



Dan Price
Cheshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

PUBLIC SCRUTINY BOARD

Notes of the Public Scrutiny Board held on Monday 29 June 2026 at Runcorn Town Hall.

PRESENT: D Price, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
M Roberts, Chief Constable (CC)

Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner
G Southern, Deputy Chief and Crime Commissioner (DPCC)
C Gilbody, Chief Executive
J Hare, Head of Communications and Engagement

Cheshire Constabulary
B Dutton, Assistant Chief Constable (ACC)
P Woods, Head of Performance & Planning

Members of the public observed the meeting online.

1. Introductions

At the Public Scrutiny Meeting held on Monday 29 June 2026, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Dan Price, chaired the meeting. The Commissioner opened the meeting and explained that Public Scrutiny Meetings provide an opportunity to test assurance, explore risk, and ensure policing activity is aligned with the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan.

The Commissioner emphasised that the 'Modernise' pillar of the Police and Crime Plan is intended to drive tangible organisational change through investment in technology, streamlined processes, workforce capability, and improvements to the police estate. He advised that the purpose of the session was to scrutinise how Cheshire Constabulary is modernising through technology, automation, artificial intelligence, and estate development.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the previous Public Scrutiny Board held on 29 April 2026 were approved. There were no outstanding actions.

3. Scrutiny Thematic – Modernisation

The Commissioner invited the Chief Constable to provide an overview of the Constabulary's approach to modernisation.

The Chief Constable stated that modernisation is intended to improve services to the public whilst operating within financial constraints. He highlighted strong operational performance, including emergency call handling, response times, crime outcomes and national recognition from HMICFRS.



Dan Price
Cheshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

The Chief Constable described record levels of demand experienced by the Constabulary, including the highest number of 999 calls ever received in a single day. He explained that modernisation is essential in enabling the force to maintain performance whilst meeting growing demand.

He further highlighted Cheshire's AI strategy, recognition from the Home Office, status as a Microsoft Frontier Force, the roll-out of Microsoft Copilot, the development of in-house digital solutions, automation programmes, and significant investment in the police estate.

The Commissioner scrutinised the data presented by the Constabulary and asked the Chief Constable to respond to a series of questions.

Slide 5 – Measuring Modernisation Success

The Commissioner asked which outcomes best demonstrated that the modernisation programme was delivering results.

The Chief Constable highlighted implementation of the SAAB Safe command and control system, next-generation radio technology, participation in the LEDS programme (the replacement PNC), AI enablement, robotics, and the successful adoption of Microsoft Copilot.

Asked whether any projects had failed to deliver expected benefits, the Chief Constable explained that rigorous governance, testing and pilot activity ensured unsuccessful initiatives were identified and stopped before implementation.

Slide 6 – Digital Skills and Organisational Culture

The Commissioner asked how the Constabulary was addressing digital skills and capability.

The Chief Constable reported that Cheshire had delivered extensive digital training, including Copilot workshops, masterclasses, online tutorials, and bespoke learning packages developed with Microsoft. He highlighted strong workforce engagement and utilisation.

The Commissioner also asked whether the organisation possessed the right culture and leadership to embrace technological change. The Chief Constable advised that adoption rates demonstrated a positive culture and noted that an Assistant Chief Constable had been given direct responsibility for modernisation and AI, reflecting organisational commitment.



Dan Price
Cheshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

Slide 7 – Automation and Productivity

The Commissioner asked how automation was improving efficiency.

The Chief Constable advised that automation development had been brought in-house and that eight automations were currently live. More than 200,000 automated tasks had been completed since February 2026, with additional projects in development. Examples included automated bail notifications, safeguarding notifications and missing person workflows. These were saving staff time, improving consistency and reducing opportunities for human error.

Cyber Security and Resilience

The Commissioner asked how the Constabulary manages cyber risk.

The Chief Constable explained that cyber security remains a force-wide responsibility supported by a dedicated IT security team, threat monitoring, staff training, information asset owners, national policing partnerships, phishing simulations, and regular security testing.

Slide 11 - Artificial Intelligence Enablement Programme

The Commissioner sought assurance that investment in AI and automation would deliver measurable benefits.

The Chief Constable advised that the programme aims to reduce administrative burdens, improve efficiency, and release officer and staff time for operational priorities. Benefits, savings and return on investment would continue to be monitored through business cases and performance reporting. The Chief Constable outlined the use of technologies including TOEX (Tackling Organised Exploitation Programme), Prometheus (digital forensics tool), and other digital solutions supporting translation, transcription, digital forensics, and crime recording.

The Commissioner also asked how 353 workforce-generated user stories had been assessed and prioritised. The Chief Constable explained that the submissions had been reviewed, categorised into themes and evaluated against operational need, value for money and organisational impact.

The Commissioner thanked the AI team and recognised the innovative work being undertaken across the organisation.

Slide 16 - Estate Strategy

The Commissioner asked how changes to the police estate would benefit communities.

The Chief Constable explained that public demand increasingly comes through telephone and online channels. During the previous year the force received approximately 150,000 emergency calls, 170,000 non-emergency calls and significant growth in online reporting via the website. He confirmed that front counters remained available across policing areas and that public access technology was being upgraded.



Dan Price
Cheshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

The Chief Constable added that whilst public footfall at stations remains relatively low, facilities continue to support those who require face-to-face contact.

4. Commissioner's Questions

The Commissioner sought an update on PCSO numbers following significant public interest in the topic.

The Chief Constable advised that there were currently 50 PCSOs in post, of whom 48 were deployable. The Commissioner asked when the number of PCSOs would be back up to 57 PCSOs.

The Chief Constable reaffirmed the Constabulary's commitment to neighbourhood policing and explained that warranted police officers had been used to backfill areas where PCSO vacancies existed. The Chief Constable confirmed that Cheshire remained fully compliant with neighbourhood policing guarantee requirements and that neighbourhood policing performance would continue to be monitored.

The Commissioner highlighted the importance of visible policing and confirmed that neighbourhood policing would remain subject to ongoing public scrutiny.

5. Any Other Business

None reported.

The Commissioner thanked the Chief Constable and Constabulary colleagues for answering the questions raised and providing transparency, accountability and reassurance to the public. He thanked members of the public for attending online and brought the meeting to a close.