



WATFORD  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL



# MEETING OF HERTFORDSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Wednesday 27 May 2026- 6 PM

Broxbourne Borough Council  
Bishops' College,  
Churchgate, Cheshunt  
Hertfordshire, EN8 9XQ

## DRAFT MINUTES

(Please note that the minutes are a summary of the discussion and not intended to be verbatim)

### Members Present:

Cllr Tom Plater ('Chair')	Stevenage Borough Council
Dr Malcolm Ramsay('Vice Chair')	Independent Panel Member
Cllr Vijaiya Poopalasingham	North Herts Borough Council
Mr Luke Rigg	Independent Panel Member
Dr Julian Hargreaves	Independent Panel Member
Cllr Andrew Scarth	Three Rivers District Council
Cllr Aaditya Kaza	Hertsmere Borough Council

### Also Present:

Mr Jonathan Ash-Edwards, Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner ('PCC')

Mr Scott Hague- Head of Delivery and Innovation- Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Office

Mr Andy Prophet- Chief Constable, Proposed Candidate for the re-appointment as Chief Constable

Mr Ibrahim Balta, Clerk to the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel

- 1 **WELCOME**  
Welcome by Chair.
- 2 **APOLOGIES**  
Apologies from Cllr Christian Gray(substitute attending), Cllr Jim Clune, Cllr Duncan Jones, Mr Mark Jackson and Cllr Matt Fisher, Cllr Aga Dychton(joined remotely via Teams)
- 3 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 5 FEBRUARY 2026**  
Agreed.
- 4 **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**  
None.
- 5 **CONFIRMATION HEARING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF CONSTABLE REPORT ATTACHED AT APPENDIX 1**

**PCC:** Presented his report for the proposed candidate Mr Andy Prophet (**‘Chief Constable’**) to be reappointed as Chief Constable for Hertfordshire.

**Chief Constable:** provided an outline progress made by Hertfordshire Constabulary, highlighting: Increased success in catching criminals and reducing crime, continued focus on improving responses to domestic abuse and commitment to achieving better outcomes for victims.

## **6 QUESTIONS FROM THE PANEL TO THE PROPOSED CANDIDATE/COMMISSIONER**

**Dr Hargreaves:** asked about improving confidence in reporting domestic abuse and how reports would be recorded and investigated.

**Chief Constable:** Proactively encouraging reporting through direct contact, victim groups and third-party reporting mechanisms. Working closely with professional networks and support organisations. Committed to improving investigative standards. Developing a centralised process for every domestic abuse call received. Seeking to improve criminal justice outcomes and use appropriate out-of-court disposals where evidence thresholds are not met. Noted that approximately 10% of domestic abuse cases are currently resolved and that progress had been made prior to his appointment.

**Dr Ramsay:** asked about steps being taken to improve transparency.

**Chief Constable:** He wishes to strengthen neighbourhood policing and make existing resources more effective. Monthly public meetings and question-and-answer sessions are held across the county. Public discussions focus on key priorities including shop theft and domestic abuse.

**Chair:** raised concerns regarding access to police misconduct hearings and noted correspondence received about a lack of online access.

**Chief Constable:** acknowledged the importance of transparency and accountability, explaining that: Professional Standards functions are delivered collaboratively with Cambridgeshire. Misconduct outcomes are published where appropriate. Greater scrutiny may be possible, while balancing transparency with fairness and staff confidence.

**Chair:** The Chair thanked the Chief Constable for his response and recognised the need to balance openness with maintaining staff trust.

**Cllr Poopalasingham:** asked how the force measures public trust and confidence.

**Chief Constable:** Surveys provide some insight, but public confidence is largely shaped by everyday interactions. Prompt responses and effective policing help build trust over time. Sustained performance improvements should increase public confidence.

**Cllr Poopalasingham:** referenced improvements in crime recording and asked whether these improvements were sustainable.

**Chief Constable:** Improved performance is sustainable. New systems now provide staff with detailed information on investigations and outcomes. This level of performance data was not available 15 months ago.

**Mr Rigg:** asked whether pension abatement would apply under the proposed retire-and-return arrangement.

**PCC:** confirmed that abatement would apply.

**Mr Rigg:** also asked what assumptions the Chief Constable had made at the start of his tenure and what lessons he had learned.

**Chief Constable:** He spent three months researching the force before applying. He found a strong sense of pride within the organisation. There was significant opportunity for improvement. Organisational change had taken longer than expected. New leadership and restructuring had been necessary. Cultural and performance improvements require time. The force is moving in the right direction but there remains significant work to do.

**Cllr Kaza:** referred to paragraph 4.8 of the report and asked about Hertfordshire's ranking.

**Chief Constable:** The ranking is based on the proportion of reported crimes solved. The figures are derived from national data. While the ranking is positive, the ambition is to improve further.

**Cllr Kaza:** comparison between different areas in Hertfordshire, good and bad areas and enquired about room for improvement.

**Chief Constable:** In response to questions regarding geographical differences across the county, the Chief Constable said: Hertfordshire remains a relatively low-crime area. Certain crime hotspots exist, particularly in areas such as Watford and Dacorum. Resources are targeted using data analysis. Both overt and covert tactics are used against organised crime groups. Long-term reductions in crime have been achieved through targeted policing.

**Cllr Kaza:** enquired about priorities.

**Chief Constable:** A new public protection structure is being introduced. Greater specialist skills will be developed in areas such as crimes against children. Improved performance and outcomes are expected. Implementation is expected to begin in the autumn.

**Dr Ramsay:** asked about ensuring the force reflects Hertfordshire's changing ethnic composition.

**Chief Constable:** acknowledged that progress has been too slow and outlined plans to: Improve recruitment from underrepresented groups. Increase oversight of diversity initiatives. Strengthen engagement with colleges and communities. Improve understanding of policing careers among diverse communities.

**Chair:** asked about engagement with communities affected by antisemitism, Islamophobia and other forms of hate crime.

**Chief Constable:** The force continues to prioritise hate crime investigations. Dedicated hate crime officers remain in place. Regular meetings are held with faith and community leaders. Hertfordshire Together and other partnership initiatives continue to support community cohesion. Police intervention focuses on preventing division and maintaining community safety.

**Cllr Poopalasingham:** how organisational changes had been received by frontline officers.

**Chief Constable:** Extensive staff engagement had taken place. Feedback from approximately 2,000–3,000 staff members informed reforms. Improvements have been made to technology, vehicle access and operational support. Senior leaders regularly spend time alongside frontline officers. Cultural surveys are used to monitor staff sentiment and track progress.

**Mr Rigg:** asked about arrangements during the Chief Constable's proposed period of absence.

**PCC:** explained that: Plans have been carefully developed. Subject to Panel approval, arrangements would commence in mid-July. The Deputy Chief Constable would provide leadership during the period. The PCC expressed confidence in the leadership team's ability to maintain performance.

**Chair:** asked about recent restructuring.

**Chief Constable:** outlined creation of East and West policing commands. Reduction of district structures from ten to six. Consolidation of criminal investigation functions from ten teams to four. Larger teams providing greater resilience, expertise and efficiency.

**Cllr Kaza:** asked about criminal activity crossing county boundaries.

**Chief Constable:** confirmed that criminals frequently travel from London into Hertfordshire. Vehicle crime and drug-related offences are key concerns. Close collaboration takes place with London, Essex, Thames Valley and Bedfordshire police forces. Joint operations are used to disrupt organised criminal networks.

**Chair:** asked both the PCC and Chief Constable about relationships with neighbouring forces.

**Chief Constable:** reported strong working relationships with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, including: Weekly meetings with counterparts. Shared governance arrangements. Collaboration on specialist functions such as dogs, scientific services and firearms licensing. The PCC agreed that collaboration had strengthened and highlighted improvements in firearms licensing and governance arrangements.

## 7 **CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED APPOINTMENT TO THE ROLE OF CHIEF CONSTABLE.**

Public and PCC's team has been asked to vacate.

**8 CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED APPOINTMENT TO THE ROLE OF CHIEF CONSTABLE.**

Panel discussed the Proposed Re-Appointment of Mr Andy Prophet as the Chief Constable.

Panel's decision following discussions in closed session:

Panel Members present unanimously agreed accept the proposed re-appointment.

Chief Constable: thanked the Panel for its trust and confidence and stated that he would continue to work tirelessly to improve policing across Hertfordshire.

**9 AOB**

**Dr Hargreaves:** asked whether the recently launched Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy had been made publicly available.

**PCC:** confirmed that the strategy had been formally launched. It had been developed in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council and other agencies. The document would be circulated to Panel members.

**Chair:** in personal capacity noted that the circumstances requiring this additional meeting as set out in PCC's report were not ideal and suggested that future government reforms should seek to avoid similar situations.

**Chair:** appreciated the Panel members, the Chief Constable and PCC for their attendance, Officers supporting the Panel, including Ms Sandra Beck Deputy Chief Executive of Broxbourne Borough Council, and Ibrahim Balta, Clerk to the Panel.

**PCC:** thanked the Panel for its professionalism and balanced scrutiny throughout the year.

**10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING 18 JUNE 2026- DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL**