



Dan Price
Cheshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

Commissioner's questions

During the 24th June 2025 Public Scrutiny meeting the Commissioner asked Cheshire Constabulary the following questions:

1. What remedial action is underway to address concerns raised by inspections and scrutiny?

The Constabulary has robust governance arrangements to manage His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection activity which is overseen by the Deputy Chief Constable who chairs an HMICFRS Strategic Oversight Meeting. The process for co-ordinating activity in response to HMICFRS reports is managed by the Planning and Performance Department. All individual Force and national thematic inspection reports are reviewed with learning and actions directed to individual leads. All actions and associated work is tracked and reported to the Strategic Oversight Meeting. Action owners and business leads complete "position statements" for each recommendation and ensure that their evidence of delivery is ready for inspection. Business leads (usually a Chief Superintendent or Head of Dept) submit completed recommendations to the strategic lead (usually an ACC) to review. Once the strategic lead is satisfied with the actions taken and has verified the evidence of delivery, the recommendation is submitted to the DCC for sign off. Once endorsed by the DCC, the position statements are uploaded to the inspectorate.

These arrangements are in place for all HMICFRS reports and are also used for key national inquiries such as the Baird and Angiolini inquiries. In the last two years the Constabulary has used these arrangements to satisfy itself that 180 HMICFRS areas for improvement and recommendations could be closed by the DCC as well as all 10 of the findings from the first Angiolini inquiry report. The Constabulary has not waited for the publication of the second Angiolini report and has instead commenced the above arrangements for the 'List of Issues' published in February 2025.

2. How is the Force working with local businesses and rural communities to build trust and improve reporting and support for victims of persistent crime such as anti-social behaviour (ASB)

We have a range of mechanisms for engaging with and supporting business

communities. Our Beat Management approach provides local named officers and PCSOs who regularly engage with and support their business communities.



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Designing out crime is an important element of our approach not only focusing on tackling current challenges but also to ensure that physical spaces of the future are places where people feel safe. The Constabulary has 3 accredited (Level 5) Designing Out Crime Officers (DOCO) and 3 accredited (Level 4) Crime Prevention officers embedded in Area Problem Solving Teams who work with local partners and businesses.

Licensing Officers work closely with Local Policing Units to support and prevent Nighttime Economy criminality and ASB. Where repeat issues are identified, licensees attend the police station for a partnership meeting with the licensing officer, Local Authority and Police and are given support, advice and an action plan, including Bystander training for their staff which is delivered by the licensing officer.

This approach is enhanced with specific retail crime operations, such as Operation watchmaker, which targeted repeat locations, taking a full 4P approach that incorporated the targeting of offenders, whilst DOCO's supported businesses.

We additionally realise the threat that cyber enabled crime causes to businesses and have dedicated Specialist Cyber protect and prepare officer who actively attends small businesses providing specialist support to enhance their cyber security and protect their digital assets.

All of this is crystallised with the regular business and retail crime conferences, which have been held in 2023, 2024 and in May 2025. These bring together regional and national assets, such as the Northwest Cyber Resilience Centre, a regional resource funded by the PCC, to support businesses within Cheshire. It provides an opportunity to showcase the work under the full 4P spectrum of business crime, such as NICE investigate, SelectaDNA and the use of preventative criminal behaviour orders.

Rural crime is an issue for large areas of the country. It can impact on insurance premiums, food prices and damage local communities. We have a dedicated team of Rural Crime officers across the County who work with rural communities to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and target offenders committing crime in our rural and remote communities. The team focus on rural, wildlife, heritage and waste crime and work with

neighbouring forces and national teams to look at emerging crime trends to bring those offenders to justice who travel to Cheshire to commit crime.



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The rural crime team has an active social media presence, particularly on Facebook, where it has more than 28,000 followers. The team have received Rural Crime Team of the year award 2023 at the UK Wildlife Crime Conference.

In a recent operation undertaken by the team they discovered £4m worth of cigarettes while searching a property in relation to stolen diggers.

[Cops hunting stolen diggers find £4m-worth of cigarettes.](#)

3. How does the Force ensure timely and consistent communications with victims particularly in high volume crimes, such as shoplifting?

The Constabulary has issued all officers with a digital contact cards. This enables officers to provide their contact details to victims with a simple tap of the card on the victim's mobile phone and also provides a link to the Victim Information Pack. Use of the contact cards is monitored and scrutinised through local accountability meetings.

As part of the Victim Code of Practice each victim will have a contact agreement which records the method and frequency of contact that will be provided.

Regular supervisory updates will ensure that the agreement is being adhered to and audits are undertaken by local Inspectors to assess the quality of victim contact.

We are also currently scoping the development of a Victim Contact app for officers which will make it easier for them to record victim updates as well as providing notifications to officers when updates are due.

4. Can you explain what Offences Brought to Justice are?

When an investigation is complete there are around 20 different outcomes or results which can be applied to the crime. These can range from formal police action such as a charge or caution through to out of court disposals such as community resolution as well as outcomes where it has not been possible or is not appropriate for action to be taken.



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The term 'offences brought to justice' is one which HMICFRS has used to compare police forces and is a collection of the outcomes as highlighted on the slide.

Offences charged makes up the largest element of 'offences brought to justice'.

5. What is the Force doing to ensure victims remain engaged by keeping them updated?

The Constabulary has additional arrangements in place for vulnerable victims and those subject to Domestic Abuse and sexual offences.

We employ six Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) who work within Area Investigation Teams whose roles are to provide immediate risk management for domestic abuse cases, provide support to DA victims and act as a conduit between IDVA and officers where required. DVAs work with all risk levels (standard/medium/high) and have been in place since February 2023. Following renewed government funding these roles have been extended until March 31st, 2026.

In addition, Cheshire Cares provide a service to standard risk (following secondary risk assessment by the Vulnerability Hub) and contact victims providing them with referrals and support.

IDVAs are commissioned via the PCC through the four Local Authorities. All IDVA services provide a high-risk service which follows referrals from the Vulnerability Hub who have carried out Secondary Risk Assessments which are graded as high. In addition, all four authorities accept referrals for any medium gradings where there have been:

- Three vulnerable persons assessments within 12 months,
- any repeat cases as well as those cases with order breaches including bail
- any cases of Non-Fatal Strangulation.

Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVA) are provided through the Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC) as the commissioned service via the PCC. RASASC accept all referrals for sexual abuse which includes for children with two Child ISVAs employed to support child victims and their parents. ISVAs work remotely but liaise closely with officers and there are plans to integrate ISVAs into police stations monthly working with Criminal Investigation Department (CID) but this is still in its early stages. Referrals to ISVA also come from Cheshire Cares to RASASC.



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6. How does the Constabulary ensure quality as well as compliance in relation to VCOP?

As part of the Victim Code of Practice each victim will have a contact agreement which records the method and frequency of contact that will be provided.

Regular supervisory updates will ensure that the agreement is being adhered to and audits are also undertaken by local Inspectors to assess the quality of victim contact.

The Force's Service Improvement Team also undertakes reality testing with officers and check the quality of victim contact with the results being provided to the Victim satisfaction board.

We are also currently scoping the development of a Victim Contact app for officers which will make it easier for them to record victim updates as well as providing notifications to officers when updates are due.

7. How do frontline officers identify vulnerable victims and refer to appropriate agencies?

When an initial call to the Police is made a THRIVE risk assessment is undertaken within the Force Control Centre to assess the Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigative opportunities, vulnerability of the victim and Engagement opportunities. This information is provided to officers and the risk assessment is reviewed as part of any subsequent investigation.

The Constabulary's Vulnerability and Safeguarding Team (VAST) contacts vulnerable victims after the initial call for service to reduce harm and to offer safeguarding options. Officers in the VAST access live incidents which are domestic, sexual or vulnerability incidents and contact victims to make sure they are supported and safeguarded, whether there is any criminal justice outcome. Officers consider a wide range of options, such as evidence-led prosecutions, the Hollie Guard personal safety app, Operation Encompass, advice from the fire service on increasing safety for people and properties and safeguarding any identified children. They also make referrals on behalf of victims to relevant agencies for support.

This approach was recognised on the Constabulary's recent HMICFRS PEEL report as national 'innovative practice'.

The Constabulary has undertaken a significant training programme with Frontline officers around vulnerability to specifically increase knowledge



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and awareness around areas such as Op Encompass, child neglect and Child Sexual Exploitation. This has included use of virtual reality headsets to simulate operational environments. HMICFRS commented positively on the Constabulary's approach in its recent PEEL inspection report.

The Constabulary has weekly continuous professional development as part of its training offer for officers and staff. Within each round of training there is training which is focussed on areas relating to vulnerability to continually improve officer and staff understanding. Themes such as Stalking Protection Orders, understanding and investigating Non-Fatal Strangulation, understanding the link between domestic abuse and homicide and understanding the importance of language within domestic abuse investigations are some of the trainings delivered so far in 2025.

Through this, the force has seen large increases in a number of areas which would evidence better recognition of vulnerable victims including:

- An 8% increase in the number of vulnerable person assessments completed (Jan-May 2025 compared with 2024)
- A 40% increase in recorded child neglect offences (2024 compared to 2023)
- A 280% increase in recorded child sexual exploitation offences (2024 compared to 2023)
- A 141% increase in Op Encompass referrals (Aug-Dec 2024 compared to 2023)

The most recent HMIC Peel report for Cheshire stated that "The constabulary has effective processes in place to make sure referrals to partner organisations are timely and of good quality" and reported that "We found that the officers and staff in the hub share good-quality information with partner organisations in a timely way. We found no backlogs in the completion of secondary risk assessments.

8. How does the force ensure that victims with additional needs have access to special measures?

The constabulary's approach to identifying vulnerable victims and witnesses is outlined above.

The use of Special measures are monitored through Witness Care Officers who ensure that every file has a completed 'assessment for special measures'. In addition, "How To" videos have been produced to ensure

officers are aware of who qualifies, what support is available and how to apply.



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275 applications have been made over the last 12 months will almost all being granted.

9. How does the force use victim satisfaction data to improve services?

The Constabulary asks victims and partner organisations for feedback in a variety of different ways. This is to improve the service it provides to victims. All feedback is considered, then shared at the monthly victim satisfaction board, which a detective chief superintendent chairs. The constabulary also asks for feedback through a monthly domestic abuse victim satisfaction survey and has recently started a similar survey for feedback from victims of stalking.

The domestic abuse and rape and serious sexual offences survivor group has helped to identify opportunities to improve victims' experience. For example, members worked with the court staff and independent domestic violence advocates to move the location of the victim's room at the court, so victims don't have to walk past the suspect to get to the court room.

10. Operation ParkSafe

The Chief Constable responded to a question about Operation ParkSafe by outlining the following key points:

- Operation ParkSafe allows residents to report parking violations online, including uploading photos or videos of offending vehicles.
- Reports are triaged by traffic officers, who assess whether the offence warrants enforcement action, such as fines or referrals to local PCSOs.
- The scheme has led to increased community engagement and has helped address school zone safety, pavement obstructions, and parking on junctions.
- However, the CC acknowledged limitations, such as:
 - The sheer volume of parking violations being received
 - The police cannot enforce yellow line violations (these fall under local council jurisdiction).
 - Some reports lack sufficient evidence or detail, making enforcement difficult.