

# Police & Crime Commissioner for Sussex Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

28 January 2026

Prepared by the Assurance Team

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# Executive Summary and External Input



The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is a mandatory annual statement as required in the Code of Corporate Governance for the Police & Crime Commissioner for Sussex and the Chief Constable. It describes how the business operates. The preparation of the AGS should add value to the governance and internal control framework. It further provides assurance on the areas of improvement identified to further enhance governance arrangements that the PCC plans to progress during 2025/26.

The Senior Management Team comprising the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) the Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer recognise the importance of continual review and scrutiny of governance. They pledge their commitment in doing the right things, in the right way, in line with our priorities and values whilst addressing any identified areas for improvement highlighted in this statement.

This statement is designed to complement the AGS of the Chief Constable of Sussex, to give the full picture of governance of the PCC corporation sole. It is informed by an annual review of governance arrangements with assurance on compliance with the seven principles of the Code of Corporate Governance, by on-going audit inspection, and internal review.

This statement has been prepared on the basis of a review of effectiveness of governance arrangements. Advice and recommendations on the AGS have been received from internal and external auditors and the Joint Audit Committee to check and verify that it represents a fair and reasonable assessment of the current governance arrangements and plans for improvement.

The AGS concludes that the governance arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katy Bourne".

Katy Bourne OBE  
Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner  
Date 28 January 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Streater".

Mark Streater  
Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer  
Date 28 January 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Iain McCulloch".

Iain McCulloch FCPFA  
Chief Finance Officer  
Date 28 January 2026

# Opinion of Internal Audit 2024/25 and Input from Independent Joint Audit Committee Chair



The Annual Governance Statement process was reviewed by internal audit in 21/22 with a **reasonable assurance** grading awarded.

## **Annual Internal Audit Opinion 2024/25**

I am satisfied that sufficient assurance and advisory work has been carried out to allow me to form a conclusion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment. In my opinion the framework of governance, risk management and control are 'reasonable', and audit testing has demonstrated controls to be working in practice.

Penny Knowles  
Deputy Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership  
Date 28 May 2025

The Joint Audit Committee (JAC) is a key component of the corporate governance arrangements for both corporation sole entities.

The JAC's purpose is to provide an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of the governance, risk and control arrangements. It supports the PCC and CC and other statutory officers in gaining confidence as to the existence of effective governance by reviewing the comprehensiveness of assurances to meet the needs of Statutory Officers in respect of reliability and integrity.

The JAC provide independent advice and recommendations to the PCC and CC on the adequacy of arrangements in place for: The risk management framework, the internal control environment, financial reporting, annual governance processes, internal audit and external audit. In each of the above areas the JAC is enabled and required to have oversight, independent review and provide recommendations helping to ensure there are adequate arrangements in place for both internal challenge and public accountability.

Eric Hepburn  
Independent Joint Audit Committee Chair  
Date 20 August 2025

# Context and Scope



The Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) are responsible for ensuring business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and is properly accounted for.

Regulation 6(1)(a) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires an authority to conduct a review at least once in a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and include a statement reporting on the review with any published Statement of Accounts (England). This term 'authority' includes the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner legal entities. This requirement is reflected in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25 published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA).

Under the Policing Protocol 2011 the PCC has responsibility for the delivery of efficient and effective policing, management of resources and expenditure by the police force. The PCC has a statutory responsibility to obtain the views of the community and victims of crime about the policing of the Sussex area and must take into account the views of responsible authorities. These views inform the PCC's Police and Crime Plan which sets the strategic direction and priorities for the Force.

The Chief Constable has a statutory responsibility for the control, direction and delivery of operational policing services provided by Sussex Police, having regard to the strategic direction and priorities set by the PCC in the Police and Crime Plan. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Chief Constable is responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate risk management processes, governance arrangements and ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, which facilitates the effective exercise of these functions.

The PCC continues to follow the principles of the CIPFA Framework: 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' and the guidance notes for policing bodies (revised 2016) also using the CIPFA Financial Management Code (CIPFA FM Code) to support good practice in financial management and to assist in demonstrating financial sustainability.

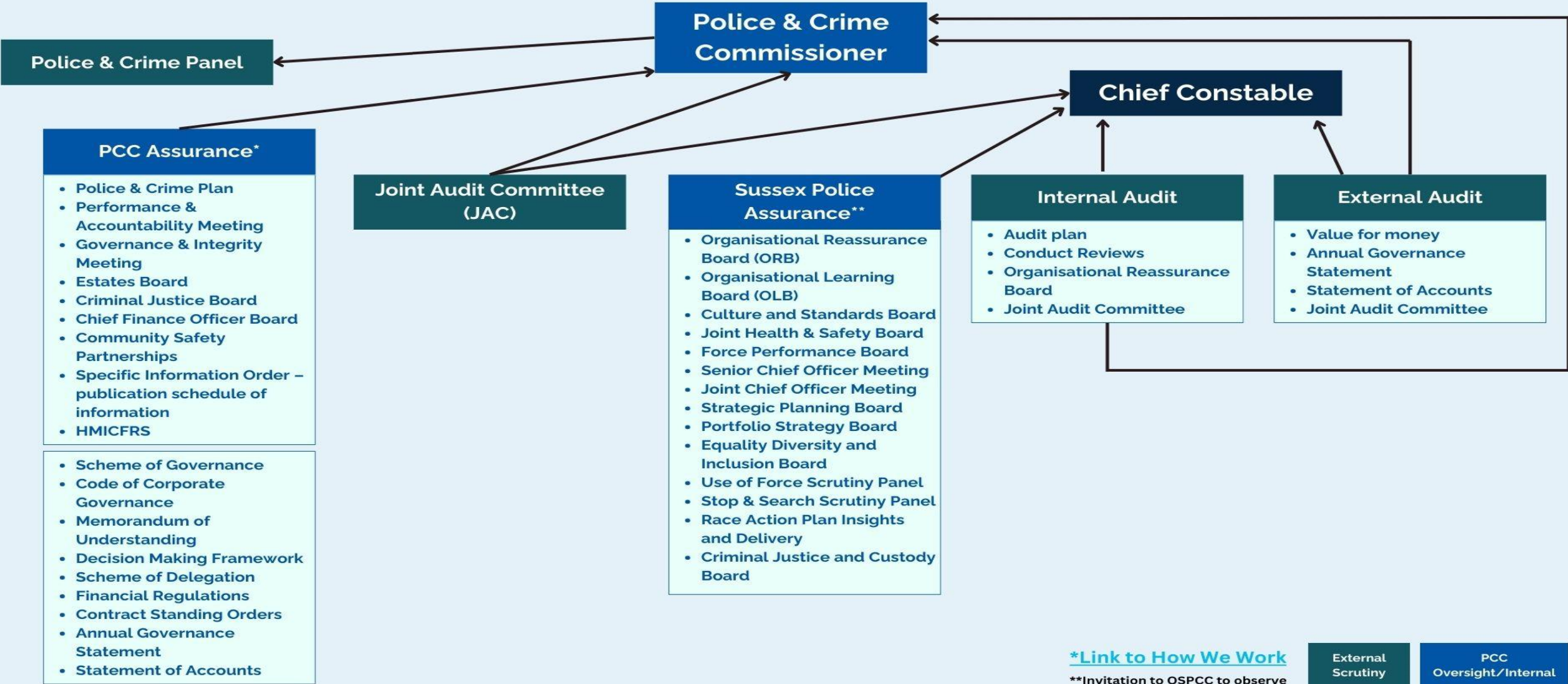
This statement explains how the PCC has complied with the principles and also meets the requirements of regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the publication of a statement on internal control.

The PCC's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of CIPFA's Statement on 'The role of the Chief Finance Officers in Policing (March 2021)' .

# Governance Framework



**Sussex  
Police & Crime  
Commissioner**



[\\*Link to How We Work](#)  
\*\*Invitation to OSPCC to observe

# Effectiveness and Assurance Review



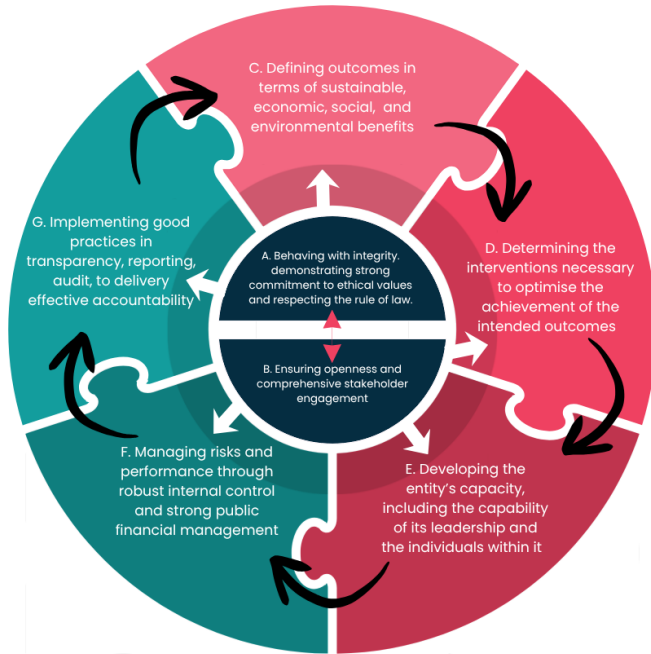
The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) incorporates the continuous review of the effectiveness of the PCC governance arrangements throughout 2024/25. It identifies those areas where we can and will do more to ensure that we have effective governance arrangements that enable the organisation to deliver on the Police and Crime Plan.

The AGS is an objective appraisal of the PCC governance framework to ensure that adequate arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose and comply with the Code of Corporate Governance. It shows that the PCC have met their legal and statutory obligations. It also acknowledges that, due to the complex and dynamic environment in which it operates, the governance arrangements need to continually evolve to respond to changing circumstances.

Governance arrangements for both the PCC and the Chief Constable follow the seven principles as set out in the revised Delivering Good Governance: Guidance Notes for Policing Bodies in England and Wales (2016 Edition).

# Effectiveness and Assurance Review continued

The diagram below illustrates the various principles of good governance in the public sector and how they relate to each other. A summary of how the PCC complies with these principles is provided on subsequent pages of this document.



As part of the annual review, the PCC has considered each principle, providing an outline of the control measures in place, how the Principles are demonstrated and evidenced and indicated any areas for future focus.

## Previous Actions

Previous actions and improvements highlighted from the 2021/22 and 2022/23 Annual Governance Statement were completed during 2023/24. A summary of previous actions status from 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement is provided, to outline the progress and future approach.

## New Actions

Whilst the PCC aims to ensure that sound policies and processes are in place and working effectively, some areas of development or areas for improvement in governance have been identified. The PCC has identified these areas of continuous improvement and outlined the relevant actions on page 25 'Future actions from 2024/25 review'. New actions have been specifically linked to an individual principle however the PCC recognises that actions can influence multiple principles.

## Existing Internal Business as Usual Actions

As part of this annual review, the PCC has also identified any ongoing areas where risks, issues and audit actions are being managed within our existing risk and recommendation governance framework which contribute to compliance with a principle. These are not featured in the in the 'Future actions from 2024/25 review' but are referenced in the individual principle section as ONGOING to provide context and transparency.

## **The Revised Timeline for Devolution in Sussex**

This section of our governance statement outlines our strategic response to the evolving landscape of English devolution, specifically in light of the government's recent decision to postpone the mayoral election in Sussex and other Devolution Priority Programme areas until May 2028. While the core ambition remains the creation of a powerful Mayoral Combined County Authority for Sussex, this delay shifts our immediate focus and planning horizon. The Police and Crime Plan remains our foremost priority throughout this revised transition period.

## **The National Devolution Framework**

The draft English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill continues to provide the legislative foundation for new strategic authorities across England. This legislation is designed to empower local leaders with greater control over key policy areas such as transport, economic development, housing, and, crucially, public safety. This process aims to establish a clearer line of accountability for local communities and presents a historic opportunity for a more integrated approach to service delivery.

## **Key Developments and the Revised Timeline for Sussex**

Following the government's announcement in December 2025, the timeline for establishing the new governance model in Sussex has been revised to prioritise the completion of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and creation new Unitary Authorities ahead of the new mayor taking office. The process for existing councils to develop plans for the new Unitary Authorities is actively underway. The planned 'vesting day' for the transfer of services, staff, and assets to these new Unitary Authorities remains 1 April 2028.

Despite the postponement of the mayoral election, the creation of the Mayoral Combined County Authority will continue and is anticipated to become a recognised corporate body in March 2026 following the EDCE Bill receiving Royal Assent. The MCCA, to be known as the Sussex and Brighton MCCA will be governed by a Board comprising of the constituent authorities and co-opted members prescribed in the Bill and have limited powers. The MCCA will be granted a smaller percentage of its intended investment funds along with an operating budget for its administration. The first mayoral election is now scheduled for May 2028, postponed from the original date of May 2026.

## **The Transfer of Police and Crime Commissioner Functions**

The transfer of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) functions and powers to the new Sussex Mayor will now be aligned with the revised election date. This handover is anticipated to take place **in May 2028** (subject to the Bill receiving Royal Assent and associated legislation being approved), on the Mayor's inauguration.

This revised timeline provides the PCC and her office with an extended period—now until May 2028—to focus on long-term planning to ensure a seamless transition of responsibilities reducing disruption to the vital functions of Sussex Police. While the fundamental goals of the PCC role will remain in place for the next two and a half years, our preparation will now be focused on enabling a new governance structure where a single, directly-elected mayor is responsible for both the strategic direction of the combined authority and the operational oversight of Sussex Police.

## CIPFA Principle A.

### *Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
Code of ethics	A revised Code of Ethics was published in 2024 and set out guidelines for ethical policing principles to assist police personal to do the right things, in the right way, for the right reasons. Practical guidance on maintaining public trust and legitimacy. Includes being open, honest and candid, treating all people and their property with fairness, dignity and respect and challenging or reporting behaviour that is unprofessional. Decision making process encourages the use of personal responsibility and professional judgment. Central to the National Decision Model (NDM), by using the Code of Ethics officers and staff can ensure they are acting in a fair and ethical way in everything they do.	The revised edition of the Code of Ethics was circulated to staff and it is embedded in new starters inductions. Mandatory training involving Code of Ethics consists of a 7 modules training package alongside an in-person module 4. Completion and attendance tracking is in place and reported to FaHRM.	
PCC voluntary Code of Conduct	The PCC upholds office in line with the intentions of the Specified Information Order 2011 and abides by the Nolan Principles. The PCC ensures that officers and staff carry out their respective roles in a climate of openness, support and respect.	The PCC swears an oath in line with the code of conduct every term.	
Standards of Professional Behaviour	Processes are in place to monitor standards of conduct and personal behaviour which are defined and communicated through appropriate codes of conduct and protocols. Standards of integrity, conduct and personal behaviour communicated, accessible and embedded in recruitment, induction, refresher training and focus reviews. (Core Values Framework).	Core Values Framework structure utilized in all entry routes and promotion processes. Annual personal development review undertaken. Regular Governance and Integrity Meetings are held with PSD.	
Culture and Standards Board, Ethics Committee, Scrutiny Panels, Independent Advisory Groups	Sussex Police have specific force level strategic board charged with Culture and Standards which is supported by an independently chaired Ethics Committee, External Scrutiny Panels for Use of Force and Stop Search, alongside engagement with Independent Advisory Groups which a representative from the PCC's office attends. All of these meetings focus on relevant Authorised Professional Practice, force policy and exploration of continuous improvement. Run an effective Independent Custody Visiting Scheme to monitor the rights and treatment of detainees.	Regular attendance of the OSPCC to these meeting. Inclusion of a race action plan question into all our promotion processes. The OSPCC has platinum status for the ICV Scheme.	
Governance framework incorporates policies and procedures addressing procurement processes, anti-fraud, bribery and corruption supported by publication of expenses, gifts and hospitality	The PCC and Chief Constable's policies are reviewed frequently, published and communicated across the organisations and in the public domain via the website. These include but not limited to; Appropriate relationships and conflicts, Gifts and Gratuities, Lawful Business Monitoring, Notifiable Associations, Substance Misuse and Testing and Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption. All of these policies have clear responsibilities for employees to follow.	An annual review of policies is presented to the Joint Audit Committee for external scrutiny. A schedule of when policies are due for review is set out within the Code of Corporate Governance. The OSPCC has refreshed its website signposting to enable better navigation and searching of documents	

## CIPFA Principle A. continued

### *Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
Whistleblowing arrangements and Professional Standards Monitoring	Professional Standards Department (PSD) operate the Break the Silence confidential reporting service and the Joint Force Vetting Unit (JFVU) continues to act as a 'critical gatekeeper' for workforce integrity. The Break the Silence system is accessible, appropriate and a long-established confidential reporting arrangement and processes in place and that these are regularly reviewed by the Joint Audit Committee;	Anti corruption reporting into the Joint Audit Committee for external scrutiny. Dip checks on unsuccessful vetting applications. HMICFRS inspection report into the effectiveness of the integrity arrangements in Sussex Police has been published.	
Complaints Process	The PCC has a statutory responsibility for complaints made about the Chief Constable's personal conduct. Clear advice on the complaints process is accessible with escalation signposting on the OSPCC website alongside reviews of police complaints and complaints made against the PCC and staff set out by the Police & Crime Act 2017.	Dip check of all complaints that are reported to Sussex Police to ensure complaints are effectively managed. Complaint and review data is published on the PCC's website. Quarterly Governance and Integrity meetings held between OSPCC, Professional Standards Department and People Services.	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy	The PCC is committed to creating an inclusive workforce and fostering a culture of inclusion which also recognises the individual needs of the people we serve by engaging effectively we communities. OSPCC staff undertake mandatory training set by the College of Policing. Further to this, staff participated in a tailor-made EDI training session, run by Weightmans on 17 April 2025 was well attended. A representative from the PCC's office also attends Sussex Police's EDI board, Culture & Standards Board, Use of Force and Stop & Search Scrutiny Panels.	The OSPCC attends Sussex Police's EDI meetings, and scrutiny panels. A representative from the PCC's office attends the Race Action Plan meetings. Compliance for completion of mandatory training packages set by the College of Policing. Good attendance at the EDI Weightmans session.	
Race Action Plan	In 2022 Sussex Police created the Race Action Plan Insights and Delivery Board (RAPID) to ensure that the national Police Race Action Plan, as agreed by all 43 Chief Constables under the NPCC, was fully implemented, a member of the PCC's office sits in on the meetings.	A representative attends the RAPID board and the Culture & Standards Board.	
HMICFRS national recommendation work	The PCC monitors all inspection reports published for Sussex Police and any national reports made available for all police forces in England and Wales. The PCC has a statutory responsibility to comment on reports and assessments published by HMICFRS within 56-days of the report being published through the HMICFRS PCC Response Portal.	These responses are published through the HMICFRS PCC Response Portal.	

## CIPFA Principle B.

### *Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
The PCC's Annual Report	The PCC is required to publish an Annual Report each year. The Annual Report provides an update on the progress made against the policing and crime objectives set out within the Police & Crime Plan. The Annual Report for the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 was presented to the Sussex Police & Crime Panel at their meeting on 3 July 2025 for their review and feedback.	The Annual report is presented to the Police & Crime Panel for oversight and comment.	
Up-to-date freedom of Information Act 2000 publication scheme	In line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the OSPCC has a Data Protection Officer who is responsible for ensuring that the publication scheme, privacy notice, disposal and retention schedule, information sharing agreement and memorandum of understanding are all up to date and accurate to ensure compliance with the law.	Data Protection Officer monitors and reviews the relevant policies. Freedom of Information requests are dealt with within the specified 28 days. The OSPCC received a substantial assurance from an internal audit review.	
Commissioning and Victim Services Team and Partnerships Team	The PCC continues to participate and engage with partners at national, regional and local level, together with supporting and contributing to community safety partnerships across the county. The PCC engages with the public in an open and comprehensive manner, consulting regularly. Weekly information about policing activities and decisions are published in our newsletter, and Performance and Accountability Meetings with the Chief Constable are webcast. There are annual engagement sessions for the High Sheriffs of Sussex. Telephone surgeries take place with members of the public. National Surveys and polls are conducted in association with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC). The PCC supports and contributes to Community Safety Partnerships in Sussex with both higher and lower tier authorities. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act place a mutual duty on PCCs and local authorities to co-operate to reduce crime, disorder and re-offending, and the PCC plays an active role in ensuring other partners contribute appropriately and support the effective discharge of the duty. The PCC is legally responsible for the Serious Violence Duty and has secured Home Office funding to meet this duty via the Sussex Violence Reduction Partnership, which is effectively reducing youth violence. She has also funded the extension of the Immediate Justice (IJ) programme in Sussex to solidify the gains made in 24/25, and in anticipation of a transition to a new Government programme incorporating the aims and objectives of IJ.	A dedicated partnership team is in place to actively engage with and support statutory partners. The PCC has regular liaison meetings with Council Leaders and Chief Executives from the top tier authorities and regular briefings with local MPs. The PCC manages the Sussex Restorative Justice Partnership in connection with the Sussex Criminal Board. Annual media and social media targets and quarterly media evaluation and analysis. Monitoring of social media channels. Good governance with partner agencies such as Youth Executive Boards, Criminal Justice partnerships etc. The Commissioning & Victim Services team also lead on a Victim Engagement Forum.	

## CIPFA Principle B. continued

### *Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
Precept Consultation	<p>The PCC’s Communications and Insight Team began another rolling programme of consultation from the summer of 2025. The plans for the year include our Talk Sussex online survey which ran from July to the end of October with over 3000 respondents. From this pool of respondents, a people’s panel of nearly 1000 residents has been formed by people wanting to participate in further and more frequent consultations on specific crime and policing issues. We are running focus groups/feedback sessions with parish and district and town clerks and councillors. Staff from our office have attended business, university and rural community events to poll attendees and circulate links to our online surveys.</p> <p>In November and early December 2025, we have commissioned an external polling company to repeat the demographically representative survey of residents (around 2500) on perceptions of police, feelings of safety and awareness of police initiatives. The poll repeats questions asked in 2023 and 2024 for comparison purposes with the addition of specific questions to test awareness of Sussex Police Hot Spots patrol activity and whether residents are aware of planned changes in local authority and police governance. The external survey also tests residents’ willingness to pay levels of police precept in their council tax.</p>	The precept decision is scrutinised by the Police and Crime Panel at their meeting in January.	
Stakeholder engagement following the announcement of the Mayoral Combined Authority with victim providers and partnerships	<p>The partnerships team have engaged with the district and borough council Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) leads and held a briefing session to discuss the potential impact of the changes, in particular the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process which is taking place alongside the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) devolution process. This briefing session set out the knowns and unknowns in the process so far, and also enabled the CSP leads to share their concerns and understand the potential impact on them and the partnerships. Ad hoc stakeholder engagement is also taking place with other key stakeholders in both upper and lower tier authorities, with sharing of information and open dialogue taking place to ensure that those impacted are being kept up to date with the current position as we know it.</p> <p>The PCCs office have also set up an internal working group to assess, understand and accommodate the changes that both the MCA and LGR will bring. This will assist the PCCs office, and our stakeholders, understand the implications of the changes and how we will ensure services continue and the required support is provided to the new organisations.</p>	Assurance is sought and demonstrated by the PCCs office running an internal working group to understand and take account of the changes.	NEW ACTION: Whilst there is ongoing uncertainty and a number of key decisions still to be made concerning both the MCA and LGR, there is obviously an ongoing challenge. The PCCs office will ensure that information is communicated to stakeholders when it is available and that an ongoing, open dialogue is maintained.

## CIPFA Principle C.

### *Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
Refresh and Publish the Police & Crime Plan	The PCC scrutiny role to determine that the Sussex Police & Crime Plan priorities are supported well by her staff and the Chief Constable.	The PCC holds the Chief Constable to account at eleven Performance and Accountability Meetings throughout the year. The PCC holds regular meetings with the public and representative groups to determine public priority and need.	
Produce an Annual Report	The PCC is required to publish an Annual Report each year. The Annual Report provides an update on the progress made against the policing and crime objectives set out within the Police & Crime Plan. The Annual Report for the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 was presented to the Sussex Police & Crime Panel at their meeting on 3 July 2025.	The annual report is published on the PCC and Chief Constable's website. The plan is presented to the Police & Crime Panel for their comment prior to publication.	
Review of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy	The Medium-Term Financial Strategy is supported by robust, sustainable multi-year budgets to deliver the vision set out in the Police and Crime Plan and supports spending plans and precept decisions. The PCC follows a decision making-framework, with a record of decisions made and supporting material with 'gate-way' sign off points. The PCC ensures that revenue and capital spending plans are appropriate and affordable.	The Medium-Term Financial Strategy is scrutinised by the PCC. Key decisions are available to the Police & Crime Panel for scrutiny and review and are published on the PCC's website. The PCC through scrutiny of the revenue and capital budgets ensures that the revenue and capital spending plans are sustainable.	
PCC holds the Chief Constable to account	The PCC holds the Chief Constable to account for the performance of Sussex Police at monthly webcast Performance & Accountability Meetings (PAMs).	The meetings are webcast live on the PCC website, and the minutes are published online.	
The PCC actively pursues joint working opportunities at a local, regional and nation level.	Collaborated arrangements with Surrey police and Surrey PCC for the delivery of specific services, as well as town boards, Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU), Bluelight Commercial, national Section 22 Collaborative arrangements for example, National Air Service.	Through partnership agreements and arrangements.	

## CIPFA Principle C. continued

### *Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
<p>Funding for Services</p>	<p>The PCC has had and continues to be successful with Home Office applications to secure funding for services. As an illustration, hot spot policing funding from the Home Office has been secured to support Sussex Police’s response to reduce knife crime and serious violence. She has also secured Home Office funding and support for the Violence Reduction Partnership, which has contributed community initiatives to reducing violent crime, especially by young people. The VRP will also be piloting the Government’s Prevention Partnerships in Sussex, for which again funding has been secured. The PCC has also extended the provision of youth Immediate Justice for 12 months in Sussex by the judicious use of reserves, meaning that a demonstrably successful initiative that the new Government stopped supporting has been maintained. The PCC is also looking at how a good level of receipts from the Proceeds of Crime Act can be used to support PCC-led initiatives which will further reduce crime and support communities.</p> <p>Within the PCC office there is a team dedicated to the commissioning of victim services and partnerships. The PCC is awarded an annual Core Victims Grant from the Ministry of Justice, which in turn funds a range of support services for victims across Sussex. When financial resources allow, a Funding Network funding tranche is also offered annually where applicants are assessed against an agreed set of criteria by a panel. The criteria can be dictated by strategic assessments that indicate where gaps in services for victims are identified i.e. recently completed Pan-Sussex Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment or a PCC commissioned sexual violence needs assessment. Those scoring the highest and who have been quality assured may be awarded grant funds for projects in Sussex.</p> <p>A common outcome-measurement framework has been developed for all victim support services in Sussex – this crosses over statutory and non-statutory agencies. The findings from these outcome measures ensure services are having a positive impact on users and therefore representing economic value also.</p> <p>The Bluelight Commercial Co, a PCC owned company, are working closely with partners to develop a qualitative approach to the evaluation of social value and sustainability aspects of bid submissions. All of this should also encourage more diverse supply chains, including SMEs and VCSEs, and help their capability to deliver against such a qualitative approach. We will update the AGS as this work develops and any changes are embedded within Contract Standing orders. A revised Contract Standing Orders will be brought to the PCC for approval in the autumn 2024 once the new procurement legislation has been translated into actions.</p>	<p>Governance and monitoring arrangements are in place with Multi-agency Violence Reduction Partnership Steering Group and Executive Board. The Partnership Team actively engage with statutory partners and attend meetings such as Community Safety Partnerships, Prevent Boards, Sussex Modern Slavery Network etc. The commissioned services are subject quarterly monitoring and grant supported service undergo quarterly outcome measurement checks.</p> <p>The Victim Services Team conduct quarterly monitoring meetings with service providers to ensure standards of delivery, to resolve any challenges with statutory partners i.e. Sussex Police, and in turn provide performance and financial data returns to the Ministry of Justice.</p>	

## CIPFA Principle D.

### *Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
Annual review of the corporate governance framework	They are reviewed each year.	The framework and Scheme of Governance is reviewed by Chief Officers and presented to the JAC prior to approval by the PCC.	
Risk Management Strategy and Policy in place	Review of the strategy and policy on a regular basis to ensure threats to the achievement of the PCC's organisational objectives and regional and national responsibilities are identified and managed effectively (reviewed December 2023).	The risk management policy is presented to the JAC and is reviewed at Finance and Human Resources Meeting (FaHRM).	
Stakeholder Engagement	<p>Carried out regular stakeholder engagement events and needs assessments for commissioned services to establish priority areas of demand for support services. Bi-annual Funding Network events delivered by the Victims Services team. Engaged in the HMICFRS Police inspections debriefs, board and relevant gold group meetings. Worked with key partners to achieve the priorities as set out in the Police &amp; Crime Plan. OSPCC representation on Pan-Sussex multi-agency management boards, delivering a joint strategy to support victims of sexual violence, domestic violence and vulnerable or exploited children.</p> <p>There is an annual precept survey completed to support the PCC precept decision.</p>	The Commissioning Strategy was reviewed and amended in 2023. The strategy sets out how the PCC commissions victim support services and will be reviewed in light of the new PCC Police & Crime Plan. The Annual Report for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 was presented to the Sussex Police & Crime Panel on 28 June 2024 and a fully-accessible version of the report can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> . There is an annual precept survey completed to support the PCC precept decision.	
Ensuring processes are in place to allocate the required funding	Met the statutory responsibility of commissioning services to support victims of crime through an effective tender process. Managed a competed fund scheme to provide funding to specialist victim support services. Enhanced monitoring is now taking place of the outcomes achieved by the funded awarded by the PCC to the Community Safety Partnerships in Sussex. The Victim Services team conduct regular monitoring meetings with commissioned service providers. This includes the review of monitoring data required for the Ministry of Justice that also highlights service user qualitative feedback. The team also review and monitor the financial spend against the grant or contract. For grants received from central government, all reporting deadlines are adhered to including financial statements and qualitative evidence of delivery. Commissioned services adhere to Contract Standing Order and Financial Regulations. Internal processes and strong governance systems in place.	Budget monitoring timetable is in place and regular monitoring of the revenue and capital budget takes place. The PCC has a communication and engagement strategy.	

## CIPFA Principle E.

### *Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
Performance reviews with staff	Personal development programme is in place for all OSPCC staff to make sure they have the knowledge and skills to undertake their roles through regular one-to-one meetings and individual development review meetings. The OSPCC team received regular themed meetings; recent topics have included Video Enabled Justice, Independent Custody Visiting Scheme, Abuse of Authority and the Anti-Corruption Unit, Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and Knife Crime, Cybercrime, precept and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. OSPCC staff receive updates from the Association of Police & Crime Commissioner on key issues.	In 2025, the OSPCC moved to a new system to record annual performance development reviews. Line managers now conduct 'focus conversations' with their staff more frequently.	
Scrutiny of collaboration work	Continued to ensure that regional and research activity takes place with examples of collaboration with Surrey and Kent forces and PCC offices on emerging issues. Continued to support a programme of collaboration between Sussex and Surrey Police to increase capacity, share expertise and provide the most efficient and cost-effective service	A representative from the PCC attend's joint boards and meetings. Regional meetings are regularly held between other PCC's office.	
NCALT mandatory online training courses	All OSPCC staff complete NCALT mandatory training courses.	The Assurance Team monitor NCALT compliance on a monthly basis and a report is produced for FaHRM.	
Partnership activity is managed on a national, regional and local level	The PCC is the chair of the Sussex Criminal Justice Board (SCJB) and relevant staff provide support and attend all three of the sub-groups. The OSPCC also employs a part-time SCJB Coordinator to support the administration of the board on behalf of all member organisations, along with horizon scanning for national criminal justice issues and themes, and attendance at the Ministry of Justice Criminal Justice Drop-in Sessions.. Funding disseminated from the Commissioner to CSPs is monitored through quarterly returns from individual CSPs to ensure outcomes are produced. Performance monitoring of the CSPs has been enhanced this year, with them required to submit evidence-based case studies which support the interventions and demonstrate the value for money of the investment into the CSPs.	The PCC has responsibilities to manage the financial grants, to convene those specified and relevant authorities and to monitor their compliance of the new serious violence duties.	
Local partnership arrangements are in place with statutory partners e.g. the numerous Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and upper tier local authorities.	The Sussex PCC continues to be successful in Home Office applications to secure GRIP funding (previously referred to as Surge funding and now Operation Safety). This is the Sussex Police dedicated response to reduce instances of knife crime and serious violence in the county. The Commissioner during this period has realigned teams and responsibilities to focus on Business Crime and the increased threats emerging, including the development of the Safer Sussex Business Partnership. Additionally, a greater emphasis has been on anti-social behaviour and community trigger and as a result PCC staff are engaged with the Sussex Police ASB working groups to monitor progress. The CSPs are being encouraged to work with the partnerships team to develop effective performance measures to ensure that they are effectively held to account.	OSPCC staff are engaged with the Sussex Police ASB working groups to monitor progress.	

## CIPFA Principle E. continued

### *Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
<p>Devolution Working Group</p>	<p>In February 2025, Sussex was confirmed as one of the six new areas that will be part of the Devolution Priority Programme. As part of this programme, the role of the PCC in these areas will be abolished and the current functions of the PCC subsumed within the newly created Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) and [most likely] delegated to a Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire &amp; Crime [or an equivalent] to deliver. The existing resources of the OSPCC are anticipated to transfer across to support this individual in post as has been the position in other areas of the country where devolution has already taken place.</p> <p><b>Key Developments and the Revised Timeline for Sussex</b></p> <p>Following the government's announcement in December 2025, the timeline for establishing the new governance model in Sussex has been revised to prioritise the completion of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) before the new strategic authority takes office. The process for existing councils to develop plans for the new Unitary Authorities is actively underway. The planned 'vesting day' for the transfer of services, staff, and assets to these new Unitary Authorities remains 1 April 2028.</p> <p>The formation of the new Mayoral Combined County Authority is proceeding, but its inaugural functions will be delayed. The first mayoral election is now scheduled for May 2028, postponed from the original date of May 2026. This allows the new Unitary Authorities to be fully operational before the Mayor takes office.</p> <p><b>The Transfer of Police and Crime Commissioner Functions</b></p> <p>The transfer of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) functions to the new Sussex Mayor will now be aligned with the revised election date. This handover is anticipated to take place <b>in May 2028</b> (subject to the Bill receiving Royal Assent and associated legislation being approved), on the Mayor's inauguration.</p> <p>This revised timeline provides the PCC and her office with an extended period—now until May 2028—to focus on long-term planning to ensure a seamless transition of responsibilities reducing disruption to the vital functions of Sussex Police. While the fundamental goals of the PCC role will remain in place for the next two and a half years, our preparation will now be focused on enabling a new governance structure where a single, directly-elected mayor is responsible for both the strategic direction of the combined authority and the operational oversight of Sussex Police.</p>	<p>A Devolution Working Group has been established.</p> <p>The Chief Executive Officer also provides regular updates to the wider OSPCC team around any developments relating to devolution and local government reform.</p>	<p>The terms of reference for the Working Group have been drafted and approved.</p> <p>When further information is made available by Government, the resourcing around the transition arrangements is expected to become more of a challenge alongside the delivery of day-to-day business.</p>

## CIPFA Principle F.

### *Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
Data Protection and information policies	The data controller within the PCC's office is the Head of Performance who ensures the correct policies are in place and reflect the changes to the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. Data protection and information management policies and strategy are in place with Sussex Police, commission services and partnerships. A process for Information Sharing Agreements is reviewed and updated regularly. Information on Freedom of Information, publication schemes, records management and disposal, and complaints can be found on the PCC's website in accordance with the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, the OSPCC has a <a href="#">publication scheme</a> and processes all FOI requests in accordance with the legislation.	Review of information security and information sharing has been undertaken between OSPCC and Force to ensure that systems in place are robust. An internal audit opinion of substantial was given with no risks identified for OSPCC Information governance and Management including GDPR and Data Protection Act 2022/23.	
Risk Management Policy and Strategy	The <a href="#">OSPCC Risk Management Strategy</a> is reviewed bi-annually to ensure continuing compliance with any legislative changes and best practice principles identified. The most recent review took place in June 2024 and was reported to the Joint Audit Committee in the same month.	The PCC reviews the risk register every month at its FaHRM meeting. Any significant risks are transferred to the strategic risk register which is reviewed by the JAC at their quarterly meetings. The PCC is also represented at meetings of the Organisational Reassurance Board where the Force risk register is managed.	
Decision Making is in accordance with the Scheme of Corporate Governance	The Decision-Making Framework details the arrangements to enable the PCC to make robust, well informed and transparent decisions.	Key decisions are discussed and agreed at weekly Senior Management Team meetings Key decisions are published Police and Crime Panel scrutiny of decisions	
Joint Audit Committee (JAC)	The JAC are made up of four independent members. Meetings are held quarterly and the open to the public for part one of the meeting. The meetings are well represented by Chief Officers from Sussex Police and OSPCC; minutes and papers are published online.	An annual assessment of the JAC is completed by the JAC Chair including input by all members. The Chair completes an annual report which is published and sent to the PCC and CC. All members have an annual personal performance review.	

## CIPFA Principle F. continued

### *Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
Police & Crime Panel	The <a href="#">Sussex Police &amp; Crime Panel</a> scrutinise key strategic decisions and documents (including the Sussex Police & Crime Plan and the proposed precept decision). The PCC cooperates fully with any requests received from the Panel for working groups to consult them on budgets and precepts, annual report, PCC priorities and the commissioning of victim services. The reports provided to the Sussex Police & Crime Panel during 2024/25 can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> .	The Sussex Police & Crime Panel is webcast live and minutes are made available online. The panel is held quarterly.	
HMICFRS Reports	The PCC has a statutory responsibility to comment on reports and assessments published by HMICFRS. The assessments and the PCC's responses to each of these can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> . Further to this, Sussex Police also conduct their own internal inspections around different areas of performance. HMICFRS undertook their initial inspection of the Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) assessment of Sussex Police in 2023/25 in February 2025. The final inspection report was published on 24 July 2025.	The Head of Performance regularly monitors the recommendations via an online portal alongside the Force Risk Manager. All PCC formal responses to HMICFRS inspections are published on the Sussex-PCC website.	
Review of whole group finances, financial risk and issues, scrutiny of Chief Constables financial business cases and procurement	The CFO attends the Deputy Chief Constables Strategic Planning Board which includes standing agenda items for the monitoring of the revenue and capital budget, establishment and demand and other significant financial decisions. The CFO also attends other Boards on a regular basis to monitor performance including the Joint Transport Board, Custody Board, CFO Board and the Financial Planning and Performance Board. The Scheme of Governance, including contract standing orders and financial regulations are reviewed annually. Links to key finance documents can be found in the Appendix.	Through Chief Finance Officer Board, scrutiny of resource transfers through scheme of consent and key financial information including financial regulations. Financial risks reviewed monthly and a quarterly review of the whole group finances undertaken. Publication of Medium-term Financial Strategy, budget, precept decision, treasury-management strategy (debt and cash management) and PCC reserves strategy. Publication of PCC key decisions on financial decisions and monitoring.	
Business Continuity	Business continuity arrangements are in place to meet the requirements outlined in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The OSPCC Business Continuity Plan is reviewed every year. It was last reviewed and tested on 9 October 2024 and is available to all staff in the Shared Drive under Business Continuity . In addition to the contact tree set out within the Plan, an OSPCC Business Continuity 'WhatsApp' group has been established to convey urgent messages that relate to business continuity to all of the team in an efficient and consistent manner. Meetings between the Business Continuity lead and the Chief Executive Monitoring Officer ahead of the testing exercise.	Business continuity plans, activation lists and the testing of plans are monitored at ORB. Testing was conducted on 9 October 2024. Tracked at ORB.	
Commissioned Services	All commissioned services are subject to regular monitoring which is aligned to their individual deliverables, including the identification of risks & issues. Monitoring data is collected from all service providers and reviewed on a quarterly basis, prior to being shared with the Ministry of Justice.	All commissioned services have a clear escalation process to notify the OSPCC should there be an issue outside the normal monitoring framework, this includes any risks to service deliver or in year financial spend.	

## CIPFA Principle F. continued.

### *Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
<p>PCC's Grants</p>	<p>The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) allocates funding to local community groups that help reduce or prevent crime, and support victims of crime, across Sussex. For the 2024/25 financial year, this was £4.67 million for Victim Services and £233,000 for the Safer in Sussex Community Fund (SiSCF). The PCC has two key grant areas, and we have focussed on these for this audit. These are the SiSCF and the Safe Space Funding Network (Victim Support).</p> <p>As part of the Internal Audit Plan for 2025/26, a review of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) - Grant Processes was undertaken by our internal auditor. The purpose of the audit was to review the current processes for awarding grants and review the monitoring of the achievements (outputs and outcomes) with these.</p> <p>The internal audit review concluded that there was limited assurance having identified significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance in governance. The review identified 9 observations and management agreed to 13 actions (4 medium priority and 9 low priority) with stated timelines to improve the governance and processes.</p>	<p>Achievement of the management actions is being monitored through the PCC monthly Finance and Human Resources Meeting, and oversight by the Joint Audit Committee each quarter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inefficient grant management- Documented guidance on how OSPCC should administer grants.</li> <li>• Funds provided to inappropriate applicants- Due diligence checks for awarding grants.</li> <li>• Misuse of funding- Better documentation and monitoring of grants.</li> <li>• Issuing of unauthorised payments- A60s to be raised after key decision has been signed.</li> <li>• Misuse of funds/fraud- implement a checklist to ensure documents were returned and verified within master spreadsheet and consistent process and documentation of payment authorization from finance department.</li> <li>• Delay of information on website- communication between OSPCC teams to be documented.</li> <li>• Inconsistent assessment of application- terms of reference to be implemented for scoring applications.</li> </ul>

## CIPFA Principle F. continued 4

### *Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
<p>Estates Strategy</p>	<p>The governance framework ensures this transformation aligns with strategic objectives and financial prudence. Strategic oversight is held by the PCC Estates Board, with the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) acting as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) who assures operational alignment through pre-approvals to gateways. All major projects must follow the RIBA Plan of Work stages and require rigorous PCC Gateway Approvals (typically Gateways 1, 2, and 4 for business cases). The PCC's Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is the financial advisor responsible for the proper financial administration and setting the annual capital programme framework. Financial controls require Capital budget holders to report formally quarterly to the Finance Performance and Planning Board on progress and expenditure of each scheme. Furthermore, long-term efficiency is secured by the planned implementation of a Computer Aided Facilities Management System (CAFM) by 2028 to manage assets, Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM), and lifecycle data, all underpinned by adherence to the formal Financial Regulations and the Code of Corporate Governance.</p> <p>The Estates Transformation Strategy 2025–2036 for Sussex Police, published in June 2025, is designed to ensure the provision of a "fit for purpose" estate that meets current and future operational policing needs while securing long-term financial viability and delivering improved value. This transformation is considered a high-priority 'call to action' and is explicitly stated as "not optional". The need for this strategic reset is driven by the age, condition, size, and cost of the existing estate portfolio. The area served covers approximately 1.7 million people across 1,462 square miles, but the physical estate is outdated, with around 56% of its buildings originally constructed before 1975. This aging portfolio results in high operational costs and contains significant excess capacity, estimated at 25% surplus space (approximately 16–18 sqm per person). Furthermore, Sussex Police faces substantial future funding requirements, notably exceeding £250 million in capital liabilities over the next 10 years. The overall objective is to achieve a necessary "step change" in size and efficiency to reset financial costs and enable investment in modern, flexible facilities that support a more agile policing model.</p> <p>To address this, the Strategy is built on four core pillars: Rationalise to Spend Less on Buildings, Optimise the Retained Estate, Enhance to Meet Today &amp; Tomorrow's Needs, and seek Collaborative &amp; Innovative Solutions. The key financial lever is the wholesale disposal of truly surplus assets/buildings to generate major income for reinvestment, committing 100% of capital receipts from 2024/2025 onwards to the retained estate. This supports a fundamental change to a 'hub and spoke' model. Reinvestment focuses on maximising efficiency: major refurbishments must target BREEAM 'Very Good' and new builds BREEAM 'Excellent' standards. Operational modernisation includes ensuring facilities are flexible for digital and agile working, and explores shared bases with other blue light partners or trialling innovative mobile solutions to maintain visual community presence without high-cost fixed buildings.</p>	<p>The governance framework ensures the estate's transformation aligns with strategic objectives and financial prudence. Strategic oversight is held by the PCC Estates Board, with the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) acting as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) who assures operational alignment through pre-approvals to gateways. All major projects must follow the RIBA Plan of Work stages and require rigorous PCC Gateway Approvals (typically Gateways 1, 2, and 4 for business cases). The PCC's Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is the financial advisor responsible for the proper financial administration and setting the annual capital programme framework. Financial controls require Capital budget holders to report formally quarterly to the Finance Performance and Planning Board on progress and expenditure of each scheme. quarter.</p>	<p>Long-term efficiency is secured by the planned implementation of a Computer Aided Facilities Management System (CAFM) by 2028 to manage assets, Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM), and lifecycle data, all underpinned by adherence to the formal Financial Regulations and the Code of Corporate Governance.</p>

## CIPFA Principle G.

### *Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability*

CONTROLS WHAT IS IN PLACE	STRENGTHS WHAT IS WORKING WELL	HOW ASSURANCE IS SOUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED	CHALLENGES WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
Internal and External Inspections	The internal audit function is carried out by Southern Internal Audit Partnership for both PCC and Sussex Police. The CIPFA code requires internal audit to provide an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the governance framework. The OSPCC and Sussex Police's annual internal audit opinion 2023/24 was 'REASONABLE' overall and audit testing had demonstrated controls to be working in practice. The External Auditor produces an annual report and a value for money report, however due to the back stop, the OSPCC have unaudited accounts for 2022/23 and 2023/24, however a value for money report has been provided with no concerns identified.	Internal and external audits are scrutinised by JAC, both report into the JAC. Internal and External audit reports are published online for public scrutiny. A reasonable internal audit opinion was issued with no risks identified. The JAC Chair meets quarterly with the Chief Internal Auditor alongside an annual meeting with all Committee members and the Partner from External Audit. Audit delays are reported at JAC .	
HMICFRS	The PCC has a statutory responsibility to comment on reports and assessments published by HMICFRS. The assessments and the PCC's responses to each of these can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> .	Comments are tracked on an online portal that is monitored by the Head of Performance and the Force Risk Manager. Recommendations are tracked through the ORB and other board meetings, including JAC.	
Decision Making	The PCC Senior Management Team meets weekly with the PCC to review activity and decisions. Senior officers also meet once a month to consider finance, governance and human resource matters. A standard decision report template is used for consistency.	The review of evidence for the effectiveness of the governance framework, confirms that current arrangements are fit for purpose, considered by senior officers at FaHRM and processes presented to JAC.	
The Annual Reports/Police & Crime Panel Reports/Statement of Accounts/AGS	The PCC is required to publish an Annual Report each year. The Annual Report provides an update on the progress made against the policing and crime objectives set out within the Police & Crime Plan. The Annual Report for the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 was presented to the Sussex Police & Crime Panel at their meeting on 3 July 2025. Report information, including Statement of Accounts, and AGS are published on the PCC's website in accordance with the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011.	Reports published on the PCC's website, presented to the JAC and made available to the Police & Crime Panel.	
Payments over £500, gifts and Hospitality and Business Interests	The expenses for PCC, CEO and CFO are available online.	The JAC provide annual scrutiny and oversight for governance and financial arrangements, payments over £500, gifts & hospitality register. Published for public scrutiny on PCC website: How We Work.	

# Progress on Improvement Areas from 23/24 Review

Action Number & Reference	Issue identified and objective	Owner	Status & Target Date	Principle Linkage	Commentary
1	<p><b>Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Development</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> The PCC's office is a separate organisation to Sussex Police, and whilst the OPSCC is engaged with the training utilised by Sussex Police, it has been identified that internal development alongside NCALT packages would be beneficial.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> To organize a training session with Mark Landen from Weightmans to deliver an independent package to the OSPCC.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> The Assurance and Complaints Manager to orgainse with Mark Landen from Weightmans an EDI training package.</p>	Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer	Completed	<b>Principle: A</b> <b>Monitored via:</b> EDI Board, FaHRM, Culture and Standards Board	<p>The PCC is committed to creating an inclusive workforce and fostering a culture of inclusion which also recognises the individual needs of the people we serve by engaging effectively we communities. A representative from the OSPCC attends Sussex Police's EDI board, the Culture and Standards Board and external scrutiny groups for Use of Force and Stop and Search.</p> <p>Members of the OSPCC complete relevant mandatory NCALT packages set by the College of Policing, alongside this, an internal, bespoke EDI training course was delivered by Weightmans on 17 April 2025.</p>
2	<p><b>Review application efficiency</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> The current downloadable application form is a slower process and time consuming at the logging stage.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> To have an online review application form that can be completed and sent directly to the Business Support/Assurance Team for logging. Automatic response generated.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Online webform is live and is being utilised successfully.</p>	Assurance & Complaints Manager/ Digital & Marketing Manager	Completed	<b>Principle: F</b> <b>Monitored via: Meetings with Assurance Team/ Digital &amp; Marketing Manager</b>	<p>To streamline the review process, an online review application form has been developed for applications to be submitted online. The review form is live on the website, and several tests have been conducted to test its efficiency. Reviews are being received via the online form Reviews are being received via the online form. A process has been developed to log and streamline the review process.</p>

# Future actions from 24/25 review

Action Number & Reference	Issue identified and objective	Owner	Status & Target Date	Principle Linkage	Commentary
1	<p><b>Open Stakeholder Engagement following Mayoral Combined Authority</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Lack of communication with stakeholders regarding changes to funding and positions. With the implementation of a new mayoral system, stakeholders may become concerned or anxious about their future if they are not regularly informed about changes to funding process and functions. This could lead to decreased engagement and reduced trust and confidence during the transition process.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> To hold regular updates and briefings with stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Community Safety Partnership briefing held in April.</p>	Head of Partnerships/Head of Victim Services	In progress	<b>Principle: B</b> <b>Monitored via: Regular Meetings with stakeholders as and when updates become available.</b>	<p>The Head of Partnerships provided a briefing for Community Safety Partnership leads in April. The Chief Finance Officer will be delivering a presentation to victim providers in May.</p> <p>Whilst there is ongoing uncertainty and a number of key decisions still to be made concerning both the MCA and LGR, there is obviously an ongoing challenge. The PCCs office will ensure that information is communicated to stakeholders when it is available and that an ongoing, open dialogue is maintained.</p>
2	<p><b>To ensure the PCC's statutory responsibilities and services are maintained throughout the devolution period and that a fluid transition to the Mayoral system is underway</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> PCC's statutory responsibilities and services are disrupted and that the transition to the Mayoral system will not be smooth. Staff in OSPCC may become anxious about their future if they are not regularly informed about devolution changes.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> To hold regular updates and briefings with stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> First meeting of the Devolution Working Group was held on 19 May 2025, a set of terms of reference were approved.</p>	Chief Executive Officer	In progress	<b>Principle: E</b> <b>Monitored via: Bi-Monthly Working Group Meetings, regular updates at OSPCC weekly team meeting.</b>	<p>The transfer of the PCC functions to the new Sussex Mayor will now be aligned with the revised election date. This handover is anticipated to take place in <b>May 2028</b> (subject to the Bill receiving Royal Assent and associated legislation being approved), on the Mayor's inauguration.</p> <p>This revised timeline provides the PCC and her office with an extended period—now until May 2028—to focus on long-term planning to ensure a seamless transition of responsibilities reducing disruption to the vital functions of Sussex Police. While the fundamental goals of the PCC role will remain in place for the next two and a half years, our preparation will now be focused on enabling a new governance structure where a single, directly-elected mayor is responsible for both the strategic direction of the combined authority and the operational oversight of Sussex Police.</p>

# Future actions from 24/25 review.

Action Number & Reference	Issue identified and objective	Owner	Status & Target Date	Principle Linkage	Commentary
3	<p><b>To ensure that the issues highlighted from internal audits limited assurance of PCC's grants</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Significant weakness and non-compliance identified with grant management. Risk of fraud, misuse of funds</p> <p><b>Action:</b> To improve the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage and mitigate risk in relation to funding not delivering programme objectives.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> All management actions have been signed off as completed at FaHRM on 15 October 2025.</p>	Chief Finance Officer	Complete	Principle: F Monitored via: PCC monthly Finance and Human Resources Meeting, oversight by the Joint Audit Committee each quarter.	<p>Risk of inefficient grant management- Documented guidance on how OSPCC should administer grants. COMPLETE.</p> <p>Risk of funds provided to inappropriate applicants- Due diligence checks for awarding grants. COMPLETE</p> <p>Risk of misuse of funding- Better documentation &amp; monitoring of grants. COMPLETE.</p> <p>Risk of issuing of unauthorised payments- A60s to be raised after key decision has been signed. COMPLETE.</p> <p>Risk of misuse of funds/fraud- implement a checklist to ensure documents were returned &amp; verified within master spreadsheet and consistent process. Documentation of payment authorization from finance department. COMPLETE.</p> <p>Risk of delay of information on website- communication documented COMPLETE.</p> <p>Risk of inconsistent assessment of application- TOR implemented. COMPLETE.</p>
4	<p><b>Estates Strategy</b></p> <p><b>Risk identified:</b> Ineffective communication with staff, stakeholders and other interested parties regarding changes to the estate could cause negative feedback and concerns. This could lead to decreased engagement and reduced trust and confidence during the programme. Ineffective communication with staff, stakeholders and other interested parties regarding changes to the estate could cause negative feedback and concerns. This could lead to decreased engagement and reduced trust and confidence during the programme.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> To hold regular updates and briefings with stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Communication strategy is being developed to address each change included in the estates transformation programme.</p>	Chief Finance Officer	In progress	Principle: F Monitored via: PCC monthly Finance and Human Resources Meeting, oversight by the Joint Audit Committee each quarter.	The communication strategy will be completed and reviewed prior to the programme start in 2026.

# Appendix - how is the review undertaken?

As part of the annual review, the PCC engages with relevant stakeholders across Sussex Police and external contributors, including but not limited to;

- The Senior Officer Teams
- Portfolio and Thematic Leads (Collaborated and Force Specific)
- Corporate Planning (including Risk Management and HMICFRS Inspection Coordination)
- Evidence and assurance gathering via staff survey
- Chief Internal Auditor
- Joint Audit Committee
- External Audit Partner

## Priorities



- Internal audit reports and actions
- External inspection recommendations
- Independent Advisory Groups, Scrutiny Panels and Ethics Committee contributions
- External audit reports and opinion
- Joint Audit Committee feedback and The Police & Crime Panel requests for information
  - Organisations Reassurance Board
  - Organisational Learning Board
  - Annual governance review
  - Accountability Meetings
  - Chief Officer Assurance Statements
  - Annual risk assurance review
- Code of Corporate Governance
- Strategies
- Policies Framework
- Codes / APPs
- Processes
- Training
- Change / Transformation
- Action plans

## Process

- The approach and schedule for the production of the Annual Governance Statement was ratified in meetings with the PCC and senior management.
- Regular alignment meetings are held with Sussex Police because we share systems and processes.
- SMT approved this AGS on 19 May 2025.
- The review undertaken and evidence to support the assessment is reported to the Joint Audit Committee.
- The Joint Audit Committee have sight of the Annual Governance Statement actions at every meeting. They recommend the signing of the final AGS after review and completion of the external audit.
- It is planned that the final AGS will be recommended for approval by the PCC after the September JAC. However, this is dependent on the External Auditor accounts audit schedule.

## Useful links

Information signposting;

- [Code of Corporate Governance](#)
- [Memorandum of Understanding](#), [Decision-Making Framework](#), [Scheme of Delegation](#), [Financial Regulations](#) and [Contract Standing Orders](#)
- [Statement of Accounts](#)
- [Policing Protocol Order 2011](#)
- [Joint Audit Committee](#)
- [Annual Governance Statement](#)
- [Publication Scheme Policy](#)
- [Gifts & Hospitality, Business Interests](#) and [Expenditure over £500](#)
- [Complaints Procedure](#) and [Complaints Policy](#)
- [Code of Ethics](#)
- [Competency and Values Framework](#)

# Conclusion

## **Conclusion of the AGS 2024/25**

The review of the effectiveness of governance arrangements provides good assurance that the OSPCC has in place robust systems of governance, risk management and internal control operating effectively. The Chief Internal Auditor concluded that the framework of governance, risk management and control are 'reasonable'.

While areas for improvement have been identified, the PCC's and the OSPCC leadership team is assured that there is a plan to monitor and strengthen arrangements going forwards. The PCC and OSPCC leadership team is committed to addressing the improvement actions identified, monitoring progress and strengthening governance further-ensuring that the OSPCC continues to operate with integrity, transparency and accountability in achieving its objectives, priorities, and meeting statutory requirements. In addition to upholding the principles set out in the CIPFA Delivering Good Governance in Local Government framework and the seven principles of good governance identified by CIPFA/SOLACE in the 2016 framework.