



Home Office

Improving Police Productivity

A response to the recommendations of the Policing Productivity Review.

23 April 2024



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Ministerial Foreword

Improving productivity across the public sector is a priority for this government. Maximising the value of every pound spent means focusing on the outcomes that matter the most to the public. Nowhere is this more important than in policing.

Policing will receive up to £18.4 billion in 2024/25, and we have invested over £3 billion in recruiting an additional 20,000 officers since 2019. It is vital that the public get the full benefits of this investment. That means ensuring our police officers are able to do their jobs effectively and stripping away the unnecessary barriers they face. We welcome the ambition that policing has shown in the independent Review of Policing Productivity, which was published in the autumn of 2023.

The Review identified many opportunities for policing to improve productivity, with the potential to save 38 million hours of police officer time every year. That would be the equivalent of another 20,000 officers on our streets. This is a challenging target, but we know that policing can rise to it, implement the Review's recommendations, and realise the potential benefits. We want to see police officers focused on core policing, catching criminals, and protecting the public.

The Government has an important part to play in this. This response sets out what we are doing. We are going further than the Review recommended, demonstrating the strength of our commitment to improving productivity and outcomes. As set out at Spring Budget, the Government has committed an additional £234 million, over four years, to the improvement of police productivity.

This will bring our additional investment into technology and innovation within policing in 2024/25 to over £65 million. It includes measures such as facial recognition, drones as first responders, redaction, rapid video response, automated triage of 101 calls, knife detection, and robotic process automation. It will also help prepare policing for both the challenges and benefits brought by advances in artificial intelligence.

We will create a new Centre for Police Productivity, based in the College of Policing. This will be established from autumn 2024 and will set the foundations necessary for policing to deliver the 38 million police officer hours identified by the independent review.

This Centre will include a new Policing Data Hub to support police forces' use of data and ensure they can deploy and get the benefits from new technology, including AI. It will also deliver new model processes into policing that was trialled during this Review. Adopting 'what works' through model processes will mean better outcomes for the public at less cost.

Government and policing must demonstrate the benefits of investment in policing. The new Centre for Police Productivity will work with policing to implement the

recommendations of the Review, identify and drive new opportunities and evaluate the progress made in delivering the 38 million hours.

Public confidence in policing must improve. People need not only to be safe but to feel safe. The Review acknowledged that improving productivity is pivotal to this endeavour, by getting back to core policing and improving outcomes for the public. New technology and innovation not only allows officers to spend more time doing the job they should do, but also allows the public to get the right information or support when they need it.

Policing is a unique job; it offers continuous challenges, and the results always matter. We want to maximise the efficiency and productivity of the service which focuses on the things that are important and deliver safety for the public. This is what is represented by the Review's recommendations, and we look forward to working with policing to deliver on them.

Rt Hon James Cleverly MP
Home Secretary

Rt Hon Chris Philp MP
**Minister of State for Crime, Policing
and Fire**

April 2024

Productivity in Policing

Why Policing Productivity Matters

Improving productivity will enable policing to make the most effective use of its available resources. It will ensure that police officers can carry out their core roles of preventing, and detecting crime, and keeping the public safe without being burdened by unproductive tasks or procedures. This will improve public confidence in policing, which is why productivity is important to the Government. The public will not only be safer, but they will feel safe as well.

The Policing Productivity Review was published on 20 November 2023. It identified 26 cross-cutting recommendations that, if implemented in full, would free up around 38 million hours of police time per year within five years. This equates to over 20,000 police officers. The review also identified that a long-term shift in the culture of policing would be required to deliver this change. It will need to move to embrace greater collaboration in trialling and rolling out new technologies, identifying and adopting best practices, and sharing and exploiting data between forces.

We believe the leadership of policing are ready to embrace this challenge and understand that doing so will be necessary to adapt to changes in demand and ensure the sector is able to fully exploit fast-paced improvements in technology, characterised by innovations in areas such as AI and automation. The Government will continue to support policing to do this as set out in this response to the Review.

The Foundation for Improvement

The Review recognised that there is a need within policing to identify best practice, make the necessary changes to implement it effectively, evaluate the impact of doing so, and measure the success. To enable these key actions to be effectively and consistently carried out, the Government has decided to set up a new Centre for Police Productivity. This will be based in the College of Policing but will be focused on driving forward the recommendations of the review and be responsible for overseeing the delivery of an additional 38 million hours of operational policing time.

The Centre will lead delivery of change across policing, working with Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), Chief Constables, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and other parts of the College of Policing. It will be tasked with driving improvement and effective practice in policing, in line with the College's core remit and headed by a new Executive Director, supported by ring-fenced funding.

The Centre will focus on supporting forces to deliver tangible productivity improvements, including those enabled by technology and innovation. It will develop force level reporting arrangements and evaluation to ensure forces are demonstrating the value of investments.

It will also provide police forces access to expertise in operational improvement and enhancing data exploitation capabilities.

The Government has confirmed funding for a new Centre for Police Productivity which will be based in the College of Policing. This will be established from autumn 2024, and will set the foundations necessary for policing to deliver the 38 million police officer hours identified by the independent review.

Cross-cutting Productivity Improvements, Informed by High Quality Data

There is a range of work already in progress to drive data improvement, which spans the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), College of Policing, and Police Digital Service (PDS). Significant improvements have already been made to police workforce data as a result of the Police Uplift Programme and this has been important in supporting the NPCC's annual Strategic Assessment of Workforce.

The Home Office agrees that these improvements should be sustained and built into business as usual for policing going forward and can confirm it will go further in delivering this.

As part of the Centre for Police Productivity, a National Policing Data Hub will be established allowing policing and government to access the data required to maximise improvements to police productivity and the further use of technology, including AI.

Developing Model Processes

The Home Office is grateful to the Review Team for their work to examine how the model-process approach to identifying what works at sector level and enabling this to be applied in a way that enables policing to better understand productivity and make sound decisions on the use of police time. The greater understanding of the benefits of alternative processes and overall drivers of performance, combined with the inherent sharing of best practice and the opportunity to enhance cost analysis and comparison between forces provides a clear opportunity for policing.

The Review estimated that over 3.4 million officer hours could potentially be saved if all 43 police forces were to use the model process tool to move their models to the most cost-efficient for antisocial behaviour and burglary demands. The Home Office is keen to see this work expanded and for the new Centre for Police Productivity to ensure that the benefits estimated are realised as part of their work to support policing to identify what works and deliver change.

The Home Office agree that the Police Activity Survey should be repeated, and that participation should be extended. However, there are concerns about repeating the survey

every six months due to the time and costs burden on police officers. The data from the survey is also not expected to change this rapidly, given the need for process reform and improvement to see significant shifts. The Home Office agree that the potential of technology to reduce the burden on officers completing the survey should be examined and the long-term ambition should be to create effective benchmarking of productivity that is regularly updated to allow forces to change and improve the way they operate.

In continuing to run the Police Activity Survey the Home Office will consider the optimal frequency, participation, and assistive technology. The Home Office will fund the expansion of the tool in 2024/25 as part of establishing the new Centre for Police Productivity.

Enhancing the Strategic Approach to Policing

Creating a Centre for Police Productivity is a key step in advancing the understanding of the outputs and outcomes of policing. PCCs have a statutory role to secure efficient and effective police service in their area, and APCC have been supporting PCCs in this role, including the development of new guidance, and in setting policing strategy. We anticipate that the insights gained through the Centre will support policing, particularly the APCC and the NPCC in their role supporting Chief Officers, in shaping their ongoing strategic approach towards demand, capabilities, and collaboration.

The Home Office support any efforts by policing to better articulate the public benefits of additional funding in policing, which will be supported by the new Centre for Police Productivity.

The Home Office agree that there may be value in bringing together cross sector representation to help tackle shared strategic issues to enable senior level conversations and encourage join up and better engagement between partners, as is already the case with the Drugs Strategy Ministerial forum.

The Home Office will explore, on a trial basis, options for the Crime and Policing Board to take on an expanded remit, addressing shared issues which require a coordinated response across government.

The Government is also clear that the New Burdens doctrine applies to policing as a local authority, where they are required to do something new or additional beyond fulfilling their existing roles. This should be done in consultation with the sector considering the productivity implications of any new expectation on policing.

The Role of Organisations that Review or Inspect Policing

HMICFRS and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) have a crucial role to play in ensuring that policing in England and Wales can maintain their high standard of service to the public, whilst identifying areas in which improvements can be made.

The Home Office respects the independence of HMICFRS and will continue to work closely with the Inspectorate in the following areas:

- To explore how the 2025-27 PEEL inspection framework can consider the need to improve police productivity.
- To ensure HMICFRS continues to adequately inspect and assess the value of science and innovation to force performance.

Driving Improvement through Science and Technology

Investment in Technology

The Home Office acknowledges the opportunities that new and innovative technology could bring to policing and will be providing an uplift of over £65 million in policing innovation and technology budgets in 2024/25, enabling piloting and roll out of new technology for the police in England and Wales. This technology will improve productivity by allowing police officers to spend less time on admin and more time on frontline duties.

Many of the innovations we will be funding were highlighted by the Review. These include Facial Recognition; automating data-processing tasks via Robotic Process Automation; automating the redaction of personal information from video and audio; automating the preparation of digital evidence for case files; automating vetting checks for officer recruits; and enabling the interviewing of witnesses and victims by Rapid Video Response video call, allowing them to share information sooner and more discreetly than in person.

The Government is also going beyond the Review's recommendations and is developing and assessing a wide variety of other technologies which can improve productivity.

This investment will also establish a fund to support police forces' most promising AI projects for improving productivity. All use of AI by Policing will be subject to the [Covenant for Using AI in Policing](#) that was endorsed by the NPCC in September 2023.

The Home Office also continues to provide other existing funding, including £9.5 million to deliver science and technology (S&T) development and advice to policing in 2024/25.

Police in England and Wales will benefit from an uplift of over £65 million of investment in 2024/25, with over a further £175 million committed for future years, which will be used to fund pilots and support the rollout of productivity-enhancing technology, leaving officers with more time to spend on the front-line tackling crime.

Developing Technology Capability within Policing

Policing is already making good progress towards exploring and adopting innovative technologies, for example the creation of an [Authorised Professional Practice](#) document by the College of Policing on Technology, and the development of an AI Covenant for Policing by the Police Chief Scientific Advisor. It will be important to ensure alignment with existing assurance activities in this area to avoid duplication and for policing to note the strategic direction of the UK's national laboratories.

The Home Office will also continue to provide active leadership to ensure policing has a regulatory and legislative framework that enables technological innovation and use, for example through its sponsorship of the [Biometric and Forensics Ethics Group](#).

The Home Office agree that it needs to be easier for forces to adopt new science and technology-based solutions at pace. That is why the Home Office is investing in co-ordination activity across policing, by funding elements of the NPCC such as the Police Chief Scientific Advisor's office. More generally, the Home Office provides national capabilities funding to accelerate adoption at a national level of technologies that have been successfully demonstrated locally. The vast majority of technology adoption, however, is a matter for policing, as policing is operationally independent. This includes activities associated with technology adoption such as the running of the new NPCC Science and Innovation Coordination Committee.

The Home Office also note the Review Team's recommendation for a clear people strategy to support policing in ensuring the right talent and skills mix to maintain and improve on the sector's scientific and technical capacity. The [NPCC Science and Technology Strategy](#) has already set out how the NPCC will invest in its people, championing S&T literacy across all of policing.

If the NPCC Science and Innovation Coordination Committee decide to take the recommendation for developing a people strategy covering Science and Technology forward, the Home Office will continue to offer support for this, drawing on ongoing work to further develop such skills across government and the wider public sector.

Continued financial support from the Home Office to the Police Chief Scientific Adviser has enabled the creation of a network of research and innovation leads across forces, and in collaboration with industry, the establishing of a Police and Industry Charter setting out how policing and industry will work together.

The Home Office agree that the Police Chief Scientific Adviser should implement structures that encourage the dynamic, coordinated, and efficient exchange of ideas and collaboration between policing and industry.

Police Workforce

Police Officer Deployment and Welfare

The Government is clear that police officers should be tackling crime and serving the public. The Home Office expect PCCs to work with their Chief Constables, who are responsible for operational decisions relating to their forces, to make the most effective use of their resources and funding.

Following successful delivery of the Police Uplift Programme, the Government has continued to work with forces to maintain officer numbers at uplift levels. The Home Office expects each police force to maintain a robust workforce plan which will ensure they can continue to deploy resources effectively to serve and support communities' current, and future, needs. As part of that workforce plan, there should be appropriate focus on recognition of strong officer performance and the role that plays in retention.

The Home Office anticipate a key part of this planning will involve the use of warranted police officers in roles which require their powers and expertise, and the use of appropriate specialised civilian staff, and innovative technological solutions, to effectively deliver the administrative and auxiliary functions of policing.

The Home Office will continue to work with policing partners nationally as they seek to build on the success of the uplift in developing effective longer term workforce plans.

When looking at deployability, the Home Office wants to ensure forces are doing all they can to support officers on recuperative or adjusted duties – many of whom may simply require workplace adjustments to reoccupy frontline roles. In 2015, new legislation and national guidance was brought in to ensure forces and their occupational health departments better manage sick and injured officers.

The Home Office continues to work closely with the Review team and other policing partners (including NPCC, College of Policing, HMICFRS, the Chief Medical Officer for Policing and the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW)) to ensure that forces have the data and best practice required to make informed decisions on how best to deploy their workforce and manage the level of sickness absence. The Centre for Police Productivity will be critical in ensuring forces own and use high quality data to support these decisions in the future.

The Home Office are keen to see the findings and recommendations which result from the ongoing work of the Review Team and have created a sector-wide working group to identify best practice and existing data collection in relation to limited duties and sickness absence. The Home Office will continue to work with the sector to enable forces to improve resilience by deploying officers in a more efficient way and ensure modernised and fair adjustments for officers.

Investing in Training and People

The delivery of training in each police force remains the responsibility of individual chief officers and PCCs, in line with the needs and priorities specific to the communities within their force area. The College of Policing has the power to mandate qualifications for the appointment and promotion of police officers and set probation periods. HMICFRS should inspect forces against standards set by the College of Policing.

Where there are new training needs identified for police officers and staff, The Home Office encourage the College of Policing to continue to work with NPCC, and others within the sector, to provide a clear investment proposition.

Barriers to Productivity

Home Office Counting Rules

The Home Office thank the Review Team for the progress update in December 2023 on the impact of the changes the Home Office made earlier that year and are confident that the second phase of the work will help to improve the system further to the benefit of both police and the public.

The Home Office agree with the Review's recommendation that HMICFRS' crime data integrity inspections should reflect the most up-to-date development in the Home Office's counting rules, and are pleased that these changes have already been incorporated by the Inspectorate.

The Home Office will continue to work closely with HMICFRS on their 2025-27 PEEL assessment framework, to make sure any further changes to the Home Office Counting Rules are clearly communicated and the framework updated accordingly.

Criminal Justice System (CJS)

The Home Office has recently concluded projects seeking to understand the reasons why some case files are rejected, and continues to work with partners to identify opportunities to streamline the pre-charge file build process (where a guilty plea is anticipated). Both projects were undertaken in conjunction with the NPCC and with the support of the National Criminal Justice Coordination Committee. The Home Office will work with partners including the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to take forward recommendations from this work.

Alongside this, the Independent Review of Disclosure (Part 1) will assess the operation of the disclosure regime, as set out in the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 and Criminal Justice Act 2003, review the guidelines on disclosure, and consider legislative and non-legislative modifications that could improve the regime. Work is also ongoing to strengthen and promote the use of Criminal Justice Units and flexible communication between police and CPS prosecutors.

The Review Team's findings are that a change in charging authority could enable more timely charging decisions. This approach could result in an increase in the number of cases charged, which could in turn lead to decreased levels of victim attrition, improvements in victim satisfaction, and an overall increase in public confidence in the CJS. However, the benefits of any change in charging authority need to be fully tested prior to adoption. It will be crucial that there is careful consideration of the impact of increases in charging upon other partners and on victims' experience of the CJS.

The Home Office recognise that over time the redaction burden on policing has significantly increased. The Home Office has been working closely with the NPCC, CPS, Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Attorney General's Office to explore ways of addressing this. This includes funding new technology, improved processes, updated guidance, and changes to legislation.

The Home Office will continue to work with CJS partners to:

- Make improvements to case file submission and progression.
- Explore with partners any potential benefits for testing a transfer of charging authority.
- Explore the options for creating a streamlined redaction process that reduces administrative burdens.

The Home Office are keen to see collaboration continue across the sector, building on the work already completed, ensuring understanding where priorities and success measures align. The National Criminal Justice Coordination Committee is seeking, as part of its Improvement Plan, to agree a series of improvement measures for policing. The Home Office will work closely with the National Team, CPS and Joint Operational Improvement Board to ensure these measures are proportionate and aligned, and will also need to ensure measures do not encourage perverse incentives.

The Home Office will continue to support further work to develop an effective performance framework for Criminal Justice and align it to the Police Performance Framework the NPCC are developing.

Mental Health Demand and Policing

The two mental health 'sprints' carried out by the Policing Productivity Review team made a series of recommendations relating to mental health and policing, which are considered below.

The [National Partnership Agreement](#) (NPA) on the Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) approach (July 2023), signed by the Home Office, Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England (NHSE) and national policing bodies, applies the RCRP approach to mental health-related incidents in England. Similar partnership work is underway in Wales. All territorial police forces have committed to introduce RCRP.

At the time of publication, a majority of police forces across England and Wales report having introduced at least one phase of the wider RCRP approach. The Home Office and Department of Health and Social Care are monitoring and evaluating the rollout of RCRP.

Forces are being supported by a team from the NPCC and comprehensive [guidance](#) and e-learning produced by that team and the College of Policing. The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners has also produced [guidance](#) for PCCs and equivalents.

Implementation of the [NHS Long Term Plan](#) (LTP) ambition of having age-appropriate 24/7 mental health crisis lines accessible via NHS 111 by April 2024 is well underway. People experiencing a mental health crisis in all areas of the country are able to access telephone support and face-to-face assessments where needed, with these lines receiving over 200,000 calls per month. From the end of April, these services will be accessible via a simple and memorable number - NHS 111 'select mental health option'.

The NHS is delivering a substantial expansion in community crisis services, including growing the workforce. In 2016, the total national staffing in adult community crisis services was 5,104 WTE (whole time equivalents). By 2022, it had more than doubled to 10,488 WTE.

Other improvements and investments have been made to support someone in a mental health crisis. 100% of hospitals with a type 1 Emergency Department have a 24/7 liaison service (on site or via in-reach), which is a specialist service providing mental health care in a physical health setting, and 77% of services are commissioned at 'core 24'¹ or an approved equivalent, exceeding the LTP target of 70% by 2023/24.

The Government is also investing £150 million in capital funding for new projects to support mental health crisis response and urgent mental health care. This includes £7 million for mental health ambulances and £143 million on alternative options to A&E and inpatient care for people requiring urgent mental health care. This investment will fund over 200 schemes, with over 100 already complete and over 60 more expected to be completed by this winter. In addition, 51 Mental Health Ambulances have been ordered in 2023/24 and 37 in 2024/25 (a total of 88).

The Government is pleased to see that the [NPCC's Mental Health and Policing Strategy 2022-25](#) includes recording and reporting data as a priority, and that the guidance toolkit on RCRP includes a [module on baselining of data](#). The NPCC's mental health portfolio will continue to monitor improvements to data quality as a Strategy objective. Guidance products for health and social care partners, which have been produced by NHSE and DHSC respectively, encourage multi-agency partners to work collaboratively to identify what data is useful to collect, to agree legally compliant mechanisms for sharing data and to use this data to inform implementation decisions.

The NPCC has produced [guidance](#) for police forces on the [Multi-agency Response for Adults Missing from Health and Care Settings: National Framework for England](#) and is committed to implementing that framework in the manner set out in that guidance. Much of the substance of the guidance has been incorporated into the guidance produced by NPCC and the College of Policing on RCRP. The approach set out in the Multi-agency Response for Adults Missing from Health and Care Settings: National Framework for

¹ A liaison mental health service model provided 24 hours, 7 days a week, commonly provided across urgent and emergency care pathways.

England is referenced and reinforced in new guidance on implementing RCRP aimed at health and social care partners, which will be published shortly by NHSE and DHSC respectively.

The Government's [Draft Mental Health Bill](#) set out ways in which the Mental Health Act 1983 could be updated. The Government has carefully considered the Joint Committee's [pre-legislative scrutiny report](#) on the draft Bill, and our [response](#) has recently been published. Although it has not been possible to include the Bill in the legislative programme for the current parliamentary session, the Government intends to bring forward a Mental Health Bill when parliamentary time allows. In the meantime, the Government continues to take forward non-legislative commitments to improve the care and treatment of people detained under the Act.

The Home Office agree that effective and regular reporting of progress in this area is vital to maintain momentum and assess the effectiveness of changes made.

Looking Ahead

Productivity in Policing

The Home Office recognises how the Policing Productivity Review Team brought together experience and expertise from across the sector and are keen to continue to make use of the relationships, trust, and insight the team have developed. The Home Office have asked the Review team to continue to examine areas such as the police response to Missing Persons, Case File Quality and Police Investigations as part of implementation of the Review.

The Home Office will continue to fund a productivity function, including the Centre for Police Productivity, into 2024/25 to support implementation of the recommendations and to undertake further work.

Improving Police Productivity

The Home Office commissioned the Policing Productivity Review in August 2022 in response to concerns about police time being taken up by unproductive administrative tasks and other non-police work. When the Review was published in November 2023 it represented a clear opportunity to improve police productivity and free up the 38 million hours of police time the Review Team had identified. Giving this time back to police officers will allow them to concentrate on their core mission of protecting the public and preventing and detecting crime.

The Home Office recognises the role that all parts of policing have to take forward the Review's recommendations, expecting them to look beyond the recommendations where necessary, and to make the changes, adaptations, and improvements needed to free up this time and allow police officers to concentrate on their core role, delivering the service the public deserve, and that officers want to provide.

Government has demonstrated its commitment to achieving this by investing an uplift of over £65 million in 2024/25 to help policing to reach this goal. The Centre for Police Productivity will strengthen the coordination and delivery of productivity improvements and the funding provided by government will enable the piloting and roll-out of innovative technology that will improve productivity and free up police time.

The Government has invested in the foundation for change and is looking to policing, to the NPCC, APCC, and Chief Officers across England and Wales, to make the most of this investment and the opportunities presented by the Review's recommendation

