

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

REPORT TO THE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

31 JULY 2026

Report Title	Review of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire's Annual Report for 2025/26
Report Author	For Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel: James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager West Northamptonshire Council James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report is intended to set out the results of the review by the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire's Annual Report for 2025/26.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire is required to publish an Annual Report on activity and progress with the delivery of key strategic outcomes in the previous year. The Annual Report must be reviewed by the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel, resulting in the production of a report to the Commissioner. The Panel reviewed the Commissioner's Annual Report for 2025/26 at a public meeting held on 18 June 2026.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire:
- a) Considers this report by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel arising from its review of her Annual Report for 2025/26 carried out in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 Section 28(4).
 - b) Provides the Panel with a response to this report and its recommendations set out in section 7 in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 Section 12 Paragraph 4(a).

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The recommendations are required to complete the Panel's review of the Annual Report for 2025/26 published by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, in accordance with the Panel's statutory responsibilities.

5. Report Background

- 5.1 Sections 12 and 28 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 state that a Police and Crime Commissioner must produce an "annual report".
- 5.2 The annual report must report on:
- a) the exercise of the Police and Crime Commissioner's functions in the financial year, and
 - b) the progress which has been made in the financial year in meeting the police and crime objectives in the police and crime plan.
- 5.3 The annual report must be sent to the relevant Police and Crime Panel as soon as practicable following its publication by the Commissioner.
- 5.4 The Panel must arrange for a public meeting of the Panel to be held as soon as practicable after it receives the annual report.
- 5.5 The Commissioner must attend the relevant meeting of the Panel to present the report and to answer such questions from the Panel about the report as the Panel members think appropriate.
- 5.6 The Panel must then review the annual report and make a report outlining any recommendations to the Commissioner. The report or recommendations of the Panel must also be published.
- 5.7 The Commissioner must provide a response to the Panel and must also publish that response.

6. Review of the Annual Report

- 6.1 The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire has produced an Annual Report for 2025/26, which is available to view at: [PFCC Annual Report 2025-26](#). The Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel met in public on 18 June 2026 to review the Annual Report. The meeting was webcast live and a recording is available to view at: [West Northamptonshire Council - YouTube](#).
- 6.2 In presenting the Annual Report, the Commissioner drew attention to the breadth of activity it set out, which was linked to the priorities in her Safe and Sound Public Safety Plan. Northamptonshire Police continued to improve through actions supporting cultural change, workforce diversification and strong professional standards. Vetting arrangements in Northamptonshire now operated to a higher standard than those of most other forces. The Annual Report also showed the Commissioner's focus on building partnerships with other local public services. Their work helped to manage the overall demand on policing, as did the

prevention and early intervention activity run by the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. Some notable successes had been achieved. Addressing violence against women and girls was a huge national and local issue and the Commissioner had published a Women's Charter at the end of 2025, which had since been signed by nearly one hundred organisations in the county. The Commissioner had produced a Safe and Sound Young People manifesto on community safety for young people. This had been informed by extensive engagement with young people and went beyond what was being done in other areas. Her Office had also taken action to understand and address issues that could cause young people to become involved in criminal activity. This work included the Girls' Pathway pilot project, which recognised that there was far more intelligence available about vulnerable boys than girls, who could go unnoticed by services. The Girls' Pathway to safeguard vulnerable girls was the first project of its kind in the country and was now working with over 40 girls. The Commissioner emphasised that the Annual Report illustrated work being done in Northamptonshire both on dealing with serious crime and bringing perpetrators to justice and on preventing crime and enabling people carrying out anti-social behaviour or low level crime to come back into society and live a full life.

- 6.3 The Panel then questioned the Commissioner about the position presented in the Annual Report and the progress it represented against the three missions in the Commissioner's Public Safety Plan. The Panel considered the following matters:

Visible, accessible community services – rebuild trust and confidence

- 6.4 A Panel member noted that local communities would make a judgement on the impact and effectiveness of the activity outlined in the Annual Report. At the same time, Northamptonshire Police would be assessed against the focus areas set by HMICFRS. The Commissioner was questioned about how she sought to strike a balance between these two drivers, particularly given the areas for improvement identified in the latest HMICFRS inspection. These had included a rating of requires improvement for leadership and force management, which followed significant recent issues relating to the leadership of the force. The Commissioner was challenged about how she would address this area in carrying out her role to hold to account the Chief Constable. The Commissioner responded that the Chief had taken the position in very difficult circumstances, which had affected stability and morale in the force. The Chief had needed to appoint a new senior leadership team, which had now been completed after a robust process. The Commissioner expected to see the force improve as a result of having a senior leadership team that shared the Chief's standards and views on good practice. The Chief had also needed to get a grip on issues with the organisation and operational deployment of the force. Operation Regen had been launched at the start of 2026 to identify ways in which the force could work smarter and reduce overall demand. The Commissioner supported this work and expected that many changes for the better would be seen during the next six months.
- 6.5 A Panel member questioned the Commissioner about her confidence in the position behind the data on policing included in the Annual Report. Arrest rates and conviction rates for 2025/26 were good. However, more information was sought about the focus of activity by the force and that it was not just seeking quick wins. The Commissioner noted that her responsibility was to hold the Chief Constable to account on such performance matters. A range of performance

information was published on the force website. This showed that the key focus area for the force was violent and sexual crimes, which made up almost 20 per cent of all crime. Specialist teams were working on this area. Retail crime had been another significant focus in the past year, reflecting the impact it could have on local areas and on perceptions of community safety. Northamptonshire was now a national leader in the field and retail crime figures had gone up as a result of retailers feeling more confident to report crimes. Operations in Northamptonshire directed at issues connected with e-scooters and e-bikes were a further recent example of the force working on an area of public concern. A Panel member subsequently commended work by the Immediate Justice Team on lower-level offending and commented that the increased focus on retail crime was noticed in the community. However, the Annual Report stated that only 34.2 per cent of retail crimes were solved, which needed to be improved. The level of crime was having a major impact on retailers, who could choose to pull out of local high streets.

Professionalism and standards – high-quality service and support

- 6.6 A Panel member expressed concern that the latest HMICFRS inspection of Northamptonshire Police had resulted in an inadequate rating for investigating crime, given that this was a core police function. Reassurance was sought about how this would be addressed. The Commissioner agreed with the concern raised and emphasised that this performance was not what she or the public expected. The HMICFRS rating for investigating crime had not come as a surprise. This was why the service improvement work begun by the Chief Constable was so important and the Chief would report progress to the Commissioner every month until performance improved. The Commissioner went on to advise that changes in the inspection framework used by HMICFRS made it difficult to compare this report with previous ones. Northamptonshire was the national leader on some issues, such as dealing with retail crime. However, this had not been considered as part of the latest inspection so was not reflected in the report. The Panel was further advised that both local surveys and the national crime survey showed improved public confidence in Northamptonshire.

Strong partnerships – work collaboratively to support the vulnerable

- 6.7 A Panel member highlighted close collaboration in Milton Keynes between police officers and the women's centre and questioned whether Northamptonshire could learn from this. The Commissioner confirmed that the same organisation ran the women's centres in Northampton and Kettering as in Milton Keynes, which meant that the centres operated in similar ways. As Commissioner she also had a good understanding of good practice in this area.
- 6.8 A Panel member commended the Girls' Pathway pilot project but raised concern that the specialist safeguarding programme for vulnerable girls resulting from it would be discontinued after the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner role ceased to exist. The Commissioner advised that all current projects carried out by her Office, including the safeguarding programme for vulnerable girls, should transfer to the new local policing governance model. It was important for such work to continue as it helped to reduce overall demand on policing.

Strong partnerships – tackle problems with a multi-agency approach

- 6.9 A Panel member sought further information about the locations and outcomes sought from the local partnership hubs that had been supported by the Commissioner and about the business of the Public Safety Board established in 2025. The Commissioner advised that the Public Safety Board had been set up to bring together decision-makers from key local organisations to work on strategic issues. It had held three themed meetings so far, with another due shortly. It had produced outcomes that would not otherwise have been achieved. The Commissioner could provide further information to the Panel in future about the local partnership hubs.

7. Outcomes of the Review

- 7.1 At the conclusion of discussion the Panel resolved that:
- a) The Panel notes the Annual Report for 2025/26.**
 - b) Points regarding the Annual Report for 2025/26 raised by Panel members during the course of discussion be set out in the Panel’s report to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.**

8. Background Papers

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Terms of Reference