



Dan Price
Cheshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner



**Cheshire
Constabulary**

MINUTES OF THE INDEPENDENT ETHICS PANEL HELD ON THURSDAY 14th MAY 2026 ONLINE VIA TEAMS

Present: Robert Mee (Chair)
Jonathan Bamford
Maggie Chen
Thomas Morris
Emma Shillabeer

Apologies: Kate Jury

Also present: Damon Taylor, Chief Executive, OPCC
Claire Gilbody, Head of Scrutiny & Planning, OPCC

For Minute 2 only:

T/DCI Hannah Friend, AI Programme lead
Gemma Carter, AI Project Manager
DS Chris Hawkins, AI Project

For Minute 3 only:

Superintendent Adam Alexander, Force Control Centre

1. Notes of Previous Meeting Held on 5th February 2026

The notes of the meeting held on 11th December 2025 were NOTED with the addition of a comment about the publication of the Panel's report on their findings in relation to the precept survey.

2. AI Enablement Programme Overview

T/DCI Friend gave a presentation to the Panel on the work of the AI Enablement Project Team.

The approach to identifying business needs, cost management, and decision-making was outlined; user stories and high-level process mapping were being used to understand workflows; AI associates had been appointed to support relationships between the organisation and project teams, cutting across ranks. It was reported that Microsoft Copilot and TOEX (Home Office-funded applications) were already in active use. The Constabulary had published internal AI guidance to support the roll out.

Pilot programmes were planned for crime recording solutions and interview transcription. While there was no national lead, the force had liaised with other forces and was likely to become a Microsoft "pathfinder" force.

In terms of Ethics and Governance, ethical oversight was informed by the NPCC; College of Policing; Meta compliance and the Home Office. It was emphasised that AI usage required watermarking and continuous human oversight.

It was noted that there had been an increase in Freedom of Information (FOI) requests regarding AI usage in particular system decommissioning, likely driven by media interest. A structured review process had been applied at both the start and end of implementation to assess need and effectiveness, supported by the Home Office "Theory of Change." In addition, post-pilot benefits realisation was undertaken.

The Panel welcomed the presentation and the opportunity to discuss in further detail three questions on the implementation of AI across the organisations, namely:

Ethical Assurance - What assurance can be provided to give the community confidence that ethical decisions are upheld when AI and staff judgement differ?

The following comments were made: MDMM (Model Decision-Making Model) principles were applied; AI may reinforce existing biases (e.g. over-criminalisation), raising questions about public explanation; systems were designed to dynamically adapt to context rather than operate as fixed algorithms; an in-house AI agent had been developed with positive early testing results; concerns were raised around potential deskilling due to reliance on technology; and assurance was provided regarding resilience (e.g. continuity if Microsoft systems are unavailable).

Transparency and Public Confidence - How can the Constabulary transparently communicate the purpose, safeguards, and limitations of AI tools?

The following comments were made: The Constabulary recognised risks and limitations; public reassurance can be strengthened through transparency about how AI is used; it was suggested that each solution should include documented guidance, assessments, and considerations; information should be published in an accessible format; and independent oversight should be considered to enhance public trust

Accountability and Oversight - What assurances demonstrate that AI-enabled forecasting (crime, threat, risk, harm) is implemented responsibly?

It was commented that there was emphasis on clear accountability; strong oversight; and ongoing human control

Reference was also made about the development of the AI stalking tool which had been presented to an earlier meeting of the Panel. Initial evaluation showed that the AI tool appropriately identified stalking cases with an 85% success rate, and that further development was being explored, alongside funding opportunities

The Project team was thanked for its presentation and it was AGREED that a further update could be provided in six months.

3. Right Care Right Person (RCRP) – 3 Years On

Superintendent Alexander gave a presentation to the Panel on the implementation of RCRP three years on, which included details of the phased implementation and how it had been rolled out; public reassurance; staff welfare particularly for those call handlers who were working with the new processes; escalation procedures to ensure appropriate application of RCRP; and collaboration with partner agencies.

The Panel welcomed the presentation and raised a number of queries relating to its roll out and how particular issues had been addressed.

The Panel NOTED the presentation and requested that further information be provided on the number of hours that had been freed up through the reduction in deployment as a result of the implementation of RCRP.

4. Ethics Panel Annual Report 2025/26

The Panel considered a report which had been drafted by Jonathan Bamford which set out the activity of the Panel over the last year.

The Panel AGREED the report which would now be published on the OPCC's website as well as circulated to the Chief Constable and Commissioner for their attention.

5. Panel membership Update

The Chief Executive presented a report which set out the proposed membership terms of the Panel as well as the proposed recruitment for new members. The draft person specification and terms of reference were also circulated for discussion.

It was AGREED:

- (1) To commence a new recruitment exercise, to increase the number of members on the Panel to at least 10, to provide extra resilience and flexibility;

- (2) Three panel members be appointed to assist with the interview process with the OPCC agreeing those members once the process had commenced and timescales known;
- (3) Extend Emma Shillabeer and Thomas Morris' term of office to end on 31 March 2027, to allow time for new members to be onboarded before existing members step down;
- (4) Re-appoint Robert Mee for a further four years with his term of office expiring on 31 March 2030;
- (5) Noted that the other 4 members of the Panel had been appointed until August 2027 (*post meeting note: agreed that due to lack of attendance at panel meetings, Panel member 'J.O' term of office be terminated with immediate effect – bringing current 'active' Panel membership to 6).*

6. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 17th September 2026

ACTIONS MATRIX

Ref.	Action	Action taken
1. [3-23]	To help inform the Panel's work, it would find it helpful to better understand how both organisations (PCC/Constabulary) gain the views of people in Cheshire on policing.	Feedback to be given at future meeting
2. [6-23] & [9-23]	Develop an induction programme for new members of the Panel	Agreed at meeting on 05/09/23 that CEO to provide list of relevant information to aid Panel's wider understanding of policing

3. [6-23]	Provide an update on other training events which the Panel may wish to consider attending in line with their work programme	
4. [9-23]	RCRP post implementation issues to be discussed at a future Panel meeting	• CLOSED
14.[01-24]	Future agenda items discussed. • Body Worn Video (BWV) • How officers deal with young people (including youth Commission work) • National Stop and Search S60 Report • New members to undertake training already given to RM and ES • Presentation from the Special Constabulary	• CLOSED • CLOSED
16.[01-24]	A.I. as a future deployment tool for the Constabulary	Presentation on the AI enablement project given on 14/05/26
17.[01-24]	Facial Recognition review for new members	• CLOSED
18.[09-24]	Possible future agenda items: • The role of Ethics Panels as governance in NPCC Covenant. • Tasers – training of and the impact on the officers who use them • PCC's Police and Crime Plan – is there a piece of work for the EP to consult on this? • Future agenda item on Code of Ethics • Use of NICE (retail) • Live Facial Recognition update	• CLOSED • CLOSED • CLOSED

19. [04-25]	Find out more about Regional Ethics Committee	
20. [05-25]	Panel to be invited to the Youth Commission's annual conference	• CLOSED
21. [05-25]	Panel to receive an update on the AI Stalking Project	• June 2026
22 [12-25]	Consider recruitment of new Panel members	• Now June 2026