

The Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London

Our ref:TP/FC15

15 October 2026

Dear Home Secretary,

Suffolk Constabulary: PEEL Inspection 2025/27 – Response to HMICFRS’ report

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this HMICFRS PEEL Inspection report. I was pleased to learn that HMICFRS inspectors observed the improvements made in how the Constabulary responds to the public following significant investment in the Contact and Control Room through the council tax precept. Increasing digital demand was being managed well, and preventing and deterring crime and ASB was graded as ‘Good’, with well-established neighbourhood teams. I was also pleased that two promising practice items were included in the report, with new technology developments recognised.

However, I was disappointed by the overall gradings awarded following the inspection and was particularly concerned that the response and management of the DVDS scheme was found to have serious shortcomings. This is an area I had raised with the Constabulary prior to the inspection within my Accountability and Performance Panel meetings to outline my concern with the backlog and to gain assurance on actions in place to mitigate the risks posed; I was therefore very dissatisfied that the Constabulary had not ensured their response was appropriately safeguarding people potentially at risk of abuse. I have previously provided you with a written response to this accelerated cause for concern and have since been assured that there is no longer a backlog, all applications are now being processed within 28 days and, following a revisit by HMICFRS, this accelerated cause for concern will soon be closed as being met.

I was troubled that there were cause for concerns in two further areas relating to assessing and mitigating risk to safeguard vulnerable people, and an absence of an effective and safe detainee handover process in the custody environment. I have been provided with the detailed action plans in place to ensure required improvements are made, which have also been shared with HMICFRS. As an immediate example, learning has been taken forward from recent audits for a new framework for supervisors to assist with effective domestic abuse risk gradings, supported by guidance across the constabulary to ensure professional curiosity, repeat victimisation and safeguarding expectations are met. Within the custody setting, a full review of shift pattern and handovers is underway and whilst this is being completed, sergeants are completing in person handovers approximately 80% of the time; I am requesting regular updates on when this will reach 100%.

In Suffolk, we benefit from having the second lowest recorded crime rates nationally, however I am seeking assurance that forward-facing activity and governance structures enables public confidence to be upheld, and that strong and effective leadership is in place within the constabulary to drive the

changes required and safeguard those at risk from abuse. This will be via my regular meetings with the Chief Constable and Chief Officer team, as well as through reporting at my public Accountability and Performance Panel meetings.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Tim Passmore". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'P'.

Tim Passmore, Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk



Response to HMICFRS PEEL Inspection 2025-27

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) conducted the latest PEEL Inspection of Suffolk Constabulary during April 2026. The report was published on 20th August 2026.

The full report can be found [here](#).

HMICFRS inspectors found that the constabulary had made improvements in how it responds to the public and recognised that Suffolk continues to be effective at preventing and deterring crime and ASB with well-established neighbourhood teams. It also recognised positive practice in the use of new technologies.

However, the inspectorate also expressed concerns around how well Suffolk Constabulary safeguards and protects vulnerable people and how it manages handovers within its custody suites. The report also highlights issues around effective leadership and force management, the administering of police powers and managing fraud.

HMICFRS Judgements

HMICFRS assessed Suffolk Constabulary in 9 areas of policing issuing graded judgements for each:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Preventing and deterring crime	Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce	Leadership and force management	Safeguarding children and adults
		Responding to the public	Police powers and public treatment	Providing a safe custody environment
		Investigating crime	Managing fraud	

HMICFRS issued a total of 17 Areas for Improvement (AFIs), 3 Cause for Concern (including 1 accelerated) and 2 Promising Practice items under the above grading areas.

Constabulary Response

Progression of activity to address each AFI and recommendation is being managed through the HMICFRS Delivery Group, chaired by a Detective Chief Superintendent. All AFIs and recommendations are being allocated to department heads and commanders as owners, then assigned to specific area leads to progress. Initial responses have been gathered from leads and progress against each will be monitored through the Delivery Group. Governance and oversight are provided by the Deputy Chief

Constable via the HMICFRS Steering Group. Updates will be periodically provided to the HMICFRS monitoring portal and will be updated to the OPCC in future APP reports, as well as through internal meeting mechanisms between the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner.

Suffolk Constabulary accept all the AFIs and recommendations made in the PEEL report. Being wide ranging in scope, it can take time to fully consider and identify plans for addressing the areas for improvement and recommendations highlighted in the report. Therefore, the following will provide an initial response to each item, including early indicative plans to begin addressing each. However, it should be noted that these plans are subject to change as they develop over time.

In addition to the formal actions identified in the report, the constabulary is also identifying additional improvement opportunities from the wider narrative of the report. This will form part of the ongoing continuous improvement activity overseen through the above-described governance structures.

The following report takes each PEEL judgement category in turn and outlines HMICFRS' findings, and the constabulary's actions to address formal actions.

Question 1: Leadership and Force Management

HMICFRS graded the constabulary as 'Requires improvement' at Leadership and Force Management and issued three AFIs in this area.

The constabulary needs to ensure that governance arrangements appropriately identify and resolve areas of risk and under-performance

This AFI will be owned by the Deputy Chief Constable and will be delivered through a number of ongoing activities, including a refresh of the force risk management procedures and a review of force governance structures. A core focus of these workstreams will be on ensuring concise presentation of data and information to support effective identification of risk or under-performance, allowing Chief Officers and senior leaders to make informed decisions in addressing them.

Consultation is due to take place with senior leaders to consider the wider landscape of governance, performance and organisational improvement activity, which will feed into the progression of this AFI going forwards.

This AFI will be monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group, with changes expected to be embedded in 2027.

The constabulary must reassure itself that it is appropriately identifying and resolving occasions when leadership behaviours fall below expected standards

This AFI will be owned jointly by the Deputy Chief Constable and Head of People Directorate and led collaboratively by the People Directorate and Professional Standards Department (PSD).

Plans to address this AFI will be aligned to the ongoing Right Culture programme, which has seen the roll out of 'Right Education' programmes targeted to all employees of Suffolk Constabulary, including targeted specific training for people in management and leadership positions. The constabulary also has a confidential and anonymous reporting line which is publicised for individuals to raise concerns, with any issues raised dealt with through a robust and independent assessment process. Trends are also identified and monitored through the organisation's regular People Opinion Survey and the National Wellbeing Survey, and staff support networks and associations are regularly actively engaged with to identify and address and concerns raised.

The constabulary has rolled out a bespoke training input as part of its Right Culture programme which includes significant elements of the College of Policing's Code of Ethics training and embarked on

additional senior management training. Planning is underway for the next phases of the Right Culture programme alongside additions to the organisation's internal leadership training programme (Leading with Care) to reinforce leadership standards.

This AFI is monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group and targets 96% completion of senior leadership training, increasing staff confidence in reporting inappropriate behaviour and psychological safety through survey engagement, and the delivery of future Right Culture phases.

The constabulary should review and strengthen its approach to risk management

This AFI will be owned by the Deputy Chief Constable and led by Head of the Programme Management Office.

A programme of work to address this AFI has already been instigated, which has already completed a number of actions to review the existing risk management processes, develop a more robust scoring process and scoping technological developments to improve the user interface for reporting and monitoring risk.

Future activity to address this AFI will include implementing effective processes for senior leaders and Chief Officers to have oversight of risk registers, including governance arrangements and updating the Risk Management Framework and Policy to ensure all parties understand their responsibilities in managing risk. Additional work will also include engagement with Chief Officers and training, which is currently being researched.

This AFI is monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group and has a number of delivery targets, including providing suitable training around any new processes.

Question 2: Developing a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

HMICFRS graded the constabulary as 'Adequate' in Developing a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce and issued one AFI in this area.

The constabulary needs to make sure its professional development review (PDR) process is effective and valued

This AFI will be owned by the Head of People Directorate and delivered by the lead for people and professional development.

Engagement in the force's PDR process has been recognised as an area for improvement and significant work has been undertaken over the last 12-18 months to improve this. Further work is planned to improve processes through strengthened governance, engagement, enhanced leadership and accountability, career development support and linking to organisational priorities.

Additional work will look to introduce a quality assurance process to improve quality of PDRs for individuals and deliver training to managers about objective setting, continuous conversations and development planning.

This AFI is monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group and targets a 75% positive response in confidence and satisfaction with the PDR process. The next phases of work to progress this are in place to launch before the end of 2026, with performance indicators monitored via Spring and Autumn workforce surveys.

Question 3: Police Powers and Public Treatment

HMICFRS graded the constabulary as 'Requires Improvement' in Police Powers and Public Treatment and issued three AFIs in this area.

The constabulary needs to improve how it records and governs its use of force

This AFI is owned by the Chief Superintendent for County Policing Command and led by the Superintendent lead for Police Powers.

To address this AFI in the immediate term, a communications plan and timeline has been developed to reinforce the guidance around the recording of use of force, which has been accompanied by visits to all frontline teams. Additionally, a use of force dashboard is now in place to improve oversight of completion providing a method to track and address performance.

A project is now underway which aims to reduce bureaucracy and improve ease of completion and supervision of use of force recording.

This AFI is monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group and data will be reviewed to target use of force recording in line with arrest numbers as per the HMICFRS assessment methodology.

The constabulary needs to safeguard children who are subject to use of force or stop and search

This AFI is owned by the Chief Superintendent for County Policing Command and led by the Superintendent lead for Police Powers.

The constabulary already has a policy in place to ensure that a child protection investigation is raised in any instance of a child being subject to stop and search. Since the HMICFRS finding, the force has improved scrutiny of any searches of under 18s to review whether an appropriate referral is made and remind officers of the policy where this is not being done. This can be followed up with performance management if not addressed sufficiently. This is accompanied by general communications to all frontline officers.

As of September 2026, compliance is now back over 90% compared to the 46% from February 2026 as quoted in the PEEL report. However, this will continue to be monitored to ensure it is sustained over a longer period before considering ready to submit for closure. This AFI will be monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group.

The constabulary needs to expand and refresh its external scrutiny panel

This AFI is owned by the Chief Superintendent for County Policing Command and led by the Superintendent lead for Police Powers.

The constabulary has already recognised the capacity challenges for its external scrutiny panel to review and discuss a suitable number of stop and search and use of force incidents and work was already underway with the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner to increase the volume of incidents that can be reviewed. Consultation is now underway to scope the full changes required to enhance external scrutiny, which will include additional recruitment of volunteers to the panel to ensure it has suitable capacity and representative community participation.

This AFI is monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group and the inspectorate will be invited to review the changes once these have been embedded.

Question 4: Responding to the Public

HMICFRS graded the constabulary as 'Adequate' in Responding to the Public and issued one AFI in this area.

The constabulary needs to effectively supervise all outstanding sources of demand

This AFI is owned by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing and is led by the Superintendent lead for the Contact and Control Room (CCR).

In response to the inspectorate's findings, a dedicated response programme was instigated to address concerns that lower priority 'Grade C' incidents were not receiving suitable management. This response has already resulted in increased supervision and management of this demand queue by the CCR sergeants and this will be reinforced within the requirements of the role moving forwards. Suffolk Constabulary is also undertaking a review of the current grading policy, which does not commit Grade C response to a target timeframe, and benchmarking against other forces.

This work continues alongside the trialling of technologies to improve process efficiency, increasing the resilience of CCR sergeant capacity and strengthening cross-command procedures with County Policing Command.

This AFI will continue to be monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group and will track compliance against the new grading policy and service level agreements before being considered for submission for closure.

Question 5: Preventing and Deterring Crime

HMICFRS graded the constabulary 'Good' in Preventing and Deterring Crime and issued no AFIs in this area.

Question 6: Investigating Crime

HMICRS graded the constabulary 'Adequate' in Investigating Crime and issued two AFIs in this area.

The constabulary needs to improve supervisory reviews of investigations, including investigation plans and finalisation

This AFI is owned by the Detective Chief Superintendent for Crime, Safeguarding and Incident Management and led by the Detective Superintendent for Crime Investigation.

The constabulary recognises that whilst supervision is taking place, the quality, frequency and recording of supervision is variable, and that where supervisory reviews lack clear direction, meaningful challenge or rationale, there is an increased risk that investigative opportunities can be missed, and victim service standards decline.

A dedicated improvement programme aimed at improving the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of investigations is being progressed alongside the implementation of a new investigative standards framework. The new framework will support the improvement of supervision using mnemonics to direct supervisory reviews, performance monitoring and audits to identify trends and a new investigative learning model to provide focused training inputs in a cyclical process. The new framework is aimed at delivering high-quality investigations and will review supervisory expectations as part of this, using an evidence base to inform ongoing actions.

This AFI will be monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group. The implementation of this programme

will continue through 2027, with delivery against the AFI measured through a number of metrics, including outcome rates, service to victims, compliance of supervisory reviews and employee satisfaction.

The constabulary needs to seek the views of victims, so they are considered before finalising an investigation

This AFI is owned by the Detective Chief Superintendent for Crime, Safeguarding and Incident Management and led by the Detective Superintendent for Crime Investigation.

The constabulary recognises that victim engagement is fundamental to effective investigations and public confidence and acknowledges that victim views are not always clearly recorded or demonstrably considered when outcome decisions are made.

Through the above-mentioned investigations improvement plan, the constabulary aims to strengthen its focus on victim-centred investigations and the service provided throughout the victim journey. Initial activity will look to understand why compliance is inconsistent and review current processes around supervision and finalisation. This will be achieved through qualitative audits and performance monitoring. Going further, findings from these initial steps will inform ongoing training and development activity amongst investigators.

This AFI will be monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group and will be informed by the tracking of audit activity, quality assurance and governance processes.

Question 7: Safeguarding Children and Adults

HMICFRS graded the constabulary 'Inadequate' in Safeguarding Children and Adults. In this area, they issued two causes of concern (including one accelerated) and two additional AFIs.

Accelerated Cause of Concern: The constabulary doesn't make prompt safeguarding risk assessment and information disclosures to help keep vulnerable people safe

This Accelerated Cause of Concern was issued in May 2026. The constabulary's original response can be found [here](#).

HMICFRS revisited the constabulary on the 22nd September 2026 to review progress against the cause of concern. During the visit inspectors were provided with a full update on work completed and data to evidence that the backlog has been eliminated, with all applications now processed within 28 days. The constabulary was also able to show that initial safeguarding is being addressed within one day of referral or application, demonstrate the technological developments put in place to reduce manual delays, and highlight where policies, processes and guidance have been updated to ensure the ongoing management of DVDS risk.

The constabulary await a formal response from HMICFRS with regards to the status of this cause of concern.

Cause of Concern: The constabulary must make sure it identifies, assesses and mitigates risk to safeguard vulnerable people.

The constabulary's response to this Cause of Concern is overseen via a Gold Group chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing, with the operational delivery being led by a dedicated Detective Superintendent. An action plan has been developed and shared with HMICFRS laying out the force's response to each of the four recommendations.

The following outlines the force's immediate response to each of the recommendations. As per the report, the constabulary's response to these recommendations will be subject to further review by HMICFRS at the three-month point.

Within three months the constabulary should:

Recommendation 1: Introduce systems to assess, manage and accurately record the risk of harm to victims throughout the constabulary's safeguarding referral processes

In response to this recommendation, immediate action has been taken to better understand and address the issues identified during the inspection. This has included a detailed audit of previous domestic abuse risk grading decisions, together with a further review of live investigations, to provide assurance that risk was appropriately assessed and safeguarding arrangements remained suitable. The findings have provided valuable organisational learning and informed improvements to current practice.

This learning has been incorporated into a new framework for supervisors when considering changes to domestic abuse risk gradings and has been supported by force-wide guidance reinforcing expectations around risk assessment, professional curiosity, repeat victimisation and safeguarding.

Longer term, work is progressing to design and implement a comprehensive Secondary Risk Assessment Framework. This will provide proportionate oversight of domestic abuse risk, strengthen the identification of cumulative and escalating risk and ensure safeguarding decisions are informed by the fullest available information. The developing approach has also been shared with the College of Policing for independent review and feedback.

Recommendation 2: Develop effective governance and performance data to understand and manage the risk of harm to vulnerable people that it actions through its safeguarding referrals

Acknowledging that stronger governance and improved performance information are required to provide leaders with a more comprehensive understanding of safeguarding risks and organisational performance, existing domestic abuse reporting arrangements have been reviewed and new measures identified covering process compliance, repeat victimisation, changes in risk grading, safeguarding referrals and risk assessment outcomes.

A more robust and structured audit and assurance framework has also been introduced, providing an ongoing mechanism to identify trends, track improvements and capture organisational learning. This will help the constabulary assess whether changes are having the intended effect and identify where further improvement may be required.

Recommendation 3: Make sure it has the capacity and capability to support its domestic safeguarding referral processes to assess risk accurately to signpost people to the right support

To respond to this recommendation, work is underway to develop a sustainable longer-term operating model capable of delivering consistent safeguarding outcomes across all domestic abuse risk levels. A number of options are being explored, informed by analysis of current demand and benchmarking with other forces, to ensure future arrangements provide appropriate secondary review, quality assurance, decision-making and oversight of safeguarding referrals.

This includes consideration of a dedicated domestic abuse safeguarding and secondary risk assessment function, with work underway to understand the resources and capacity required to deliver this sustainably. Training requirements are also being considered to ensure the future model is supported by people with the appropriate knowledge and skills.

Recommendation 4: Make sure its safeguarding systems and processes support the provision of police-held information and intelligence to inform appropriate allocation of investigations

To respond to this recommendation, work has progressed to improve how police-held information and intelligence is brought together and used to inform domestic abuse risk assessment and safeguarding decisions. A revised research process, which automates the previously manual collation of relevant historic information, has been developed and piloted, with feedback now being evaluated to inform the preferred future approach.

Alongside this, technological developments are being explored to improve the identification of repeat victimisation, repeat perpetrator behaviour, escalating domestic abuse and cumulative risk. This work is intended to support earlier identification of vulnerability and ensure relevant information is available to those making risk and safeguarding decisions.

To accompany this, work has also been commissioned to explore opportunities to extend research capabilities across all domestic abuse risk levels and further strengthen the identification of vulnerability. Domestic abuse crime allocation processes have also been reviewed and revised to support timely victim contact, risk assessment, safeguarding activity and investigative progression.

Areas for Improvement

The constabulary must improve how it monitors preventative orders

This AFI is owned by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing and led by the lead Superintendent for Partnership and Prevention.

Following HMICFRS's AFI issued in the 2023 PEEL inspection work was undertaken to review the management of preventative orders and as a result, in early 2026 a new Preventative Orders Sergeant post was established to improve the oversight and management of orders in the constabulary. This means that whilst inspectors were unable to see how this role had embedded itself at the time of the 2026 PEEL inspection, the constabulary is already making clear steps to address this issue.

The constabulary recognises that there remains a need to ensure consistency of ownership, performance oversight and confidence in the application and management of orders. To address this, an action plan has been developed which focuses on embedding the function of the new orders sergeant, developing a dashboard to support monitoring and oversight, reviewing existing quality assurance processes, ensuring clearer ownership across departments and identifying good practice.

Governance arrangements have been established alongside a working group to progress the actions outlined in the plan. Overall progress against this AFI will be monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group targeting improved compliance of the use of orders.

The constabulary should ensure that governance arrangements and systems are in place to capture, issue and embed organisation learning from statutory reviews

This AFI is currently under consideration by Chief Officers for its ongoing ownership and progression. This follows work that has already been completed to create a central repository of findings and recommendations for organisational learning. A new Organisational Learning board is due to start in Q3 2026/27 which is being considered for governance, and elements of the AFI are being addressed through a large-scale review of the force's safeguarding and vulnerability approach.

As this AFI is allocated for onwards progression, this will be tracked and monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group.

Question 8: Managing Fraud

HMICFRS graded the constabulary 'Requires Improvement' for Managing Fraud and issued three AFIs in this area.

The constabulary needs to adequately train investigators and call takers to respond to fraud

This AFI is owned by the Detective Chief Superintendent for Crime, Safeguarding and Incident Management and led by the Superintendent for Contact Management.

To respond to this AFI, the constabulary has implemented a structured improvement plan, which includes the dedicated Fraud Assessment Unit providing targeted guidance to every officer allocated a fraud investigation, supported by additional investigation guidance available on the force intranet. This accompanies dedicated fraud inputs to relevant investigator training days. Frontline officers will also be required to complete a mandatory e-learning training programme in the coming months.

Call takers are being engaged with to better understand challenges to inform future actions to resolve. This will be supported by quality assurance to ensure any future training is embedded.

This AFI will be monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group and will make use of training completion rates, improved call taker confidence (measured through staff engagement) and audit outcomes to assess for readiness before considering for closure.

The constabulary needs the capacity to review, allocate and investigate fraud effectively

This AFI is owned by the Detective Chief Superintendent for Crime, Safeguarding and Incident Management and led by the Superintendent for Crime Investigation.

The constabulary's response to fraud investigations is currently subject to comprehensive review as part of wider considerations about Suffolk's investigation portfolio. This review will ensure the force's response to fraud is appropriate and will include allocation and training as part of the considerations. Initial College of Policing training is due to be rolled out imminently to improve knowledge of fraud investigations, whilst wider governance improvements are being detailed.

This AFI will be monitored through the HMCIFRS Delivery Group.

The constabulary needs to improve how it responds to victims and protects the community from fraud

This AFI is owned by the Detective Chief Superintendent for Crime, Safeguarding and Incident Management and led by the Superintendent for Contact Management.

In 2026, Suffolk Constabulary launched the Suffolk Against Fraud multi-agency fraud prevention partnership, chaired and coordinated by the constabulary, with a growing network of public, private and voluntary sector partners, including Trading Standards. This programme provides a coordinated approach to fraud and cyber fraud prevention, enabling consistent messaging, greater community reach and the ability to respond quickly to emerging threat trends.

This partnership is in its early phases and requires a period to embed, in which time referral pathways and processes are being reviewed, and training to be assessed to ensure appropriate advice and referrals are made. Additionally, in response to the AFI, immediate action has been taken to ensure call takers have access to appropriate question sets and call scripts to provide initial safeguarding advice to members of the public.

This AFI will be monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group and targets improved referral rates and

improved safeguarding advice via audits.

Question 9: Providing a Safe Custody Environment

HMICFRS graded the constabulary 'Inadequate' for Providing a Safe Custody Environment. In this area, they issued one cause of concern and two additional AFIs.

Cause of Concern: The constabulary doesn't have an effective and safe detainee handover process.

The constabulary's response to this Cause of Concern is overseen via a Gold Group chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable for Joint Protective Services, with the operational delivery being led by the Chief Superintendent for Specialist Operations, which includes Custody within its portfolio. An action plan has been developed and shared with HMICFRS laying out the force's response to each of the recommendations.

The following outlines the force's immediate response to each of the recommendations. As per the report, the constabulary's response to these recommendations will be subject to further review by HMICFRS at the three-month point.

Within three months the constabulary should:

Recommendation 1: introduce an in-person handover process between outgoing and incoming custody personnel that allows for clarification of detainee risk information between shifts, in line with APP

Immediate mitigation has been implemented to provide assurance over the handover process and ensure risk is not being missed during this handover. In the immediate term, the comprehensive written handovers that are already in place are being accompanied by mandatory verbal handovers recorded for the incoming personnel.

The constabulary recognises that this does not satisfy the need to re-introduce in-person handovers. Therefore, the force has instigated a full shift pattern review for Custody Sergeants to ensure that a cross over period is built in, and physical handover can take place. This review has started and will be led by the Superintendent lead for Custody with a plan to have a solution in place by June 2027.

In the meantime, Sergeants have been asked to complete physical in person handovers where practicable. This is being tracked, and at present 83% of all handovers are being conducted in person in Suffolk custody suites. Compliance is tracked across all custody suites, with any areas where this isn't happening being addressed. The shift pattern review will ensure that this position becomes mandatory and sustainable long-term.

Recommendation 2: Introduce a quality assurance process for the handover procedure so that the constabulary can assure itself that risk is sufficiently managed

Alongside the response to Recommendation 1, a structured audit process has been introduced to track the method of handover and ensure that the handovers are appropriate. This includes a regime for both Inspectors and Sergeants to review a dip sample of recorded handovers, and for Inspectors to attend handovers when in the custody suite. Findings from these audits are reported into the Gold Group for governance and assurance.

Areas for Improvement

The constabulary should make sure that it has effective governance and quality assurance processes to manage the safety and wellbeing of detainees

This AFI is owned by the Chief Superintendent for Specialist Operations and led by the Chief Inspector for Custody.

Monthly audits are conducted on the use of force in custody, Inspector PACE reviews and detention of young people alongside independent scrutiny panels. These are embedded within the management of custody as business-as-usual, being tracked centrally and outcomes recorded for any feedback provided. This allows for the sharing of best practice and identification of learning opportunities.

To progress this AFI, an enhanced Children and Young Persons (CYP) Inspector PACE review is currently being developed. This review will cover a 10-point plan in addition to the usual PACE reviews to ensure that care needs are met with young people in custody and follows the best practice of other forces. This practice is due to be in place by the end of September 2026, with an appropriate audit regime in place to monitor.

This AFI will be monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group, making use of audit and review data to demonstrate the effectiveness of the quality assurance practices in custody.

The constabulary should make sure reviews of detention are carried out and recorded in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984

This AFI is owned by the Chief Superintendent for Specialist Operations and led by the Chief Inspector for Custody.

The delivery of PACE reviews by Inspectors has undergone a transition phase with the introduction of in-cell video technology to allow Inspectors to complete PACE compliant reviews remotely. Through its implementation PACE reviews have been audited for compliance, with data showing that compliance is improving overtime, with most recent audits showing this is over 80% within Suffolk custody suites.

Further improvements are being made to enhance the connectivity of this new technology, which is hoped will help to improve compliance further. This will continue to be measured through monthly auditing, with learning shared with Inspectors to address any identified issues.

This AFI will be monitored through the HMICFRS Delivery Group, targeting appropriate compliance levels as a result of auditing.