenders alone. The Probation Service works with the police to manage registered sex offenders. But high probation workloads can lead to delays in risk assessments. This means that some forces can't properly manage the risk of offenders in the community.

Police forces should work closely with children's social care (CSC) to effectively safeguard children. However, HMICFRS found that some forces weren't sharing information with CSC at the earliest opportunity. In these cases, CSC was contacted prior to the police searching the suspect's premises but usually no more than 24 hours beforehand. This was generally due to the fear that CSC would contact the suspect before police enforcement, which could risk vital evidence being lost before the police had been able to secure it.

During HMICFRS' 2021/22 and 2023–25 PEEL inspections, they found that most forces had good governance and operating models for investigation of online child sexual abuse and exploitation.

Forces should have well-structured teams and processes in place to effectively investigate online child sexual abuse. Some forces aren't regularly reviewing the intelligence for referrals that are awaiting enforcement. This means they can't accurately assess whether the risk has changed and whether the enforcement should be prioritised. HMICFRS found that some forces had outstanding referrals in intelligence development, investigation action (progressing to a warrant or arrest at an address) or both.

Police officers and staff need to do more training to improve the investigation of online child sexual abuse. The Inspectorate found that many forces didn't have enough officers and staff to investigate online sexual abuse, even after they had highlighted that their staffing models were insufficient. Investigating online child sexual abuse is a specialist, high-risk area. Clear and detailed guidance is essential to make sure that best practice is followed and successful outcomes are achieved.

Forces aren't always effectively managing the risk posed by online child sexual abuse suspects. Forces should primarily use arrest for OCSAE team investigation. Some forces use voluntary attendance for interview rather than arrest powers, which removes opportunities to safeguard the public. The use of bail to safeguard victims should be a starting point due to the offences that the suspect has been arrested for. These offences are committed online. This means that suspects don't require physical access to children to be a risk. Forces should use bespoke conditions that will safeguard the public. HMICFRS also found that some forces didn't carry out bail checks for those bailed by OCSAE teams. This can lead to forces missing bail breaches and changes in risk to children.

Families of online child sexual abuse suspects are often severely affected by the investigation. However, they aren't officially classed as victims. To provide support, some forces use a third-party organisation or an officer or staff member whose sole responsibility is to carry out the family support role.

Recommendations

16 recommendations are made within the report, nine of which are directed at Chief Constables nationally:

Recommendation 1:

By 31 October 2026, forces should:

- Review existing practices to make sure they use the Kent internet risk assessment tool and the prioritisation tool to prioritise referrals for all children and adult suspects;
- Review their procedures to make sure there is regular assessment of intelligence and risk for online child sexual abuse and exploitation suspects both prior to enforcement and throughout the lifecycle of the investigation; and

- Make sure investigations allocated outside online child sexual abuse and exploitation teams remain under the team’s management oversight, including a central escalation policy.

Recommendation 2:

By 30 April 2027, forces should review existing staffing levels in online child sexual abuse and exploitation teams to make sure that they have enough officers and staff to manage demand effectively and that workloads are manageable.

Recommendation 4:

By 31 October 2026, forces should:

- Review their online child sexual abuse procedures and make sure that arrest and bail is considered and recorded for all suspects; and
- Make sure that when online child sexual abuse suspects are on bail, conditions are proactively checked at least once per applicable bail period.

Recommendation 5:

By 30 April 2027, forces should make sure that third-party provision is in place to support families of online child sexual abuse suspects and that leaflets with contact details of support organisations are available.

Recommendation 6:

By 30 October 2026, forces should:

- Review their operating models and governance frameworks to make sure they have a consistent approach to managing registered sex offenders across all teams, including use of the Violent and Sex Offender Register in line with Home Office standards; and
- Review the data they collect, how they collect it and how it is presented and make sure that it represents what is on the Violent and Sex Offender Register to accurately assess and manage the risk of registered sex offenders.

Recommendation 8:

By 31 October 2026, forces should:

- Use previous demand trends and review predicted demand for management of sexual offenders and violent offenders teams for five years to make sure that they have enough offender managers and supervisors to manage this;
- Make sure that management of sexual offenders and violent offenders team abstractions are recorded, reviewed, don’t happen on a regular basis and don’t have a negative effect on workload completion;

- Make sure that management of sexual offenders and violent offenders teams have manageable numbers of outstanding active risk management systems assessments, risk management plans, and visits and that these are assessed by both risk level and how overdue they are; and
- Make sure that supervisors are completing reviews of active risk management systems assessments, risk management plans, and visits promptly and within one month.

Recommendation 10:

By 31 October 2026, forces should make sure that:

- Home visits are unannounced and carried out in pairs to comply with the College of Policing authorised professional practice for the management of sexual offenders and violent offenders;
- Visits that don't comply with the authorised professional practice for the management of sexual offenders and violent offenders are authorised, the rationale is recorded on the Violent and Sex Offender Register and that a system is in place to allow assessment of the decision;
- Any reactively managed registered sex offenders meet the conditions set out in the authorised professional practice for the management of sexual offenders and violent offenders; and
- They carry out and assess Police National Database checks on registered sex offenders.

Recommendation 15:

By 31 October 2026, forces should:

- Make sure psychological health screening is mandatory and provided at least annually (as per guidance from the National Police Wellbeing Service) for management of sexual offenders and violent offenders and online child sexual abuse and exploitation team members and supervisors with access to follow-on well-being services; and
- Make sure that management of sexual offenders and violent offenders and online child sexual abuse and exploitation team supervisors have regular trauma-informed training and knowledge sharing to identify signs of trauma, burnout, and other well-being issues and that they can refer to and access timely support and treatment where needed.

Recommendation 16:

By 31 October 2026, forces should make sure that they have a strong service level agreement in place with the Probation Service and that they have a two-way process for

review, feedback, and escalation to make sure safeguarding opportunities aren't being missed.

Areas For Improvement

There were no areas for improvement.

Chief Constable response to report and any Recommendations/Areas for Improvement

I acknowledge the report published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) concerning the policing response to the investigation of online child sexual abuse and the management of registered sex offenders.

Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm is a fundamental duty of the police, and this spotlight report identifies important opportunities for policing to strengthen its approach in this critical area.

The report recognises areas of effective practice but also identifies clear and legitimate concerns that require sustained focus and improvement. I accept the findings and recommendations in full.

The report identifies the growing demand associated with managing sex offenders in the community. The number of offenders being managed by police forces is set to rise even further because of recent sentencing reform and increased reporting on sexual abuse, including online offending. Whilst the report correctly identifies the need to ensure resourcing matches growing demand, it makes no observations about where this resource might come from or how it could be funded.

With the Government prioritising the funding of neighbourhood policing, it is unclear as to how forces should resource other higher risk areas. With police finances already incredibly stretched, further consideration is required as to how the ever-growing number of sex offenders can be effectively monitored without investment. Recent changes to sentencing policy do not appear to have considered whether policing has the capacity to manage the demands that will be placed on police forces.

Each recommendation has been reviewed, and appropriate actions have been identified where required. Delivery and progress will be overseen through established governance arrangements and will remain subject to ongoing scrutiny by the Police and Crime Commissioner. We fully accept the importance of these recommendations and will strive to comply with them all. However, with no additional funding, this will be achieved by reducing resource in other areas of the Constabulary.

Our initial response to each recommendation is set out below.

Recommendation 1:

By 31 October 2026, forces should:

- **Review existing practices to make sure they use the Kent internet risk assessment tool and the prioritisation tool to prioritise referrals for all children and adult suspects;**

- **Review their procedures to make sure there is regular assessment of intelligence and risk for online child sexual abuse and exploitation suspects both prior to enforcement and throughout the lifecycle of the investigation; and**
- **Make sure investigations allocated outside online child sexual abuse and exploitation teams remain under the team’s management oversight, including a central escalation policy.**

Norfolk Constabulary has established effective arrangements to assess and manage risk in online child sexual abuse and exploitation investigations. The Safeguarding Children Online Team (SCOLT) uses the Kent Internet Risk Assessment Tool (KIRAT) to prioritise adult male Indecent Images of Children (IIOC) suspects, with an additional prioritisation tool for all other suspects.

Once suspects are identified, intelligence and risk are routinely assessed prior to enforcement, with checks completed every 28 days for low-risk cases and every 21 days for medium, high, and very high-risk cases will be subject of enforcement within Authorised Professional Practice (APP) timescales. In high-risk cases, these assessments continue post-enforcement, including bail management checks, until the investigation concludes. Post-enforcement assessments for medium and low-risk suspects have not been routine; however, this is being addressed to ensure a consistent approach across all risk levels.

Increased staffing has enabled most Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (OCSAE) investigations to remain within SCOLT. Where a small number of low-risk cases are allocated to other teams, SCOLT retains responsibility for intelligence development and risk assessment. These cases are supported by clear guidance, SCOLT involvement during enforcement, post-enforcement allocation to a PIP2-accredited (Professionalising Investigation Programme Level 2) investigator within the Investigations Command, with appropriate supervision, and SCOLT support to investigators. In response to this recommendation, governance and oversight are being strengthened to ensure all investigations allocated outside SCOLT remain under its management oversight, supported by documented investigation plans, clear consultation requirements, and a formal escalation process which will be defined within SCOLT’s Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). A final review will also be undertaken by SCOLT prior to the investigation being closed.

Recommendation 2:

By 30 April 2027, forces should review existing staffing levels in online child sexual abuse and exploitation teams to make sure that they have enough officers and staff to manage demand effectively and that workloads are manageable.

The Constabulary completed a comprehensive review of staffing levels and demand within SCOLT in 2025. This review informed an options paper and business case which resulted in increases to both officer and staff establishment. Additional posts included a Detective

Sergeant, an Intelligence Development Officer, further Detective Constables, and Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) graders.

This investment has strengthened the team's capacity to manage demand effectively, improved compliance within APP timescales across all risk levels and enabled the team to retain responsibility for a greater proportion of relevant investigations. It has also reduced the need to allocate arrests or deployments outside the specialist team.

Current staffing levels enable the team to manage caseloads effectively and maintain a sustainable workload for officers and staff.

Demand, workloads, and staff welfare will continue to be closely monitored. The Constabulary will also maintain regular dialogue with the National Crime Agency to enhance our understanding of anticipated future demand arising from their referrals.

Recommendation 4:

By 31 October 2026, forces should:

- **Review their online child sexual abuse procedures and make sure that arrest and bail is considered and recorded for all suspects; and**
- **Make sure that when online child sexual abuse suspects are on bail, conditions are proactively checked at least once per applicable bail period.**

All investigations managed by SCOLT include consideration of arrest and bail. Arrest and bail are the default position for suspects, with clearly defined bail conditions used to manage risk. The use of Voluntary Attendance or Release Under Investigation is restricted and may only be authorised by an Inspector or above, ensuring that any alternative to bail is subject to robust scrutiny.

Supervisory oversight is embedded throughout investigatory decision-making. Decisions relating to arrest, bail, visit type and suspect management are recorded, reviewed, and audited, ensuring compliance with national guidance and consistency of practice across SCOLT and wider Public Protection Unit (PPU) functions. To further strengthen assurance, SCOLT will complete a formal review of its processes to ensure that arrest and bail considerations are explicitly recorded for all suspects. This requirement will be clearly reflected within the SCOLT Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

SCOLT currently undertakes proactive bail condition checks for higher-risk suspects as part of its risk management arrangements, prioritising safeguarding where risk is greatest. This approach will be extended to ensure that proactive bail condition checks are completed for all suspects, regardless of risk level, at least once during each applicable bail period. This expectation will be formalised within the SCOLT Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

Opportunities are being explored to strengthen the involvement of Beat Managers in supporting the monitoring of individuals subject to bail conditions, supported through appropriate briefings, clear expectations, and guidance.

Recommendation 5:

By 30 April 2027, forces should make sure that third-party provision is in place to support families of online child sexual abuse suspects and that leaflets with contact details of support organisations are available.

All suspects arrested by SCOLT are provided with a leaflet that includes contact details for third-party support organisations. Leaflets are also made available to the families of suspects to ensure they can access independent advice and emotional support at an early stage. The information provided includes details of the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, a recognised organisation that offers specialist support to individuals under investigation for sexual offences and their families.

In addition to physical leaflets, a QR code is available via the SCOLT intranet page, enabling officers and staff to quickly access up-to-date information on support services for suspects and their families. To ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of this provision, SCOLT has recently reviewed the organisations and agencies listed to confirm that they remain active and continue to offer appropriate support services.

We will continue to keep this provision under review to ensure that families are signposted to suitable third-party support, in line with this recommendation and with our wider commitment to safeguarding and victim-focused policing.

Recommendation 6:

By 30 October 2026, forces should:

- **Review their operating models and governance frameworks to make sure they have a consistent approach to managing registered sex offenders across all teams, including use of the Violent and Sex Offender Register in line with Home Office standards; and**
- **Review the data they collect, how they collect it and how it is presented and make sure that it represents what is on the Violent and Sex Offender Register to accurately assess and manage the risk of registered sex offenders.**

The Constabulary's Public Protection Unit (PPU) operates under policy and governance frameworks that provide a consistent approach to managing Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs) across its teams. This includes the use of the Violent and Sex Offender Register (VISOR) in line with Home Office standards which ensure that responsibilities, processes, and decision-making are applied consistently and appropriately.

We recognise the importance of high-quality management information to support effective oversight of RSO management and OCSAE investigations. Work is underway to strengthen data quality and develop structured management dashboards. These products will provide supervisors and senior leaders with improved oversight of demand, investigative progress, outstanding suspects, bail status, and supervisory capacity.

To address this recommendation in full, a comprehensive review of the data collected by PPU, how that data is captured, and how it is presented will be undertaken. This review will ensure that management information accurately reflects records held on ViSOR and supports effective risk assessment and management of RSOs.

Recommendation 8:

By 31 October 2026, forces should:

- **Use previous demand trends and review predicted demand for management of sexual offenders and violent offenders teams for five years to make sure that they have enough offender managers and supervisors to manage this;**
- **Make sure that management of sexual offenders and violent offenders team abstractions are recorded, reviewed, don't happen on a regular basis and don't have a negative effect on workload completion;**
- **Make sure that management of sexual offenders and violent offenders teams have manageable numbers of outstanding active risk management systems assessments, risk management plans, and visits and that these are assessed by both risk level and how overdue they are; and**
- **Make sure that supervisors are completing reviews of active risk management systems assessments, risk management plans, and visits promptly and within one month.**

A review of historic demand trends and forecast demand for the management of sexual offenders and violent offenders has recently been completed, covering a five-year period. This work identified the need for increased capacity and has resulted in the recruitment of two additional full-time equivalent Offender Managers. This uplift strengthens resilience and helps ensure workloads remain manageable as demand increases.

We will undertake a repeat demand and capacity review within the next two to three years to confirm that Offender Manager ratios remain appropriate. In the interim, Offender Manager staffing ratios are actively monitored on a monthly basis through our established governance structures. Growth needs are also kept under constant review. In addition, we will review supervisory capacity to ensure that leadership and oversight arrangements remain effective and proportionate to both the volume and risk profile of offenders being managed. As part of this review, we will also consider the contribution of other support roles and specialist skills that can assist in the ongoing management of risk, ensuring a holistic and sustainable approach to service delivery.

All abstractions from PPU are recorded and are reviewed routinely to ensure they are kept to a minimum and do not occur on a regular basis. Abstraction data, including levels and any impact on performance, is reported monthly through established governance processes and scrutinised by senior leaders.

The Constabulary closely monitors outstanding Active Risk Management System (ARMS) assessments, risk management plans and required visits. The recent increase in Offender Manager capacity supports more effective completion of this work and helps maintain compliance with required timescales. Information on overdue activity is routinely reviewed by supervisors and escalated through governance meetings, enabling timely intervention where needed.

Supervisors are already required to complete reviews of ARMS assessments, risk management plans, and visits promptly and within one month. Compliance with this requirement is reviewed monthly by the Detective Inspector responsible for the PPU, providing oversight and assurance that supervisory standards are being maintained.

Recommendation 10:

By 31 October 2026, forces should make sure that:

- **Home visits are unannounced and carried out in pairs to comply with the College of Policing authorised professional practice for the management of sexual offenders and violent offenders;**
- **Visits that don't comply with the authorised professional practice for the management of sexual offenders and violent offenders are authorised, the rationale is recorded on the Violent and Sex Offender Register and that a system is in place to allow assessment of the decision.**
- **Any reactively managed registered sex offenders meet the conditions set out in the authorised professional practice for the management of sexual offenders and violent offenders; and**
- **They carry out and assess Police National Database checks on registered sex offenders.**

The PPU conducts the vast majority of RSO home visits on an unannounced basis and always deploys officers in pairs, in line with the APP. In limited and clearly defined circumstances, announced visits may be undertaken, such as for welfare or suicide prevention purposes, or during the initial registration process. All visits are recorded on ViSOR in line with ethical standards and data management requirements.

To further strengthen governance and assurance in relation to visits that do not fully align with APP requirements, the Constabulary is introducing additional controls. Any deviation from unannounced visiting will require authorisation by a PPU Detective Sergeant, supported by a clearly documented rationale on ViSOR. These decisions and their supporting rationale will be subject to monthly review by a PPU Detective Inspector to provide quality assurance and oversight. These changes will be incorporated into our PPU Policy.

Current processes for reactively managed RSOs ensure that individuals are only transitioned to this status once the criteria set out in APP have been met. This process includes

appropriate supervisory oversight, risk assessment, and formal sign-off by a PPU Detective Sergeant.

Police National Database (PND) checks are completed for all RSOs. These checks are undertaken by the PPU administrative function and shared with responsible Offender Managers, who review the information and take appropriate action where required.

Recommendation 15:

By 31 October 2026, forces should:

- **Make sure psychological health screening is mandatory and provided at least annually (as per guidance from the National Police Wellbeing Service) for management of sexual offenders and violent offenders and online child sexual abuse and exploitation team members and supervisors with access to follow-on well-being services; and**
- **Make sure that management of sexual offenders and violent offenders and online child sexual abuse and exploitation team supervisors have regular trauma-informed training and knowledge sharing to identify signs of trauma, burnout, and other well-being issues and that they can refer to and access timely support and treatment where needed.**

Mandatory annual psychological health screening is already established for all SCOLT staff and is delivered through Occupational Health in line with national guidance. This screening is also provided to new recruits upon joining the team. SCOLT supervisors work closely with Occupational Health to ensure prompt access to follow-on wellbeing support where required.

Additional clinical capacity has recently been introduced, enabling more timely and meaningful intervention for staff experiencing higher levels of psychological distress. Occupational Health has also made further recommendations to strengthen early identification and prevention, including enhanced trauma-informed learning through the Wellbeing Champion networks. These measures are currently being implemented.

Psychological screening and trauma-informed training have not previously been mandatory across PPU teams. To address this gap, mandatory annual psychological health screening will be introduced for staff and supervisors working within PPU functions. This will align with existing SCOLT arrangements and National Police Wellbeing Service guidance. In addition, regular trauma-informed training and knowledge-sharing will be delivered for PPU supervisors. Across both PPU and SCOLT teams, a 'pause point' style of support will also be embedded, enabling opportunities for individuals to be attached to other departments where appropriate, providing preventative interventions and reducing the risk of escalation.

Comprehensive wellbeing support services are available to all staff working within SCOLT and PPU. Individuals may self-refer to these services, and supervisors may also make referrals with the consent of the individual.

Recommendation 16:

By 31 October 2026, forces should make sure that they have a strong service level agreement in place with the Probation Service and that they have a two-way process for review, feedback, and escalation to make sure safeguarding opportunities aren't being missed.

The PPU does not currently have a formal Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place with the Probation Service. However, there is a well-established and positive working relationship between the PPU and Norfolk Probation at both managerial and practitioner levels. This has resulted in effective collaboration and produced strong examples of joint working to safeguard vulnerable individuals.

Although these arrangements are effective, they are not sufficiently formalised. To further strengthen practice and provide greater clarity and assurance, the PPU will work in partnership with the Probation Service to develop and implement a robust SLA. This will enhance information sharing, strengthen accountability, and ensure safeguarding opportunities are consistently identified and acted upon.

PCC response to report and any Recommendations/Areas for Improvement

The content of the HMICFRS report is noted and welcomed, as are the Chief Constable's responses to the various recommendations.

I support the Chief Constable's remarks relating to the downstream effects of the recommendations in the current report, given the wider context that resourcing the police service finds itself in and the continued government focus on neighbourhood policing.

In my meetings with the Chief Constable, and with the officers and staff who investigate these crimes and who support the victims and witnesses of these crimes, it is clear that there is a strong commitment keeping the public safe and improving the service across this area. I will continue to monitor and provide another layer of scrutiny to this work.

For Office Use Only:

- Response forwarded to the Chief Constable.
- Response forwarded to the Norfolk Police and Crime Panel.
- Response submitted to the HMICFRS monitoring portal.
- Response published on the OPCN website.