

North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Annual Report 2025/26

Foreword from the Chair

As Chair of the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel I am pleased to introduce the Panel's Annual Report for 2025/26.

Last year I highlighted our ongoing support for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in seeking more resilient funding arrangements from government for our fire and rescue service. This has included highlighting the increasing need for the service to respond to volatile environmental issues such as flooding and wildfires and the impact this has on the service's resources. The fragility of this position could not then have been driven home more clearly than through the devastating impact of the Langdale Moor wildfire in the summer of 2025, which required fire and rescue resource from North Yorkshire and a number of other areas over a number of weeks in order to get the blaze fully under control. 'Lessons learned' from the response effort will certainly help the service and partners going forward but resilient funding and cost recovery in these circumstances become particularly important. We will continue to review with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor how they are ensuring that an efficient and effective service is delivered, which is also able to mitigate and plan for a changing environmental climate.

Looking to our policing service, the government published its White Paper "From local to national: a new model for policing", in January of this year. This signals significant changes to the policing landscape nationally. Closer to home it also outlines a government commitment to abolish Police (Fire) and Crime Panels at the end of the Mayoral term in spring 2028. It is unclear at this stage what the detail of these reforms will look like for our police area. Regardless of what 2028 brings, the Panel members – and our constituent local councils – are committed to ensuring that robust scrutiny arrangements continue and that the Panel can scrutinise the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in relation to their performance against the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan.

In closing these comments may I take opportunity to extend my thanks to the various colleagues and partners who have guided and inputted to our scrutiny process over the last year; to the officers of the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA), particularly those from the Policing, Fire and Crime Directorate; to the Chief Officers from policing and fire and rescue for attending our meetings and providing the Panel with briefing opportunities; and of course to those officers from Legal and Democratic Services at North Yorkshire Council who have continued to support and counsel the Panel.

Cllr Peter R Wilkinson
Chair

June 2026

1. What is the Police, Fire and Crime Panel?

Police and Crime Panels were established in England and Wales in 2012 to provide a check and balance function in relation to the performance of Police and Crime Commissioners, who also came into being at that time. Panels have a wide remit to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other actions taken, by the Commissioner in connection with the discharge of the Commissioner's functions. Panels have oversight of some of the Commissioner's key documents, decisions and reports, requiring them to provide information and answer any questions which the Panel considers necessary.

Police and Crime Panels are joint scrutiny bodies of the local authorities in the police service area. They are mainly comprised of elected members from these authorities, with normally at least two independent members who are co-opted to bring additional or complementary skills and knowledge. Councillor membership of a Panel must be geographically and politically proportionate. The Panel's membership in this reporting period is outlined in section 9, below.

With the transfer of fire and rescue governance to the Commissioner in 2018, the North Yorkshire Panel duly became the Police, Fire and Crime Panel ("the Panel"), to reflect a broadening out of its scrutiny functions.

The Panel does not scrutinise the Chief Constable or Chief Fire Officer or hold them to account. They are not required to attend Panel meetings but can be asked to attend with the Commissioner where it is felt that providing further operational context or clarification to a discussion would be helpful.

With the advent of devolution in York and North Yorkshire in 2024, the policing, fire and crime responsibilities of the area's Commissioner transferred to the Mayor, David Skaith, on 7 May 2024. The Mayor is legally able to delegate policing and crime functions to a Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and, in this area, this delegation extended to the fire and rescue authority functions which passed to the Mayor. A Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime – Jo Coles - commenced in post on 8 July 2024.

Similarly to the role of Commissioner, the Mayor has responsibility for setting the direction, objectives and budgets of North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, and for holding the Chief Constable/Chief Fire Officer to account. The Panel's role is to scrutinise and support the performance of the Mayor (and Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime) and specifically to conduct the following statutory functions:

- To review the Mayor's draft Police and Crime / Fire and Rescue Plans and make recommendations on these;
- To review and make recommendations on proposed appointments for the roles of Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer – the Panel also has the power to veto these proposed appointments;
- To review and make recommendations on the Mayor's proposed level of Council Tax precept for policing and fire – the Panel has a power of veto for the Mayor's first policing precept proposal;
- To review and make recommendations on the Mayor's draft Annual Reports for Policing and Fire and Rescue;
- To consider non-criminal complaints made against the Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime.

The Mayor may delegate some of the policing and crime functions to a Deputy Mayor with the exception of:

- Issuing a Police and Crime Plan / Fire and Rescue Plan;
- Calculating the Council Tax precept requirement for policing and fire and rescue; and
- Appointing, suspending or requiring a Chief Constable or Chief Fire Officer to retire or resign.

Further details about the Panel's governance and recent publications can be found on the [North Yorkshire Partnerships website](#). Meeting papers and agendas can be found on the [North Yorkshire Council website](#).

Panel meetings take place roughly five to six times per year and are held in public. Support to the Panel is provided by the host authority, which is North Yorkshire Council.

2. Meetings held during 2025/26

Formal Panel meetings are held in person and generally rotate venue between Northallerton, York and Selby. The Panel convened in person and in public on five occasions to undertake Panel business in the last municipal year. Panel meetings are live broadcasted and recorded where possible and recordings can be viewed on the ['Live Meetings' page](#) of the North Yorkshire Council website.

The Panel remains keen to hear from and engage with the public in its role. In addition to its governance web site as referenced in section 1, meeting agendas and papers are published at least five clear working days prior to each meeting and the North Yorkshire Council Communications Team also support in disseminating social media messaging to promote upcoming meetings.

While there were only two members of the public who submitted questions or statements to the Panel in this reporting period, it is notable that as at end of March 2026, the average viewing figures for recorded Panel meetings in the 2025/26 municipal year were 132 per meeting via YouTube. This indicates that the public continue to make use of the ability to view Panel proceedings at a time and manner of their choosing.

Panel members have also continued to meet remotely for more informal briefings and development sessions during the period and these are outlined through this report.

3. Key Areas of Focus for the Panel in 2025/26

The Panel has reviewed a number of items over the course of the 2025/26 municipal year and the following provides an overview of some of these.

a) Scrutiny of how well 'hidden harms' are being tackled in our rural areas

Wildlife crime

We live in a beautiful, expansive area of the country but that brings with it many challenges for communities and for policing in our most rural areas. A key area for scrutiny by the Panel continues to be how effectively the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are holding to account the police service for tackling the 'hidden harms' of rural crime, aligned to the Mayor's priority of "Building Stronger Communities".

North Yorkshire has for a number of years had a poor reputation nationally for its record on raptor persecution, in addition to numerous incidences of other forms of wildlife crime such as hare coursing and poaching. There have been relatively low numbers of prosecutions historically for wildlife crime due to various factors including the fact that wildlife offences are often discovered

long after the offence, making forensic recovery and identification of suspects very difficult. The Panel has been keen to understand how this is being improved. We benefit from having a dedicated Rural Task Force (RTF) in the area, who work closely with communities and farmers. As a result of their work, we were pleased to note in May 2025 that there had been a 61% reduction in poaching over the last three years. However, the Panel is aware that they are a small team and we were keen to understand the Deputy Mayor's level of reassurance around resourcing for the RTF. We heard that the Chief Constable's plans for developing neighbourhood policing will incorporate support for rural communities but also that resourcing would be monitored to align with crime levels.

The Panel has also sought to scrutinise the factors around difficulties in securing prosecutions for wildlife crime. This highlighted Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) concerns on the potential costs of bringing a prosecution; the fact that the estates being prosecuted were likely to employ King's Counsel in their defence and that the cost of bringing the prosecution would be too high. Following a Panel request, the Deputy Mayor has agreed to pursue further conversations on this with the CPS.

Panel members have previously benefited from contextual briefings with members of the RTF and it has been agreed that we will continue to take up this opportunity as needed going forward.

Domestic abuse

In May 2025, the Panel also requested a report on how effectively domestic abuse is being tackled in rural communities, particularly as domestic abuse is nationally under-reported and rural victims of domestic abuse are half as likely as urban victims to report their abuse. The Panel heard from the Deputy Mayor about the work being done to ensure that rural spaces are reached through commissioned services as well as partnership working with the farming community. It was helpful to note that IDAS had reported a 9% increase in referrals in comparison with the previous year's figures, which appeared to reflect the hard work being done to raise awareness of support and break down barriers of under-reporting.

The Panel made reference to the report entitled "Captive and Controlled" on rural domestic abuse, led by a former Commissioner of North Yorkshire and that a recent BBC report indicated that while reporting of crime is higher, conviction rates are very low. The Deputy Mayor was asked about the factors behind these low conviction figures and for assurance around the police service taking necessary steps to improve the current rate. The Deputy Mayor considered the Panel request and responded subsequently to outline that North Yorkshire Police (NYP) has one of the highest domestic violence arrest rates in the country and are victim-led in their prosecution of offences (dependent on the severity of the offences reported). The service works closely with the third sector and commissioned services to understand the reasons for the outcome rates and how force performance can be improved. The Panel heard that the Deputy Mayor chairs the Local Criminal Justice Partnership for York and North Yorkshire, which brings together local criminal justice leaders to maintain oversight of the system and promote a collaborative approach to addressing challenges. This includes improving the experiences of victims and witnesses. A Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Panel is also in place in York and North Yorkshire, led by the Police, Fire and Crime directorate, which examines domestic abuse cases which have received a 'no further action' outcome. The multi-agency panel provides an opportunity to highlight learning opportunities for the police and partner agencies and increase transparency for victims/survivors.

The Panel will continue to scrutinise the efficacy of services for victims of rural crime and domestic abuse in addition to outcomes regarding wildlife crime.

b) HMICFRS report on ‘Effectiveness, Efficiency and People’ at North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service 2023-25

Reports from His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on the effectiveness of both of our services continue to provide a useful source for scrutiny by the Panel in terms of how effectively the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are ensuring that the services continue to develop and embed improvements made.

A report from HMICFRS on [‘Effectiveness, Efficiency and People’](#) at the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS) for the period 2023 to 2025 was published in June 2025. The Panel commended the service and Deputy Mayor on the positive report and the significant improvements made since the previous inspection a few years ago. These included marked improvements in:

- responding to fires and other emergencies
- making best use of resources
- getting the right people with the right skills
- managing performance and developing leaders

At the point of the HMICFRS report, there was still further work identified to improve areas such as investing in the fire estate and responding to major and multi-agency incidents, but as HMICFRS reports are published a number of months after initial fieldwork, the next reporting cycle will bring a more up-to-date picture on progress.

Panel Members have been keen to establish whether the service will pursue cost recovery for automatic alarm callouts (unwanted fire signals) as while there is a policy in place to address this, cost recovery hasn’t yet been implemented. The Panel heard that the Chief Fire Officer places emphasis on engagement with the business community and while the service will retain the potential to charge, success is measured around securing engagement.

The Panel has continued to access the regular performance packs produced by the Deputy Mayor for the Online Public Meetings, which provide a useful source of information for scrutiny on matters such as call-outs, response times and automatic alarms.

Panel members will continue to scrutinise how the Mayor and Deputy Mayor hold the service to account on the affordability of the service and its focus on supporting the workforce.

c) Scrutiny of the Management of Police Complaints

In July 2025, the Panel held the Deputy Mayor to account for how effectively complaints about North Yorkshire Police are being managed, following concerns raised by a recent inspection of integrity arrangements and also some direct feedback from members of the public.

The Panel examined both the scale of the challenge and the progress being made. Members questioned the timeliness of responses to complaints, noting dissatisfaction expressed by complainants about delays at both force level and within the Deputy Mayor’s Policing, Fire and Crime Team. The Panel raised particular concern about Independent Office for Police Conduct data showing slower-than-average complaint logging and initial contact in North Yorkshire. In response, the Deputy Mayor acknowledged that there had been a backlog issue but outlined the steps undertaken to help address this both within the Policing, Fire and Crime Team and within NYP’s Professional Standards team which now showed greatly improved performance. The Panel were also apprised of the national perspective that complaints levels have risen.

Members also challenged how well learning from complaints is being captured, prompting discussion on new approaches to analysing themes, behaviours and service areas generating dissatisfaction.

The Panel will revert to reviewing this area again in the next year.

d) Review of the Mayor's Council Tax precept proposals for policing and fire 2026/27

Policing precept

The Mayor formally proposed an increase of £15 to the policing precept for 2026/27, bringing it to £335.86, which represented an increase of 4.67% above the 2025/26 level for a Band D property. This followed strong public support for an increase within the public consultation and the Mayor highlighted the various pressures on policing services including inflation and pay awards.

Panel members were pleased to note the 9% reduction in crime overall in North Yorkshire and York in the last two years and commended improvements made in neighbourhood policing in particular. However, in the context of the removal of national funding for police officer uplifts and the freezing of the Neighbourhood Policing grant, Members expressed concern around the continued commitment to deliver sustained, visible local policing moving forward.

The Panel noted the Chief Constable's assurance that the planned 17 additional neighbourhood officers will still be delivered in 2026/27 as funding will be at risk if this is not achieved. However, concern was expressed that in view of the funding pressures and challenges facing the police service locally, an increase in the precept of £15 will still leave a funding gap for the service. The Panel heard that the resulting 'worst case' scenario could lead to a reduction of up to 21 police officers. The Chief Constable acknowledged the concerns but also highlighted the need for the service to balance resource across frontline and specialist functions (such as cyber crime). Members felt it important that within communities, people perceive that they are safe. The Panel has requested a financial and resourcing update from the Deputy Mayor in the autumn, to be apprised of the status of any officer reductions within the force.

We welcomed the efforts of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to make ongoing representations to government around the challenges of policing such a large rural area, particularly in view of the changes signalled around policing following the government's White Paper.

Fire and rescue draft budget 2026/27 and Medium Term Financial Plan proposal

Under the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) framework, the Mayor determines how much of their general budget requirement will be allocated to fire and rescue services. While the MCA therefore makes the final decision on the fire and rescue budget and the Council Tax levy for fire and rescue for the coming year, the Panel continues to have an important role in reviewing these proposals and giving recommendations to the Mayor on the proposed levy.

The Mayor proposed a precept increase in January of this year of £9.60, bringing it to £116.62 for a Band D property in 2026/27 and representing a 9% increase. The Panel heard from the Mayor and Deputy Mayor around the need to stabilise and invest in the service, recognising evolving risks such as wildfires and flooding, and the importance of road safety. The public consultation on the fire precept indicated a high level of support for an increase.

In relation to reimbursement of costs incurred by the service during the Langdale Moor wildfire, the Panel heard that a claim has been submitted to government under the Bellwin scheme for around £2.6m and that the outcome is pending. The Panel has as such been keen to explore financial

resilience further and took opportunity to consider with the Mayor around rural risks and the lack of statutory basis for funding flood response. The Panel welcomes the continued efforts to lobby government by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor around realigning funding for a rural service.

Historically, the service has been unable to invest in the estate and in critical appliances to the degree required due to limits on precept levies but the increases in precept afforded by the Mayor over the last two years have helped to put the fire and rescue service into a more financially stable position. The Panel noted that a joint estates maintenance contract is also helping to improve responsiveness and planned works; in addition to a PFI contract coming to an end in May 2027, which will enable significant cost reduction and transfer of buildings to the Mayor.

e) Tackling Online Fraud and Cyber Crime

In October 2025, the Panel scrutinised how effectively cyber crime and online fraud are being addressed across North Yorkshire, and the role of the Deputy Mayor in holding the police service to account for tackling this growing and complex threat.

The Deputy Mayor set out the scale and changing nature of cyber crime and online fraud, highlighting that victims span all age groups and that patterns of offending continue to evolve rapidly. The Panel examined how North Yorkshire Police is responding through its dedicated Economic Crime Unit and tested how partnership working underpins this approach, including emerging engagement with the North Yorkshire Youth Commission to better understand risks facing younger people.

Members also explored how well victims are supported and how public awareness is being raised. The Panel pressed the Deputy Mayor on whether more could be done to promote reporting routes, such as Action Fraud (now [Report Fraud](#)), and to ensure that advice keeps pace with rapidly changing online threats. Particular concern was expressed about the risk of younger people being targeted by online blackmail and “sextortion” scams, with the Deputy Mayor agreeing to pursue further information and assurances on this issue.

The Panel were keen to reinforce the importance of prevention and education, highlighting that cyber crime and fraud can have devastating, life-changing consequences. Members advocated making better use of existing community networks, such as Town and Parish Councils, to strengthen local awareness and resilience.

f) Scrutiny of shared services collaboration between policing and fire and rescue (formerly EnableNY)

The Panel has had a longstanding interest in the development and efficacy of shared services collaboration between policing and fire and rescue. During a discussion in January 2026, Panel concerns were noted as being around a historic lack of savings realised under the previous guise of shared services collaboration (EnableNY) and some flawed governance/oversight structures under that rubric. The Panel received an update on the renewed approach to shared services work from the Deputy Mayor, who acknowledged the Panel’s concerns. The Deputy Mayor highlighted the core purpose of the Assurance Framework, under which she holds the two services to account for shared services collaboration.

As highlighted in section b, a generally highly positive inspection report on NYFRS was received last year in which HMICFRS commended the improvements made by both services in relation to the shared service collaboration. The Panel has been apprised by the Deputy Mayor that specific

benefits under the renewed shared service approach have included ICT resilience and logistics support (for example during the Langdale wildfires incident), improved radio coverage at York Designer Outlet, strengthened financial management, and tangible estates improvements.

Panel Members welcomed the clearer scope, governance and delivery approach to shared services between policing and fire and rescue.

g) Scrutiny of the Community Risk Management Plan Consultation

The Panel played a constructive role in scrutinising the Mayor’s consultation on the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, both while the consultation was live and as final decisions were brought forward.

In October 2025, the Panel received an update from the Deputy Mayor on the progress and early findings from the public consultation on the CRMP 2025/29. Members welcomed the strong level of engagement and acknowledged the significant operational pressures faced by NYFRS during the consultation period, particularly the Langdale Moor wildfire. The Panel explored how consultation feedback had been analysed, including the decision to segment responses before and after the wildfire, to understand whether public perceptions were influenced by major incidents.

The Panel examined the proposal to extend the Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) attendance policy to operate 24 hours a day at commercial premises with no sleeping risk. Panel members raised concerns about how this change might affect rural response times and the safety of commercial premises located close to housing, seeking reassurance that these risks had been fully considered. The Panel also scrutinised the proposal to replace one of the service’s two water bowsers, querying resilience planning and the capacity to respond to multiple or large-scale incidents following the experience of the wildfire, where extensive additional resources had been required.

Workforce resilience formed another key theme of the Panel’s scrutiny. Members asked about the availability of on-call firefighters in rural areas and tested the steps being taken, alongside partners and employers, to improve recruitment, retention and facilities to support on-call staff.

In January 2026, the Panel returned to the CRMP to scrutinise the outcomes of the consultation and the Mayor’s subsequent decision-making. The Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Mayor outlined how consultation feedback, operational evidence and national best practice had shaped final proposals, highlighting the service’s broader shift from “save to survive” towards “invest to improve”. The Panel examined the additional assurances sought on rural impacts, continued life-risk responses, business engagement on fire prevention and partnership arrangements to maintain resilience during concurrent major incidents.

h) Road Safety – Progress in York and North Yorkshire

At its February 2026 meeting, the Panel undertook detailed scrutiny of road safety across York and North Yorkshire, examining progress against this key partnership priority and the challenges that remain. Members considered a report from the Mayor and Deputy Mayor which set out the region’s commitment to *Vision Zero*, alignment with the new national Road Safety Strategy and the importance of strong collaboration between policing, fire, highways and local authority partners.

The discussion focused on how effectively current arrangements are reducing fatalities and serious injuries on the road network. Panel members expressed concern about the region’s limited use of fixed and average speed cameras, particularly when compared with neighbouring areas. This issue was reinforced by the Chief Constable’s assessment that the current position is “untenable”, given

the number of people killed or seriously injured on North Yorkshire's roads over the past decade. Members explored how a balanced approach of engineering, education and enforcement – with modern speed camera infrastructure playing a key role – could help change driver behaviour and improve safety.

The Panel also tested how well the partnership is learning from recent improvements. Members sought clearer data on the causes of collisions and asked what lessons could be drawn from the welcome reduction in fatalities during 2023/24. They emphasised the need for a clearer, time-bound delivery plan for road safety activity and greater certainty around future funding for the Road Safety Partnership.

Further scrutiny covered practical and emerging issues, including the enforcement challenges associated with 20mph zones, the pressures created by seasonal spikes in visitor traffic, and the growing road safety risks linked to e-bikes and e-scooters. Panel members also highlighted the importance of early and sustained engagement with schools and communities to embed safer behaviours from a young age.

Overall, the Panel's discussion underscored the need for partners to ensure that strategic ambition on road safety is matched by effective delivery, clear accountability and tangible improvements for communities across York and North Yorkshire.

i) Appointment of co-opted members

Following a recruitment and selection process last year, the Panel was pleased to approve the appointments of its three co-opted independent members in January 2026, as follows:

Fraser Forsyth

Mags Godderidge

Caroline O'Neill

Co-opted independent members bring a unique set of expertise, complementing the skills and knowledge of the Panel's elected membership, thereby fulfilling the legal requirement to ensure the Panel can discharge its functions effectively. Thanks were given to Martin Walker, the outgoing co-opted member, for his insight and contribution over the last four years.

4. Forward Plan – Key Issues for 2026/27

The Panel has a number of issues on the forward work programme for the 2026/27 municipal year, including statutory and non-statutory business such as:

- How policing and fire use data-driven approaches to identify high-risk areas and individuals and put in place impactful programmes.
- How fire and rescue service is ensuring that it can best meet emerging environmental and technological changes (flooding, e-bikes etc)
- Review impact of government funding changes on police officer numbers
- Review and make recommendations on the Mayor's draft Annual Reports for Policing and Fire and Rescue 2025/26;
- Review and make recommendations on the Mayor's proposed Council Tax precept level for 2027/28 for policing;
- Review and make recommendations on the Mayor's proposed fire and rescue budget for 2027/28 which includes the proposed precept levy for fire and rescue;

- Scrutinise how rural crime is being tackled, including wildlife crime;
- Scrutinise progress against recent HMCFRS inspection outcomes for both services;
- Scrutinise the efficacy of complaints handling within both the Policing, Fire and Crime Directorate (MCA) and at NYP.

5. Development of the Panel

The Panel has continued to seek opportunities for informal briefings, training opportunities and development workshops to help continue members' awareness of regional and national issues and to enhance their scrutiny role. Panel Members and supporting officers have been involved in the following during 2025/26:

- **Operational Briefings for Panel Members at Police HQ.** An informal briefing was facilitated by the Chief Constable for the Panel in May 2025, to support the Panel in getting further context into a range of current topics of interest including neighbourhood policing and rural crime. An additional briefing has been arranged for the Panel for May 2026.
- **Operational Briefing for Panel Members on Fire and Rescue.** An informal briefing was facilitated by the Chief Fire Officer for the Panel in October 2025, to support Panel members in developing their understanding of the strategic planning, prevention and protection work.
- **Induction Briefings for new Panel members.** Three new members have joined the Panel in the last year and have been provided with contextual briefings by the Chair and Secretariat, with support from the Policing, Fire and Crime Directorate.
- **Attendance at the National Rural Crime Network Conference 2026.** Two Panel members attended the NRCN conference in March 2026 in York, which brought together Police and Crime Commissioners, law enforcement leaders, policy makers and frontline practitioners to name a few to share best practice and help shape strategies around the protection of rural people and communities. This event built further upon the Panel's knowledge of issues such as rural domestic abuse and wildlife crime, as considered in section 3.
- **National Police (Fire) and Crime Panel Network Meeting.** An online networking session for Panel members and officers was held mid-March 2026, hosted by the National Association for Police, Fire and Crime Panels and Frontline Consulting to consider 'live' issues for Panels such as the future scrutiny of policing, fire and crime scrutiny. Two members of the Panel attended this and shared their observations back with the wider Panel.
- **Regional Yorkshire and Humberside Panel Officer Network.** The Panel's supporting officer continues to participate in informal quarterly meetings of counterparts from neighbouring Panels in the Yorkshire and Humber area, providing a helpful touchstone for considering national developments, briefings and sharing good practice around Panel support.

6. Complaints handling by the Panel

The Panel has a statutory role to consider non-criminal complaints made regarding the conduct of the Commissioner (now Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime). Complaints regarding the Mayor are handled differently as described below.

During the municipal year 2025/26:

- Eleven complaints were received by the Panel. Three of these were recorded against the Deputy Mayor (see below) and one against the Mayor, due to the legal requirement to record those complaints referencing the Mayor/Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime for this area.

- Complaints regarding the Mayor must be recorded by the Panel but cannot legally be considered by the Panel so are diverted to the Monitoring Officer of the Mayoral Combined Authority to review under their Code of Conduct.
- In relation to the three complaints recorded regarding the Deputy Mayor, it was determined that no further action was required. The majority of the complaints received related to dissatisfaction around service levels in handling of police complaints, rather than having regard to the personal conduct of the Deputy Mayor and as such were diverted by the Panel’s Lead Officer to the Complaints Team for North Yorkshire Police.

Further information about the Panel’s complaints handling process and complaints publications can be found on the [North Yorkshire Partnerships website](#).

7. Panel budget for 2025/26 [Section to be updated following year-end return]

As host authority, North Yorkshire Council receives an annual grant from the Home Office to support the administration of the Panel. For the 2025/26 financial year the Home Office grant was **£65,260**. The Panel is required to report biannually to the Home Office as to how the grant has been spent, including provision of a performance report against Key Performance Indicators.

North Yorkshire Council has submitted its year-end return in May 2026 to claim the full amount of £65,260 for the 2025/26 financial year.

The Panel also received £7,760 from City of York Council for the 2025/26 financial year, to contribute towards both administration costs and Member allowances. This is slightly less than was received in previous years, commensurate with the reduction in Member allowances (see below).

For the 2025/26 financial year, North Yorkshire Council absorbed an estimated £XX,XXX in costs for the running of the Panel, in addition to the grant and income received.

North Yorkshire Council anticipates that it will be offered a grant of £65,260 for the 2026/27 financial year by the Home Office. However, the award will not be confirmed until August 2026. The council will need to review with the Panel Chair how any further overspends are best managed. A review of Special Responsibility Allowances undertaken by North Yorkshire Council’s Independent Remuneration Panel in 2024 resulted in some reductions to Member allowances from 2025, which has helped to reduce overspends slightly.

In relation to the planned changes by government to policing, fire and crime scrutiny arrangements from May 2028, it is anticipated that local authorities may need to fund ongoing scrutiny in part or wholly.

The following table highlights actual spend for 2025/26.

Expenditure Breakdown 2025/26 financial year (£)

XX,XXX

made up of:

Support to the Panel (inc on-costs) Secretariat, Legal, Finance, Business Support & Communications staff

XX,XXX

Printing / Postage / Admin / Meeting costs

X,XXX

Subscriptions, training and conferences

XXX

Panel Member expenses (inc Member allowances, expenses)	<u>XX,XXX</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>XX,XXX</u>
Home Office total grant 2025-26	<u>65,260</u>
Income received from City of York 2023-24	<u>7,760</u>
Total Income Received	<u>73,020</u>
Total overspend incurred by NYC	<u>XX,XXX</u>

8. Membership

Membership of the Panel during the 2025/26 municipal year was as follows:

North Yorkshire Council	Cllr Chris Aldred Cllr Lindsay Burr MBE (to November 2025) Cllr David Chance (appointed July 2025) Cllr Kevin Foster (appointed November 2025) Cllr Tim Grogan Cllr Heather Moorhouse Cllr Steve Shaw-Wright Cllr Peter Wilkinson
City of York Council	Cllr Emilie Knight Cllr Danny Myers Cllr Michael Pavlovic
Co-opted independent member	Fraser Forsyth
Co-opted independent member	Mags Godderidge
Co-opted independent member	Caroline O'Neill (appointed January 2026)
Co-opted independent member	Martin Walker (to January 2026)