

To:	The Sussex Police & Crime Panel
From:	The Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner
Subject:	The role of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner in ensuring the effective and appropriate use of artificial intelligence-related technology by Sussex Police
Date:	9 October 2026
Recommendation:	That the Sussex Police & Crime Panel note the report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the role of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) in ensuring the effective and appropriate use of artificial intelligence (AI) and AI-related technology by Sussex Police.
- 1.2 The report also provides an overview of the current and planned use of AI technology by Sussex Police; the governance, oversight and accountability arrangements in place to monitor the use of this technology and the role of the Sussex PCC in this process in terms of holding the Chief Constable to account for performance in this area.

2.0 Current and planned use of AI technology by Sussex Police

- 2.1 AI in policing is not a single product or programme and is, instead, a broad range of capabilities that are increasingly widespread, varied and embedded across the multiple strands of technology already relied on by the police service.
- 2.2 Sussex Police is progressively using AI-related initiatives, tools and technology to change the way that policing services are being delivered in Sussex by maximising the potential opportunities to change processes and procedures by doing things differently.
- 2.3 The Force recognises that, if used safely and appropriately, AI can improve how data is managed and used to support the delivery of policing operations, assist with decision-making and enable customer interactions to be more efficient and effective. This has already been achieved by automating processes, reducing duplication of effort and improving communication with stakeholders, including victims of crime.
- 2.4 Sussex Police seek to adopt a proportionate, risk-based approach to innovation and has several AI-related initiatives that are currently operational. These projects are summarised in the table on the next page, alongside the other AI technology that is being piloted, explored or in active development for the future, as follows:

Initiative	Purpose	Status
Automated Video Redaction	To securely blur and/or mask sensitive details in digital evidence, including faces, vehicle registration numbers and identifying logos	Operational
Text Redaction	To automatically find and remove private data from digital files, including names, addresses and identification numbers	Operational
Sussex Police Victim Portal	To provide guided and automated messaging and updates about ongoing investigations to victims of crime	Operational
Live Facial Recognition Vans	To support the real-time deployment comparing a live camera feed of faces against a pre-determined watchlist, with overt signage, advanced notices and the immediate deletion of any non-matches	Operational
Demand Forecasting	To forecast incident demand (e.g. location, type and response category) and visualise this within operational demand and resource management tools	Operational
Transcription (speech-to-text)	To convert witness accounts obtained via Microsoft Teams into statement form	Pilot
AI Agent Crime Data Integrity	To assess crime data integrity performance, offering suggestions for corrections to crime recording decisions	Exploratory
Service Management Tool	To enable increased user self-service and improved problem management analytics, reducing costs and increasing system reliability	Planned
AI Server Proof of Value	To test different options relating to the use of cloud-based and local processing and data storage capabilities	Planned

2.5 Sussex Police has also explored the use of AI-related initiatives for low-risk administrative tasks which do not involve operational or personal data. These include:

- ✓ Legal research for legislation and case law queries
- ✓ Daily media monitoring
- ✓ Awards administration
- ✓ Minutes, actions and papers (for non-operational/non-sensitive meetings)
- ✓ Document and report summarisation
- ✓ Feedback from training courses delivered

3.0 Governance, oversight and accountability arrangements

3.1 Sussex Police recognises that the use of any AI-related initiatives and tools in a policing context must be lawful, necessary and proportionate in order to promote fairness, avoid bias and prevent any discrimination.

3.2 Where AI-related tools process personal data, Sussex Police is required to comply with the United Kingdom (UK) General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 to maintain security of the information, alongside respecting the fundamental freedoms set out within the Human Rights Act 1998.

- 3.3 This includes the routine completion of data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) before the introduction of any new AI technology is considered. Where sensitive data is proposed and/or revisions to the original use case are intended (i.e. expanding the scope of the Live Facial Recognition watchlist) additional grounds set out in law must be satisfied through the completion of a revised DPIA before the technology can be made operational. This includes the requirement to produce an appropriate policy document and further consideration as to whether the use of this tool should be explained in the privacy notice for Sussex Police.
- 3.4 The use of AI systems in Sussex must remain justifiable and explainable, with their reasoning processes open to scrutiny wherever operationally feasible. It is important to note that the Force only uses AI to support decision-making, with all operational policing decisions remaining human-led. This means that any outputs generated by AI tools are reviewed by police officers and staff before any decision is taken.
- 3.5 Where any use of this technology could potentially amount to automated decision-making with legal and/or other similarly significant effects, meaningful and effective human oversight processes have been introduced for all decision-making that is supported using this technology, with other appropriate safeguards (e.g. legal protections) applied prior to any use. This includes the requirement to have sufficient information and authority to challenge those outputs and not simply relying upon or endorsing automated recommendations.
- 3.6 The Force is governed by the national frameworks and materials which have been created by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), College of Policing and Information Commissioner's Office relating to the use of AI technology and has adopted a local approach to its standard operating procedures that is consistent with the accountability and transparency principles, policies and guidance issued by each of these bodies.
- 3.7 As the data controller, the Force must understand and assess the use of each type of AI technology on a case-by-case basis to address and manage any risks and concerns before these tools become operational, as follows:
- ✓ The security of data stored in off-premises, cloud-based environments, including the risk of unregulated international transfer
 - ✓ Potential for large language models to ingest, learn from and recycle operational and/or sensitive data
 - ✓ The risk of AI producing results based on bias, hallucination or sycophancy (i.e. the machine telling the user what it believes the user wants to hear)
 - ✓ The risk of an over-reliance on AI generation resulting in a reduction in core human skills, including accurate report writing
- 3.8 Sussex Police has also set out the limitations for the use of AI-related initiatives throughout the workforce, including the controlled use of Microsoft Copilot – an AI-powered assistant available as a standalone web experience, integrated tool and dedicated app which is built into many police systems – after local and national assessments highlighted that this product is not currently appropriate for processing personal and/or operational data.

- 3.9 The Force continues to provide police officers and staff with proactive communications, advice and guidance around the responsible use of AI-related initiatives to educate and raise awareness amongst the workforce, including specific messaging around the appropriate use of Microsoft Copilot and offering remedial training packages for those individuals identified as having potentially been involved in the processing of personal and/or operational data.
- 3.10 Sussex Police has also established an Artificial Intelligence Governance Board, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, which is responsible for monitoring the appropriate use of all AI-related technology in Sussex. This Board is accountable for ensuring ongoing compliance with all applicable legislation, policy and guidance in this area.
- 3.11 An internal audit into the AI and robotics process automation (RPA) used by Sussex Police (and Surrey Police) was undertaken by the Southern Internal Audit Partnership in May 2026. The scope of the audit was to consider whether the policies and procedures in place for the use of AI and RPA across both force areas was aligned with national legislation, policy and guidance.
- 3.12 The independent auditor issued a 'reasonable' assurance opinion and found that there is generally a sound system of governance, risk management and control measures in place, with limited issues, non-compliance and/or scope for improvement identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
- 3.13 The Force has developed an Artificial Intelligence Policy (1236/2026) and an Overt Deployment of Live Facial Recognition Technology Policy for Sussex Police and Surrey Police (1249/2025). Both policies can be viewed on the Sussex Police website through the following links:
- Artificial Intelligence Policy – https://www.sussex.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/sussex/other_information/foi-super-response--artificial-intelligence-ai-v5.1.pdf
 - Overt Deployment of Live Facial Recognition Technology Policy – <https://www.sussex.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/sussex/policies/overt-`deployment-of-live-facial-recognition-lfr-technology-policy-surrey-and-sussex-1249.pdf>
- 3.14 Both policies in Sussex (and Surrey) are aligned with national frameworks and guidelines, including the AI Strategy and AI Playbook for Policing (developed by the NPCC) and the authorised professional practice (APP) for data ethics and data-driven technologies (developed by the College of Policing).
- 3.15 Further information about each of these policies and the individual APPs can be viewed through the following links:
- NPCC AI Strategy – <https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/publications-log/science-and-innovation/2025/npcc-ai-strategy.pdf>
 - NPCC AI Playbook for Policing – <https://library.college.police.uk/docs/NPCC/Artificial-intelligence-playbook-policing-2025.pdf>

- College of Policing APP Data Ethics – <https://www.college.police.uk/app/data-ethics>
- College of Policing APP Data-Driven Technologies – <https://www.college.police.uk/app/data-driven-technologies>

- 3.16 Sussex Police (and Surrey Police) has also compiled a single response covering the many points detailed in the different requests for information received to date relating to the use of AI-related technology by both police force areas. This approach was introduced following the high volume of requests made about this subject matter to ensure ongoing transparency and maximise public confidence.
- 3.17 A copy of this 'super response' can be viewed on the Sussex Police website through the following link:
https://www.sussex.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/sussex/other_information/foi-super-response--artificial-intelligence-ai-v5.1.pdf

4.0 Role of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner

- 4.1 The PCC recognises that the effective and appropriate use of AI-related technology remains fundamentally important to support the delivery of policing operations, decision-making and interactions with victims of crime and members of the public in a more efficient and effective manner.
- 4.2 The PCC is also mindful that the use of any AI-related initiatives by Sussex Police must be lawful, necessary and proportionate in order to promote fairness, avoid bias and prevent any discrimination, whilst simultaneously remaining compliant with all data protection law in the UK and the freedoms set out within the Human Rights Act.
- 4.3 It is a statutory responsibility for the PCC to hold the Chief Constable to account for delivering efficient and effective policing in Sussex that is responsive to the needs of the public. This includes an expectation that Sussex Police will continue to use AI-related tools and initiatives to automate processes, reduce duplication of effort and improve communication with all stakeholders to better protect the communities in Sussex.
- 4.4 The PCC has continued to use her monthly webcast Performance & Accountability Meetings (PAMs) to scrutinise and challenge the Chief Constable about the use of AI-related technology by Sussex Police on behalf of members of the public.
- 4.5 The Force's use of AI technology to support police investigations was raised at the most recent PAM on 17 September 2026. This area was also discussed at the PAM on 23 October 2023 (Artificial Intelligence in Policing). Both sessions are archived and, together with the summary notes from the meetings, can be viewed on the PCC's website through the following link:
<https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/about/how-we-work/watch-live/>

5.0 Launch of Police.AI

- 5.1 In June 2026, Police.AI was launched as a new national centre dedicated to the responsible development, piloting and scaling of AI in policing.
- 5.2 The launch of Police.AI forms a central part of the Police Reform White Paper – published in January 2026 – and aims to provide the police service with the data and technology required to keep pace with criminality and ensure that the best possible service to the public is delivered, alongside enabling chief constables to deploy AI tools in a responsible manner which builds and maintains public consent, trust and confidence.
- 5.3 The creation of a national centre for AI in policing, supported by investment of £75million by the Home Office over the next three years as part of a wider £140million AI investment package, will create a platform for identifying, testing and scaling the use of AI technology across all police force areas.
- 5.4 Through Police.AI, a public-facing registry will be developed to provide national oversight, transparency and consistency in the adoption of AI-related technology across policing. The registry will summarise each of the initiatives currently being deployed by police forces throughout England and Wales and aims to make the use of AI more accountable, evidence-based and publicly understandable.
- 5.5 Sussex Police is one of six pilot forces currently working with Police.AI to develop further the questions and processes that will be used to create the registry, alongside Bedfordshire Police; Metropolitan Police Service; South Wales Police; Surrey Police and West Midlands Police.
- 5.6 The registry is anticipated to provide one trusted, nationally owned picture of all the AI tools currently being utilised by the police service and the individual steps taken to ensure the reliability of these tools before operational usage commences. This approach also aims to make the use of AI technology more accountable, evidence-based and publicly understandable. The first iteration of the registry is anticipated to be made available (for internal use) by autumn 2026.

6.0 Summary

- 6.1 The PCC recognises that the responsible use of AI has considerable potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of policing in Sussex, reducing administrative burdens, supporting the workforce and improving services provided to victims of crime and members of the public.
- 6.2 However, the adoption of new technology must be driven by an evidenced policing need and demonstrable public benefit, rather than pursuing innovation for its own sake. The use of AI must remain lawful, necessary, proportionate and subject to effective governance, meaningful human oversight and appropriate transparency.
- 6.3 The PCC will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account not simply for how AI technology is introduced, but for the outcomes it delivers, the risks it creates and mitigates, the value for money it provides and its impact on public trust and confidence.

- 6.4 As AI technology and the regulatory framework continue to develop, the PCC will expect Sussex Police to demonstrate that its governance, workforce capability and safeguards evolve at the same pace, with enhanced scrutiny applied to those technologies carrying the greatest potential implications for individuals and communities.

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