



Force **Management Statement** 2026



NORTHUMBRIA
POLICE



Chief
Constable
**Executive
Summary**



Vanessa Jardine
Chief Constable
Northumbria Police

As Chief Constable of Northumbria Police, I remain deeply conscious of both the privilege and the responsibility of leading this organisation at a time of significant and sustained change in policing. Every day, our officers, staff and volunteers respond to increasingly complex demand, from serious violence and organised crime to vulnerability, mental health, and safeguarding, often in environments shaped by digital risk, public scrutiny, and rising expectations.

They do so in challenging circumstances, with limited margin for error, and often while managing the cumulative impact of repeated exposure to trauma. I am continually struck by their professionalism, resilience and compassion, and by the determination with which they serve our communities to keep people safe and uphold public trust.

This Force Management Statement reflects our current understanding of the nature, scale and drivers of demand, acknowledging that much of modern policing is no longer driven solely by volume, but by complexity, risk and harm. It recognises the growing interplay between crime and vulnerability, the sustained pressure on the wider public service system, and the need for disciplined prioritisation to ensure that our response is informed, balanced and sustainable.

Those challenges are set against a backdrop of an increasingly constrained medium-term financial outlook, driven by uncertainty in funding beyond 2026/27, rising pay costs, growing reliance on borrowing, the need to deliver significant efficiencies, external (including geopolitical) pressures, and the unplanned loss of overshoot funding. This reinforces the requirement for continued financial discipline and active review of delivery plans to ensure longer-term affordability.

This is not simply a statement of capability, but a candid assessment of where we are, what we are learning, and how we are adapting. We are placing greater emphasis on evidence-led decision making, the intelligent use of data and technology, and a more proactive understanding of risk, both operational and organisational. At the same time, we are strengthening our focus on legitimacy, productivity and value, recognising the importance of public confidence as expectations of policing continue to evolve.



**Our people remain
our greatest asset.**



The year ahead brings both significant opportunity and challenge. National Police Reform, the development of the Police Performance Framework, and increased focus on consistent standards across forces require us to think differently about how we measure success and demonstrate impact. These changes reinforce the need to invest in our people, strengthening wellbeing provision, improving our response to trauma exposure, and ensuring our workforce is equipped, supported and resilient.

Taken together, this environment demands clarity of purpose and a willingness to adapt. It invites us to challenge long held assumptions, to be more transparent about our service priorities and performance and focus relentlessly on improvement where it matters most; protecting the public, supporting victims, and sustaining a capable and healthy workforce for the future.

Our direction, values and culture

Our strategic direction remains anchored in a clear and enduring purpose: to keep people safe and fight crime, with an ambition to be an outstanding police force. It is centred on three core objectives:

- 1. Focusing on prevention**
- 2. Being there when the public need us**
- 3. Delivering an outstanding service**

Our people remain our greatest asset, and we recognise that delivery against these objectives is shaped significantly by organisational culture, standards and leadership. Over the past 18 months we have implemented a suite of leadership and cultural interventions designed to raise professional standards, improve behaviours, strengthen team performance, increase workforce engagement and improve public confidence.

We have introduced a single Culture, Leadership and Engagement Framework and refreshed our performance and development review process to strengthen consistency, fairness and accountability, and to reinforce the behaviours and values we expect at every level. Alongside this, we are strengthening how we recognise and respond to trauma exposure, with a continued focus on wellbeing provision and supervision for those in high-risk roles. Operationally, these changes are intended to reduce wasted effort and public complaints by improving quality and consistency, so we do things right first time.

2030 Programme

Our 2030 programme aims to make the Force more predictive, preventative and seamless; making better use of data and

digital capability, working more closely with partners, and focusing relentlessly on reducing harm.

The Estates Strategy supports this ambition by improving the condition, suitability and sustainability of our estate. The planned delivery of a new Force Headquarters by May 2027, including a single-site Communications Department and dedicated training facilities, is designed to improve resilience, learning, supervision and major incident management, while also supporting workforce wellbeing and efficiency. Investment in EV charging infrastructure and estate decarbonisation reflects both operational need and our responsibility to plan sustainably for the future.

Technology

We are accelerating digital advancement through a modern Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) strategy aligned to national direction, prioritising cloud adoption, a mobile-first approach, treating data as a strategic asset, and systematically removing legacy technology that constrains performance and change.

The successful implementation of NicheRMS365 in February 2026 marked a significant milestone, replacing a legacy system that had served the force for over 40 years. The transition was delivered without interruption to frontline services and reflects the professionalism and adaptability of our workforce.

NicheRMS provides an integrated platform across crime, safeguarding, intelligence and investigations, strengthening our understanding of demand and our ability to protect the most vulnerable. The forthcoming mobile capability will further reduce abstraction, improve visibility and enable faster, more informed decision making on the frontline.

We will build on technology already deployed across Crime and Safeguarding to reduce investigation time and administrative burden, using AI and automation where it demonstrably improves efficiency while protecting decision-making quality, evidential standards and frontline outcomes. Our technology roadmap will remain focused on practical benefits: improving service to victims and communities, strengthening risk management, and releasing officer and staff time back to frontline activity.

Strengthening organisational oversight

Increasing organisational and operational complexity has reinforced the need for clearer strategic oversight and governance of change. The development of a Corporate Hub will strengthen analytical capability, improving prioritisation and providing clearer oversight of delivery.

The Hub is designed to support better strategic scanning, clearer understanding of risk, improved performance insight and more disciplined programme management. It also introduces a structured continuous improvement function, intended to support learning, process refinement and incremental efficiency. This represents a deliberate approach to improvement that emphasises sustainable benefits over pace.

Reform and collaboration

We view reform and performance developments not simply as a compliance exercise, but as an opportunity to benchmark, learn and improve, and to influence emerging approaches for the benefit of our communities.

Collaboration continues to play an increasingly important role in building resilience and capability. Together with Durham Constabulary and Cleveland Police, we have moved to a more structured model of executive oversight, with priority workstreams spanning fleet, learning, specialist capabilities, digital policing, criminal justice and forensic services. At a regional level, the appointment of a Regional Chief Officer reflects our shared view that more coordinated engagement strengthens our collective ability to influence and respond to national reform.

Increasing Efficiency

Northumbria Police is focused on sustainable efficiency by reducing avoidable demand, strengthening problem solving and maximising partnership working, so that capacity is directed to core policing and public protection. Our efficiency programme centres on; expanding the Right Care Right Person (RCRP) methodology and demand management; 'right first time' behaviours to reduce failure demand; digital modernisation to streamline workflows; savings and financial sustainability; and embedding prevention approaches across the Force.

Community Cohesion

The Force continues to face complex challenges linked to community cohesion, hate crime and protective demand arising from protests and major events. These pressures are increasingly influenced by national and international events that can quickly raise local tensions, stimulate protest activity and trigger spikes in hate incidents.

We have strengthened our approach to community engagement and insight, recognising that legitimacy and trust

are fundamental to effective policing. Multi-agency arrangements operate across all Area Commands, supported by neighbourhood structures, engagement groups and a coordinated approach to leadership oversight.

Our improvement plans are aligned to the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on media and communications and driven by the need for an enhanced capability to identify and respond to misinformation. This is being supported through targeted investment in digital engagement tools and the embedding of more routine, accessible community surveying, to build a stronger and more consistent evidence base of public views and experience.

Northumbria Police is strengthening its already well-established neighbourhood policing model through the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, underpinned by place based partnership working designed to reduce long-term demand by tackling the root causes of offending and vulnerability.

Protective demand will intensify further as we prepare for UEFA EURO 2028, with St James' Park confirmed to host matches. This is a great opportunity which will generate income and have clear benefits for the region. However, this event will add further pressure to finances as the associated policing and operational requirements will exceed the funding provided. The event will require significant partnership planning and wider engagement to ensure we can provide visible, proportionate and intelligence-led policing that keeps people safe, protects the most vulnerable, and enables an enjoyable experience for everyone, while maintaining our ability to respond to day-to-day demand across the Force area.

Protecting vulnerable people

Protecting vulnerable people remains a core strategic priority, informed by national expectations on violence against women and girls (VAWG) and rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO), alongside local analysis of demand and victim experience. Our safeguarding approach aligns to the national ambition to reduce VAWG through a stronger whole system response that prioritises prevention, supports victims and survivors, and relentlessly pursues perpetrators.



Protecting vulnerable people remains a core strategic priority.



We have refreshed governance to strengthen focus on high-harm threats and improve perpetrator management. This aligns with the national RASSO transformation programme, including Operation Soteria. A review of the domestic abuse victim journey and the reinstatement of high-risk safety planning within neighbourhood teams is driving improvements to policy and practice.

In child protection, we are preparing for significant reform, aligning our approach with the Families First programme and anticipated Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams. We are also strengthening our readiness for rising online harm and safeguarding demand, ensuring a timely, effective and victim-centred response.

This Force Management Statement is presented at a time of considerable change. It sets out our commitment to an evidence-led, learning-focused approach to continual improvement. While we are proud of our progress, we remain clear about the work still to do.

I remain confident in our direction and grateful for the commitment of our workforce. By staying reflective, honest about our challenges, and focused on our purpose, I truly believe Northumbria Police is well placed to continue serving our communities with professionalism, care and integrity.

RAG Assessment

A RAG assessment has been completed for each section of the Force Management Statement, reflecting both our current position and future outlook based on forecast demand, capability and capacity.

This statement represents the Force Management Statement for Northumbria Police and, except where stated otherwise, the information is complete and accurate in all material respects.

Vanessa Jardine
Chief Constable
Northumbria Police



Strategic
Risk
Assessment

Strategic Risk Assessment

Northumbria Police has conducted a Strategic Risk Assessment for each area within the Force Management Statement (FMS), assessing present and anticipated demand, reviewing performance, status of the workforce and key assets, while also identifying critical risks and mitigations. The findings are presented in a colour-coded 'RAG' format.

KEY:



Green

The force is confident in the asset state and expects it to match current and future demand with minimal change.



Amber

The force is confident in the asset state but expects challenges to meet current and/ or future demand and will require more strategic action



Red

The force has either concerns over the asset state, its ability to meet current and/ or future demand or its ability to mitigate these challenges.

The current RAG status indicates the current risk associated to that department or area of policing and the current ability to meet that demand based on capability, capacity, and condition. The future RAG assessment forecasts the ability to meet future demand and considers the future impact of strategic plans, together with the residual risks.

The narrative provided articulates the assessment of risk associated for each section, including rationale.



Finance

The force has a balanced Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), savings and efficiencies identified by the Chief Constable have consistently been achieved and spending plans continue to be under control. Due to the scale of inflationary and budget pressures and uncertainty around future government funding it has been necessary to identify continued efficiency plans to bridge the projected financial gap, including an additional efficiency target of £6.0m.

The force's capital programme represents significant investment over the term of the MTFS to support the Chief Constable's aspiration to be a forward thinking and technologically advanced force.

The force will recruit over 990 additional police officers over the course of the MTFS. This will be supported by government funding via the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee in 2026/27.

There are continued funding risks relating to uncertain government grants beyond this financial year, reinforcing the need for continued financial discipline and active review of delivery plans to ensure long-term affordability. Audits confirm the force's operational sustainability, with no material uncertainties identified.

Current RAG Status:

The force continues to operate within a balanced MTFS maintaining strong financial control and discipline. Whilst inflationary budget pressures and higher pay awards continue to impact on force budgets, savings and efficiencies have been achieved, and spending remains aligned to approved plans. The gaps in funding are supported by the effective use of an Investment Reserve, which is being used to bridge the gap in funding as necessary efficiencies are achieved and embedded, and earmarked reserves are being used to mitigate risks.

Future RAG Status:

Despite prudent financial planning, there remains uncertainty with the future assessment which presents several emerging pressures and challenges, including the loss of overshoot funding, alongside continued cost and demand pressures. While the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (NPG) is currently assumed to continue as a ring-fenced grant, this remains dependent on future government funding decisions and does not provide long-term certainty. As a result, maintaining workforce numbers and service capacity is increasingly reliant on local funding, with further precept increases likely to be required.

Wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of the workforce continue to reflect the demands and complexity of policing, with pressures often more present in roles involving sustained exposure to traumatic incidents. The force recognises these dynamics and continues to prioritise wellbeing as a core component of workforce sustainability and operational effectiveness.

Over the past year, governance, oversight and assurance arrangements for wellbeing and Occupational Health have been strengthened through contractual reform, clearer performance expectations and improved data capability, alongside closer alignment to national wellbeing priorities. These changes enhance the force's ability to understand, monitor and manage wellbeing risk, although elements of this framework continue to mature.

Demand for wellbeing and mental health support remains evident in some operational functions and is monitored through established governance structures. Improving data insight and ongoing staff engagement are supporting better identification of pressure points and underlying drivers, while recognising that management capability, cultural change and cumulative exposure to trauma require sustained, longer-term focus.

Current RAG Status:

Sickness absence remains below the national policing average, with mental health continuing to represent a significant proportion of absence. Line manager capability is central to early intervention and management of wellbeing risks and leadership development focuses on trauma informed practice and early intervention. Internal trauma support has come under pressure following a rise in referrals resulting in an increase in wait times. Reviews of the trauma support model are underway. Recent contractual reform is embedding and addressing identified capacity constraints and improving oversight. While demand for wellbeing and trauma support remains high, these pressures are increasingly well understood and actively managed.

Future RAG Status:

The revised Occupational Health contract is embedding and assessed as sufficient for demand, with improved forecasting, contractual flexibility and strengthened governance reducing sensitivity to short term fluctuation. Ongoing reviews of trauma support provision, alongside continued investment in data capability, targeted wellbeing initiatives and trauma-informed leadership development, are expected to strengthen early intervention and management response ensuring wellbeing risks are increasingly understood and managed within a mature governance framework.

3.

Responding to the Public

The force continues to adapt services to manage a rising demand with a strong focus on improving customer experience. Response policing teams provide 24-hour coverage across six Area Commands, within a challenging and evolving operating environment.

The Communications Department remains a critical enabling function, with a clear strategic focus on expanding and improving digital services as public contact increasingly transitions to online channels. Improvements are required in 999 call handling, and work is ongoing to address this with performance gaps between local and national data recently showing positive improvements.

Performance in responding to the highest-risk incidents remains strong, demonstrating the force's ability to prioritise vulnerability and threat while sustaining service standards. Continued investment in technology and the refinement of deployment models have enhanced operational flexibility and resilience, whilst improvements are still required in relation to Grade 2 incident attendance times.

The adoption of the GoodSAM platform, enabling video-based interaction with the public, reflects the force's commitment to innovation and modern service delivery. This capability has already demonstrated its value in improving responsiveness and resolving incidents more efficiently, with plans to further expand its use to enhance service provision while delivering sustainable efficiencies.

3a.

Calls for Service

Current RAG Status:

Overall demand from the public into Northumbria Police communications department has increased; however, emergency call handling performance requires further improvement, providing confidence in the force's ability to respond to immediate risk. Non emergency 101 demand continues to present challenges, with persistent abandonment rates creating uncertainty around unmet vulnerability needs. Failure demand remains a material issue, while digital demand generates hidden workload that is difficult to quantify and manage consistently. Workforce pressures, including high absence rates and vacancies in specialist functions, further limit flexibility.

Future RAG Status:

The shift towards digital engagement drives a forecasted overall increase in demand in the short to medium term, before stabilising as digital first models mature. The force has a clear mitigation plan, which includes the

introduction of a self-service public portal planned as part of the 2030 programme. Mitigation relies on the migration of demand away from telephony, and includes the expansion of webchat, revised grading models and longer term investment in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and AI enabled solutions. Early data capture of customer information through digital channels will reduce current risks associated to 101 abandonment issues. Dedicated training time allows upskilling of staff, supported by enhanced development opportunities and the move to a single Communications Centre in 2027. This is expected to improve resilience, wellbeing and operational efficiency. Further improvements are dependent on new technology and cultural change to reduce failure demand.

3b. Incident Response

Current RAG Status:

Performance for high-risk incidents remains strong, with improved response times and a higher proportion of grade 1 incidents attended within Service Level Agreement (SLA), providing assurance around immediate threat and vulnerability. Overall calls for service have increased, whilst grade 2 performance has marginally declined. The number of investigations allocated have grown by 8% in the last year. Taken together, this creates increasing demands on the Response Policing function and causes capacity pressures that require close management. System challenges create difficulty in reliably predicting deployable numbers. While technology, such as video response is beginning to release capacity, and confidence is developing in managing investigations, high workloads and abstractions from front line duties due to essential training and force deployments continue to place pressure on response teams.

Future RAG Status:

Demand is predicted to continue to increase; the force has a range of mitigation measures in place, including further refinement of incident grading, expanded use of video response, rollout of NicheRMS mobile, and the development of community deployment hubs. Continued partnership working building on the Right Care, Right Person initiative will ensure that appropriate resources are deployed to policing related incidents. These interventions are expected to improve efficiency and overall service provision, although benefits are expected to be incremental. Ongoing workforce pressures, abstraction levels and increasing demand mean that capacity gaps are likely to persist.

Prevention and Deterrence

Prevention and deterrence activity remains strong, with sustained reductions in anti-social behaviour driven by effective neighbourhood policing, targeted problem solving and mature partnership working. Investment in workforce capability, data led deployment and early intervention continues to support the management of current demand.

Looking ahead, continued delivery of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, alongside enhanced use of analytics, technology and place-based partnerships, positions the force well to mitigate emerging risks associated with increased community-based offender management and digital offending. Overall, the force is well placed to maintain a strong prevention focus and deliver long term reductions in crime and demand.

Current RAG Status:

Anti-Social Behaviour continues to reduce with a 16% reduction compared with the previous year. Positive impacts can be seen from targeted hotspot activity, early intervention programmes and neighbourhood problem-solving, supported by improved data insights. Problem solving is being expanded through multi-agency hubs. Digital solutions help manage high demand for prevention through education and wider early intervention continues to evolve with Prevention Panels showing early positive results. Stop and search and use of force activity remain well governed, with improving compliance and strengthened internal and external scrutiny.

Future RAG Status:

Increasing multi-agency partnership hubs will expand delivery of tailored problem-solving activity with a continued focus on preventative practice. There is continued investment in Neighbourhoods through the Neighbourhood Guarantee and targeted entry routes, with supported training and accreditation. Development of an Offender Management Model to deal with increasing management of offenders in the community and enhance both capacity and capability in problem solving and prevention. NicheRMS and developing data insights will support a targeted approach to hotspot areas and addressing vulnerabilities. Short term funding arrangements present challenges in arranging longer term prevention initiatives.

5.

Investigations

Performance in investigative outcomes continues to improve, with significantly increased levels of positive disposals and appropriate use of out-of-court resolutions demonstrating a strong organisational focus on delivering high-quality investigations and achieving better outcomes for victims.

Investigative demand continues to rise, driven by increasing complexity, whilst technological developments are beginning to deliver benefits improving operational efficiency and overall victim experience. The ongoing implementation of NicheRMS is a key enabler and expected to deliver further benefits as it becomes fully embedded. NicheRMS is a modern integrated platform that will strengthen our ability to understand demand and respond effectively.

Targeted investment has strengthened capability in priority areas, including the establishment of a dedicated historic homicide review team. This has enhanced organisational understanding of demand in this complex field, while also generating new investigative opportunities and supporting the pursuit of justice in legacy cases.

Digital forensic demand remains a significant and evolving challenge that continues to impact on investigations. The force has invested in additional resource, improved management information and has commissioned detailed analytical work to understand changes in demand to ensure future preparedness. Processes are being reviewed and submissions prioritised aiming to reduce pressure in this area.

Workforce development remains a clear priority. Financial incentives, increased recognition and wellbeing initiatives alongside direct entry routes seek to address the shortfall in investigators. Broader efforts aim to build capability and continue to raise investigative standards across the organisation.

5a. Investigations

Current RAG Status:

Current investigative demand continues to rise, with the proportion of offences allocated for investigation increasing by 7.8% over the last year, building on the previous year's higher allocation rates. The sustained growth places pressure on investigative teams, with cases remaining open longer as standards improve. While this reflects positive progress, there is a risk to timeliness and victim experience. Digital forensic demand presents a persistent risk, with backlogs driven by increasing device volumes and advancing technology. Shortage of PIP 2 investigators continues to create pressure on investigative resource with a flexible approach required to manage this. Whilst outcomes continue to improve, capacity and capability pressures remain a challenge.

Future RAG Status:

Crime volumes are expected to reduce, with a 1.4% overall reduction in the last 12 months. Investigative complexity is anticipated to rise, particularly in relation to digital forensics and communications data. Paedophile Online Investigation Team (POLIT) investigations directly impact digital demand and are likely to increase. Further demand arises from increasing obligations from statutory review requirements. The force continues to invest in development with incentives to attract investigators to PIP 2 roles. The plan to address a shortfall is not due to fully mature until 2028. Investment in technology is planned to address future demand through a developing digital evidence roadmap; these benefits are dependent on successful implementation and adoption and will not fully mitigate demand pressures and capacity risks are likely to persist.

5b. Custody

Current RAG Status:

There has been a custody review over the past 12 months resulting in a force decision to close Bedlington Custody Suite, with the reinvestment of some sergeants and detention officers into the three-hub model based on demand data and recent and expected future increases in custody detainees. The last year has also seen significant pressure on custody overtime budgets, due to lack of force resilience for both sergeant and detention officers.

The introduction of the Bail Team has delivered tangible benefits, reducing avoidable custody demand and the volume of bail returns, while levels of child detention continue to decline. Improved governance is in place to manage suspects released under investigation. Further value will be derived from this team if failure demand is reduced.

Future RAG Status:

A robust plan is in place to prevent a recurrence of overtime spend over the coming year. The three hub model will strengthen resilience, supported by the maintenance of higher numbers of trained resilience staff. Formal agreements are also in place with Area Commands to provide resources on request. The structural changes taking effect from the end of June 2026, together with the increased resilience, will ensure that custody is in a strong position to manage demand pressures over the next year.

Investment in a Child-Centred Custody Suite, alongside the upskilling of staff, will support the embedding of the Children and Young Persons Charter, with a clear focus on improving wellbeing outcomes and increasing diversion opportunities. Work is also underway to enhance interpreter provision and expand the use of technology to improve service delivery and safety, including the potential adoption of AI-enabled tools and motion-sensing systems.

5c. Criminal Justice

Current RAG Status:

File Presentation Accreditation Certification (FPAC) has increased and improved the standard of file submissions contributing to a reduction in the volume of action plans required. Improved charge rates and use of Out of Court Disposals have increased workloads into CJU. Additional pressures have emerged following the implementation of NicheRMS. Whilst CJU demand has increased, it is anticipated this will lead to further improvements in submission standards over time. Ongoing backlogs within the court system continue to place pressure on Victim and Witness Services. In response, a structural review has been undertaken to better manage demand and enhance the quality and timeliness of service delivery, but these mitigations are still bedding in.

Future RAG Status:

New technology presents opportunities to improve efficiency and further enhance file quality. Adoption to date has been slower than anticipated. Focused activity is underway to increase utilisation and fully embed these systems alongside NicheRMS. Until these systems are fully embedded, uncertainty remains regarding performance improvement. Court backlogs persist and longer-term uncertainty remains regarding funding for certain posts providing victim services. The increase in demand through the CJU for file submission requires close monitoring. Early indications have highlighted concerns that this demand is not manageable with current staffing levels. Responsibility for ownership of Right 6 under Victims' Codes of Practice has now moved to investigating officers and requires close monitoring for compliance.

5d. Forensics

Current RAG Status:

Digital Forensics continues to face increasing demand and growing complexity of digital evidence. Recent investment in resources and improvements in processes and performance visibility has provided a clearer understanding of overall workload, highlighting a current backlog of cases. Previous investment in resource has been insufficient to deal with the backlog and increased demand. Further analytical work is ongoing to understand projected demand. An improvement plan is in place to streamline workflows and maximise the effective use of technology. This has led to improvements, reducing authorisation times but backlogs remain significant. Frontline digital capability remains inconsistent with kiosks introduced to reduce demand not being fully utilised.

Future RAG Status:

The expansion of accreditation requirements is expected to increase pressure as mandatory standards across forensic services continue to widen. Plans to strengthen capacity include workforce development, improved case management, enhanced frontline digital awareness, and continued investment in technology. Work is ongoing to improve understanding of incoming demand and introduce an early assessment process that reduces digital forensic demand. Remote wipe risks and increasing device security highlight the need for early assessment to preserve evidence. The Digital Forensics Unit (DFU) remains a key area of vulnerability, directly impacting investigative timeliness with demand in this area predicted to continue to rise.

Protecting Vulnerable People

Safeguarding demand continues to evolve, driven by improved identification of vulnerability, increased victim confidence, and the continued focus on national Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) priorities. This reflects a positive shift, with the force and its partners becoming increasingly effective at recognising harm, intervening earlier, and providing a more proactive response to protect vulnerable people.

Domestic abuse remains a central priority. There is growing recognition of the complexities associated with non-physical forms of abuse, and the introduction of DARA, alongside targeted initiatives such as Operation Aegis and the VAWG Top 25, is enhancing the force's ability to identify risk, disrupt high harm perpetrators, and safeguard victims more effectively.

Demand within child protection and Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) has increased in both volume and complexity, particularly in relation to non-recent offences and online harm. This trajectory is expected to continue as confidence in reporting grows and legislative developments take effect. In response, the force is investing in specialist capabilities and reviewing its operating models to ensure it remains well positioned to meet current and future demand.

The force is continuing to strengthen its understanding of stalking, harassment, and cyber enabled abuse. Investment in frontline training, combined with the implementation of NicheRMS, is expected to further improve the identification, recording, and differentiation of these offences.

Overall, the force is well placed to meet future challenges, with a clear and sustained focus on prevention, strong partnership working, and the protection of those most at risk.

Current RAG Status:

Domestic abuse reporting remains high, with a 3% increase in Public Protection Notifications and growing demand linked to coercive control, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), Claire's Law and repeat high harm perpetrators. Improved awareness and the expansion of mandatory reporting expectations on partners increases child safeguarding demand. RASSO demand continues to rise, influenced by increased victim confidence, non recent reporting and digitally complex investigations. Increased staff training has seen a growth in stalking and harassment cases as identification and recording improve. The missing from home team have reduced missing episodes with a focus on problem solving and partner engagement to identify causes and prevent future harm.

Future RAG Status:

The national VAWG priorities, legislative change, mandatory reporting, increased online harm, sentencing reform and improved identification of vulnerability continue to drive demand. The force has implemented a strengthened VAWG governance, perpetrator management models and investment in neighbourhood led safeguarding. Implementation of NicheRMS seeks to improve evidence collection and data quality. Planned workforce development, operating model redesign, strengthened governance, digital enablement and sustained partnership delivery aim to improve efficiency and consistency. These benefits will be incremental against the challenges of growing demand and complexity.

7.

Managing Offenders

The force has restructured the teams responsible for managing Registered Sex Offenders to align them more closely with local policing areas. This has strengthened collaboration with Neighbourhood Policing teams and supports a more holistic understanding of offenders within communities. Governance arrangements within this area are well established, with clear management information available to provide oversight and assurance that threat, harm and risk are being effectively identified, assessed and managed.

Youth Justice, Integrated Offender Management and Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) teams operate through well-embedded processes, working closely with partner agencies to manage offending behaviour and reduce reoffending. Strong links with Neighbourhood Policing teams enhance problem solving capability, particularly for individuals who fall outside formal statutory processes, ensuring that emerging risks are identified early and proportionate interventions are applied.

Sentencing reform is expected to result in an increase in the number of offenders managed within the community, alongside a broader drive to expand the use of orders to address offending behaviour. This will place additional pressure on already stretched resources.

In response, the force is working closely with partners to develop capacity and resilience through improved use of technology and streamlined processes. This activity is focused on ensuring the force can manage rising volumes of repeat offenders and individuals subject to conditions requiring ongoing management in the community, while maintaining effective oversight and public protection.

Current RAG Status:

The Registered Sex Offender cohort continues to grow, with increases in the use of Sexual Harm Prevention Orders and Sexual Risk Orders, reflecting a more proactive approach to offender management. MATAC prioritises the highest risk domestic abuse perpetrators, while Integrated Offender Management operates at capacity. Youth Justice demand remains stable in volume but increasing in complexity, driven by technology enabled offending and safeguarding needs. Demand growth and continued reliance on partner agency capacity present ongoing challenges that require active oversight.

Future RAG Status:

Sentencing reform, early release schemes and increased use of community based disposals are expected to expand offender cohorts. The anticipated introduction of Domestic Abuse Protection Orders, transition from ViSOR to MAPPS, and national expansion of VAWG offender management expectations will see increases in workload and complexity. The force has focused on technological modernisation, improved performance data and expanded use of civil orders. A proposed neighbourhood offender management model will see strengthened governance and oversight in this area.

Managing Serious and Organised Crime

Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) continues to evolve, encompassing a diverse range of offending including exploitation, cyber enabled crime, economic crime and the use of sophisticated communication networks. The force demonstrates a strong and developing understanding of threat, risk and harm underpinned by mature governance structures, strengthened intelligence frameworks and investment in new specialist capabilities through the creation of dedicated teams.

Operation Sentinel reflects a robust collaborative approach to tackling SOC, with the force embedding a more balanced application of the Prevent, Prepare, Protect and Pursue pillars. This has supported an increased emphasis on early intervention and preventative activity, alongside continued enforcement. While offences linked to Organised Crime Groups have reduced overall, those that remain are increasing in complexity and severity. This has resulted in increased arrests and disruption activity, demonstrating an effective operational response.

Current RAG Status:

The force has seen an increase in the number of organised crime groups, priority individuals, alongside a 32% reduction in SOC linked crime but a corresponding increase in crime severity. Drug related harm remains a dominant driver of demand, alongside growing exploitation, Paedophile Online Investigation Team (POLIT) referrals and cyber enabled offending. Performance in disruption activity has improved, with arrests and recorded disruptions increasing year on year. Specialist SOC units are well established. Influencing pressures remain around intelligence development within Area Commands, digital complexity and court delays.

Future RAG Status:

National and regional threat assessments highlight growth in exploitation, online criminality, economic crime, cyber threats and synthetic drugs. Legislative change, technological advancement and improved identification of hidden harm are expected to generate additional investigative demand across SOC, intelligence, forensics and safeguarding. The force continues to invest in its specialist capability, with enhanced use of technology, strengthened financial investigation and closer regional and national collaboration. Uncertainty around intelligence structures, accreditation requirements, partner capacity and future funding streams presents challenges. Outside of specialist teams there are competing demands on the functions required to support activity.

Major Events

The force continues to strengthen its strategic approach to major events and specialist policing functions, with a clear focus on resilience, preparedness, and organisational capability. Recent investment in the Force Coordination and Resilience Unit has enhanced both capacity and capability, ensuring that contingency planning, testing, and response arrangements are robust and aligned to local and national risk profiles. This is supported through strengthened collaboration with partners, notably via the Local Resilience Forum trailblazer programme, which has also enabled access to additional funding opportunities.

The force maintains a strong partnership with Counter Terrorism Policing, underpinned by targeted investment in technology and workforce development. This ensures readiness to respond to a dynamic threat environment shaped by rising demand and a complex political landscape.

Armed policing continues to be guided by a comprehensive strategic threat assessment, providing a clear understanding of risk and demand, which has remained stable. Operational command structures have been further strengthened through the introduction of a dedicated Tactical Firearms Commander (TFC) role, supported by a structured development programme. Improvements within firearms licensing are being progressed through process optimisation and greater use of technology, enhancing both efficiency and risk management.

In roads policing, the force has a proactive and preventative approach, targeting key risk areas associated with serious and fatal collisions. Activity is aligned to the Roads Policing Strategy, with an increased emphasis on enforcement and harm reduction. At the same time, there is ongoing efforts to strengthen investigative capability to ensure the force is well-equipped to manage the growing complexity of collision investigations.

This strategic progress is underpinned by investment in enabling capabilities, including the implementation of a new resource management system alongside enhanced training and equipment provision. Collectively, these developments enable the force to respond effectively to current and emerging challenges while maintaining a strong focus on public safety and service delivery.

Current RAG Status:

Current demand on force coordination functions is driven by sustained protest activity, major events, counter terrorism responsibilities, and civil contingency preparedness. Investment has strengthened preparedness and contingency planning with effective collaborations improving planning and testing capabilities aligned to local and national threats. Challenges exist in relation to firearms licencing which are being actively managed. Heightened protective security is currently in place to support one community following national events and a case for further resourcing is being submitted to ensure activity can be maintained. Road Policing investigations continue to increase in complexity with digital investigation skills being currently limited but with plans in place to address this. Estate to support operational training is reliant on partners with new premises being progressed through the estate's strategy.

Future RAG Status:

Pressure is likely to persist in this area because of heightened national terrorism threat levels, legislative change such as Martyn's Law, major event planning including Euro 2028, evolving protest dynamics and increasing digital and cyber enabled risk. This forms a central part of force planning, ongoing workforce development, digital investment, strengthened intelligence capability, improvements in contingency planning and continued collaboration through the Local Resilience Forum and counter terrorism networks position the force well to manage this trajectory. Within Roads Policing additional staff have been skilled in digital investigation with plans to develop a dedicated portfolio of digital trainers to be attached to the Serious Collision Investigation Unit and wider Roads Policing Unit.

10.

Knowledge Management and ICT

Digital Policing underpins the force's operational resilience and transformation ambitions, providing crucial infrastructure, applications and data services that support frontline and enabling functions. Demand is well understood and aligned to the Digital, Data and Technology Strategy and the 2030 programme. Lifecycle management is resource intensive, with some systems relying on specialist skills which can cause gaps in resilience.

Information management is aligned to operational demand and complex legislative requirements. The force has undertaken a data maturity assessment which identified a solid foundation but also highlighted areas for improvement which underpin the force's planned progression under the CMMI Data Maturity Model, providing a clear and sustainable improvement pathway.

The intelligence function continues to provide essential support to operational delivery, strategic assessment and risk management across the force. The Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB) delivers a wide range of operational and analytical intelligence functions and has demonstrated adaptability in responding to emerging threats, national requirements and system change. The force's intelligence capability includes Live Time Intelligence Cell and officers attached to local and specialist teams.

10a.

Digital Policing and ICT

Current RAG Status:

Digital services demand is driven primarily by the lifecycle management of a complex technology estate. A service management tool ensures workloads are effectively understood and managed. Specialist digital and emerging technology skill sets remain hard to recruit and retain. Around 80% operational staff time is absorbed by maintaining existing technology and infrastructure, limiting flexibility to absorb emerging demand.

Future RAG Status:

A large-scale technology refresh programme and expanding programme of work aligned to the 2030 roadmap will see an increase in work. Further demand will arise from the transition to a new data centre, delivery of new estate buildings and emerging national requirements around interoperability, facial recognition and system nationalisation. Demand for business-as-usual activity continues to constrain the ability to use resource flexibly. Any new national or reform driven requirements would necessitate reprioritisation or additional specialist resource, which can be difficult to recruit.

10b. Information Management

Current RAG Status:

Demand in the department is high and increasing with Freedom of Information requests growing in complexity. Family Court disclosure requests are growing year on year and there is also increased demand in relation to Information Security. The Property Other than Found Property and Assets project has dominated departmental workload, diverting capacity from planned physical Retention Review and Disposal (RRD) activity and contributing to legacy backlogs. System limitations and poor interoperability continue to hinder the efficient location and retrieval of information. Considerable time is also absorbed by the redaction of Body Worn Video and CCTV footage due to the absence of automated redaction capability, placing pressure on the department.

Future RAG Status:

Addressing extensive legacy backlogs through RRD activity remains a priority and is fundamental to public inquiry readiness, particularly considering the restrictive preservation requirements associated with the Child Sexual Exploitation Public Inquiry. Mitigation strategies are in place to manage these risks, supported by strengthened governance arrangements; however, backlogs remain significant. A continued focus on NicheRMS data quality remains essential, with a recognised requirement for dedicated resource to ensure accuracy and ongoing compliance. Demand into the department is high and anticipated to grow further with current process in relation to redaction time consuming creating a risk to meeting statutory disclosure times.

10c. Intelligence

Current RAG Status:

Intelligence submissions continue to rise, increasing processing demand. While the introduction of NicheRMS is expected to reduce the overall volume of intelligence records, the time required to process each submission has increased, temporarily reducing productivity and creating uncertainty around true demand levels. Intelligence officers are also based outside of Force Intelligence Bureau in local policing and crime; however, resilience is limited. Analytical capacity remains constrained, necessitating prioritisation; however, expected service delivery is currently being maintained.

Future RAG Status:

Future demand will be driven by national accreditation requirements and the increasing requirement for online intelligence collection, placing additional pressure on specialist capability. Investment in technology and participation in national pilots offer opportunities to enhance innovation and effectiveness; however, the scale and timing of benefits are not yet assured. A comprehensive intelligence review is scheduled for 2026 to assess demand, capability and future operating requirements, which will inform mitigation activity, but until outcomes are understood the risk remains managed rather than fully mitigated.

Force wide Functions

Force wide functions play a critical role in enabling Northumbria Police to deliver effective, efficient and sustainable policing. Collectively, these functions provide the infrastructure, governance, professional expertise and support services that underpin operational delivery, organisational change and statutory compliance. This year's assessment reflects a complex operating environment characterised by, increased regulatory requirements, national reform and the continued delivery of significant transformation programmes.

Overall, force wide functions continue to demonstrate resilience and a strong commitment to service delivery. Many areas are meeting current demand effectively, supported by clear strategies, strengthened governance and targeted investment in capability. Estates, Fleet, the People Department and the Corporate Hub provide a solid foundation, with stable demand profiles, effective prioritisation and alignment to the Force Strategy and the 2030 change programme.

Pressures remain evident across several enabling services. Rising demand, increasing complexity and workforce challenges are impacting capacity in areas such as Business Services, Finance, Legal Services, Procurement and Professional Standards. In these functions, performance is being maintained through prioritisation, risk-based decision making and short-term mitigations, but reliance on manual processes, specialist skills and legacy systems continues to present risk.

11a. Business Services

Current RAG Status:

Property services continue to experience rising demand driven by increasing volumes of seized property and associated storage, audit and disposal requirements, creating pressure on capacity. Some functions remain constrained by outdated processes with work underway to introduce new technology and streamline processes. Some roles suffer from high turnover and recruitment challenges as staff develop and move internally.

Future RAG Status:

Future demand for Business Services is expected to increase, driven by organisational transformation, digital change and policing reform. Growth is anticipated across property, uniform, and evidential storage functions, alongside evolving health and safety requirements. Planned mitigations such as process improvement, digital barcode scanning, workforce accreditation and strengthened governance are expected to reduce inefficiency.

11b. Communications and Engagement

Current RAG Status:

Demand remains elevated across internal, external and digital channels, driven by major organisational programmes, increased public scrutiny and a more challenging online environment. Digital engagement has expanded significantly, with social media now widely used for public interaction and engagement. Despite this, demand is being managed effectively. The department benefits from strong leadership, specialist teams and high workforce morale, supported by positive staff survey results and external recognition, providing confidence in its ability to meet current requirements.

Future RAG Status:

Future demand is expected to increase following the introduction of the updated College of Policing APP, which will raise expectations around transparency, digital engagement and misinformation management. While there is confidence in the department's ability to manage this trajectory, these requirements represent a step change in demand. A proactive approach is being taken to understand and plan for these pressures, supported by a new strategy and delivery plan. Work will be prioritised based on risk, with mitigations in place while longer term resourcing decisions are progressed.

11c. Corporate Hub

Current RAG Status:

The integration of previously separate functions into a single Corporate Hub has improved alignment, reduced fragmentation and strengthened organisational coordination across strategic planning, performance management, continuous improvement and delivery of the Force's 2030 change programme. This integrated model supports a more coherent and structured approach to organisational performance and change delivery. Targeted investment in capability and leadership has created a more sustainable operating model and reduced reliance on individual roles, mitigating risks associated with single points of dependency.

Future RAG Status:

The Corporate Hub is aligned to the Force Strategy to drive long term change and enhance organisational effectiveness and evidence-based decision making. Governance structures are in place to support prioritisation, oversight and delivery as demand continues to evolve. Challenges remain in building resilience within specialist roles, particularly in analytical and technical areas, and recruitment activity is ongoing to address current gaps. Supporting technology and data infrastructure continue to develop but are not yet fully mature. There is a risk that as demand for change grows pressure is placed on resource.

11d. Estates

Current RAG Status:

Current demand is stable and remains fully aligned to the Estates Strategy, with the department effectively managing a significant programme of new provision and estate improvement. Major projects, including the Operational Training Facility, Cobalt accommodation, and new dog kennelling facilities, are progressing as planned. Prioritisation remains tightly aligned to strategic and operational need.

Future RAG Status:

Major estates projects are already embedded within the capital programme, with suitable sites identified, commercial terms agreed and planning processes underway or secured, providing assurance of deliverability. National developments, including police reform and changes to operating models, are not anticipated to materially alter the underlying demand for local, purpose-built operational facilities. Longer term demand associated with decarbonisation and electric vehicle infrastructure is understood and phased over an extended timeframe.

11e. Finance

Current RAG Status:

The Finance function continues to deliver its core statutory and strategic responsibilities, providing effective financial planning, governance and assurance aligned to the MTFS and wider organisational priorities. The department is increasingly operating as a strategic partner, strengthening financial insight, forecasting and analytical capability to support informed decision making and value for money. Main challenges within finance are concentrated in payroll and pensions and the management of external audit activity, attributed to the combination of staff absence and the loss of some key specialists. Pension remedy work is complex and continues to impact the department. Strict governance and oversight is in place to monitor.

Future RAG Status:

Finance is positioned to strengthen resilience and maturity as stabilisation activity in payroll and pensions progresses and system development, automation and process improvement reduce reliance on manual intervention. Demand is expected to continue to increase due to pension complexity, regulatory change, national reform and major organisational programmes; however, clear recovery plans, leadership realignment and targeted investment in capability provide confidence that capacity will improve. Some short-term pressure is likely as remedy work and transformation activity continue in parallel.

11f.

Fleet Management

Current RAG Status:

Current demand on the Fleet function remains stable and well managed, with planned and unplanned maintenance activity being effectively absorbed within existing capacity. The Fleet Strategy ensures alignment with operational demand and value for money, while utilisation data confirms that operational requirements are being met. Progress in transitioning response and neighbourhood vehicles to hybrid technology is well advanced, with no material impact on service delivery, and governance arrangements support effective prioritisation and asset use.

Future RAG Status:

Future demand is fully understood through robust forecasting and horizon scanning, with no significant increases identified. The ongoing transition to hybrid and electric vehicles is not expected to generate a large increase in demand, although it will introduce incremental technical activity linked to emerging vehicle technologies. Dependencies remain around long-term EV policy clarity and the future availability of specialist and high-performance vehicles.

11g.

Legal

Current RAG Status:

Demand for legal services is notably increasing; however, the department continues to meet core demand, prioritising high risk and time critical matters and supporting operational delivery. Additional investment in resources has been made to strengthen resilience however, workload continues to grow in volume, and complexity created a sustained pressure on the department. Absence of a case management system limits the efficiency and visibility of workload.

Future RAG Status:

Future demand for legal services is forecast to continue to rise, driven by the anticipated introduction of Domestic Abuse Protection Orders, increasing complexity and volume of civil orders, continued growth in misconduct cases and ongoing LPP reviews. The department's ability to absorb this growth in the short to medium term is constrained by existing capacity and the continued absence of a case management system, planned for 2027. To mitigate risk a strengthened prioritisation and triage system is in place. Unavoidable delays are anticipated in non-urgent cases.

11h.

People Department

Current RAG Status:

The department is delivering against a broad and complex agenda, including workforce planning, leadership development and support to key operational priorities such as Neighbourhood Policing and investigative capability. While demand remains high, the department is responding effectively through strengthened governance, targeted interventions and a clear focus on improving workforce insight and value for money.

Future RAG Status:

The restructure of the department's operating model aims to reduce duplication and improve coherence to manage future demand, which is anticipated to remain stable. The implementation of the Integrated People Platforms aims to strengthen forecasting and data insight. Mid-level leadership disengagement has been identified as a risk with a clear plan in place increase engagement through extended leadership days and to consolidate leadership training.

11i.

Procurement and Supplies

Current RAG Status:

Demand remains high, driven by contract renewals, enhanced supplier management, the requirements of the new Procurement Act and wider market volatility; however, this is being actively managed through structured planning, strengthened governance and early engagement. Capability is still embedding following recent workforce turnover and some delays have occurred, operational impacts have been mitigated through controlled contract extensions, strong supplier relationships and an uplift in capacity. Service delivery is not yet consistently at the level expected of a fully mature function.

Future RAG Status:

Future demand for procurement is forecast to increase further, driven by the continued roll out of the Procurement Act, migration of legacy contracts into the new regulatory framework and the development of the 2030 programme. The introduction of the Proactis procure to pay system will generate short term additional demand as the organisation adapts to mandatory purchase orders and new processes. Mitigations are in place, including agreed uplift in staffing, structured forward planning for all contracts due to expire before 2027, strengthened governance and improved planning tools. National Reform is likely to create significant short – medium term demand to align contracts and differing financial systems.

11j.

Professional Standards

Current RAG Status:

Professional Standards Department (PSD) continues to manage high and increasing demand, reflecting greater organisational transparency, national scrutiny and a growing workforce. Increased reporting is viewed positively, demonstrating confidence in standards, prevention activity and reporting routes. While investigative capacity is under pressure and legacy systems constrain efficiency, the department is prioritising high risk and time critical cases effectively. Workforce capability is sufficient, wellbeing indicators have improved, and specialist functions such as counter corruption benefit from increasing stability, enabling PSD to continue meeting its core responsibilities.

Future RAG Status:

Demand is expected to continue to rise, driven by further workforce growth, national inquiries and changes to conduct and vetting requirements. The department has undergone a structured review which has identified a clear improvement plan, underpinned by digital modernisation, process redesign and workforce planning. Planned system replacements, automation and new digital tools for notifiable associations will improve capacity, consistency and early risk identification over time. While pressures will remain as changes embed and investigative capability develops.

Collaboration

Northumbria Police has a Strategically Aligned Forensic Service with Durham Constabulary. In addition, a regional collaboration agreement is in place in relation to some specialist skills. Bi-monthly Regional Collaboration Meetings have been established between the executives of Neighbouring Police Forces to review existing joint working and identify future opportunities. A lead Chief Officer will be appointed to improve reform engagement and collaboration.

The force is also involved in a place based budgeting pilot, delivered in collaboration with local authorities, with funding received from central government. The pilot is designed as a test, learn and grow programme, focused on developing and evaluating approaches to reducing offending among young people.

Work is also ongoing with the Combined Authority and the PCC's office to explore, at an early stage, the potential transition of PCC functions to a mayoral governance model, supported by a multi agency working group to scope legislative, operational and governance implications.

Current RAG Status:

The force is taking a proactive approach to support operational resilience, efficiency and preparedness for national reform. Established formal Section 22A agreements with Durham Constabulary and wider North-East collaboration frameworks, have reached a steady state and provide tangible benefits. Place based partnership working demonstrates a proactive commitment to prevention and innovative public service delivery.

Future RAG Status:

The force is well positioned to expand and adapt collaborative arrangements in response to reform, devolution and evolving demand. Planned investment in governance, including a dedicated Chief Officer role and strengthened regional coordination, will support more effective engagement with national reform and emerging opportunities. Uncertainty remains around Collaborative work required as details of Police Reform emerge.

