



Independent Scrutiny & Oversight Board (ISOB) — Minutes

Date: Thursday, 29 January 2026

Location: Teams

Attendance

[REDACTED]	JS	ISOB Chair
[REDACTED]	FK	ISOB
[REDACTED]	CL	ISOB
[REDACTED]	MK	ISOB
[REDACTED]	AJ	ISOB
[REDACTED]	RM	ISOB
[REDACTED]	DH	ISOB
[REDACTED]	SK	ISOB
Lisa Honess	LH	Trust and Confidence Support Officer OPCC
Rachel Gilbert	RG	Head of Performance, OPCC
Neelam Shiraz	NS	MK CADO
Karen Adamson	KA	Bucks CADO, TVP
Louise Warbrick	LW	TVP
Rvd Nicky Skipworth	NS	TVP Lead Chaplain
Neeta Mistry-Patel	NMP	E Berks CADO

Apologies

Dennis Murray, Gillian Ormston, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Nita Pankhania, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Opening

The Chair welcomed members to the first ISOB meeting of 2026.

New attendees were welcomed and invited to introduce themselves, including:

- **Revd Nicky Skipworth**, TVP Lead Chaplain
- **Neeta Mistry-Patel**, new CADO for Berkshire East (Day 4 in role)

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a fair and accurate record.

Actions from the previous meeting were reviewed.

It was noted that an action regarding notification of ISOB/IAG members ahead of **Section 60 authorisations** remains under review.

Discussion

- LW explained that notification is built into templates as a *consideration*, but cannot be mandated due to spontaneous Section 60s (e.g. overnight authorisations).
- Members acknowledged the operational constraints.
- AJ queried whether this was happening in practice; LW advised there have been no recent Section 60s in Berkshire East to test the process.

Trust & Confidence Framework Update (LW)

LW provided an update on the development of the **Trust and Confidence Framework**, aligned to the **NPCC Culture and Inclusion Strategy**.

Key Points

- The framework is being developed carefully to reflect feedback from the Race Action Plan.
- Increased emphasis is being placed on **antiracism**, equality duties, and ethnicity-specific measures.
- Current challenges include incomplete data, particularly around **self-defined ethnicity** (approx. 23% “not stated” in use of powers data).
- A comprehensive **self-assessment** has been completed and submitted to the NPCC (deadline: 23 January).
- The self-assessment includes:
 - Working with the public
 - Data and information
 - Culture
 - Collaboration
- RAG ratings indicate:
 - Many areas rated **amber (achieving)**
 - Some areas **red (developing)**
 - Community consultation rated **green (promising practice)**

Next Steps

- NPCC peer review (force-to-force).
- Use findings to inform the Trust and Confidence performance framework.
- Engagement with community governance groups (including ISOB) planned for February–April.
- **Action 1: Framework to be shared with ISOB ahead of the next meeting for consultation. LW**

Questions Raised

- Clarification sought on whether metrics are locally set or nationally defined (confirmed: NPCC-defined criteria, supplemented by Home Office data).
- Access issues raised regarding Trust and Confidence Strategy documents (to be re-circulated).

Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) – Maturity Matrix and Timeline Update (LW)

Key Milestones

- **Feb–Mar 2026:** Evidence gathering and self-assessment completion.
- **Apr 2026:** Engagement with governance and community groups for challenge and feedback.
- **Aug–Sep 2026:** Publication of force report on progress against PREP.

Discussion

- Importance of meaningful community challenge, particularly from Black communities.

Need to ensure PREP actions are embedded within the Trust and Confidence performance framework.

Transition from ISOB to Trust and Confidence Scrutiny Board (JS) & (RG)

JS & RG outlined proposals to transition ISOB into a broader **Trust and Confidence Scrutiny Board**, aligning with governance structures.

Governance Structure Explained

- **Strategic Trust and Confidence Board (Gold)** – chaired by ACC Dennis Murray
- **Tactical Trust and Confidence Board (Silver)** – chaired by Louise Warbrick / Nita
- **Scrutiny & Advisory Boards (Bronze)** – including ISOB / future Trust & Confidence Scrutiny Board

Discussion

- Members raised concerns about optics and community perception, particularly regarding:
 - Loss of direct engagement with senior leadership
 - Risk of community voices becoming diluted through multiple governance layers
- It was emphasised that:
 - Chairs continue to have direct access to senior leaders
 - Chairpersons' Forum remains an escalation route

Action 2: TOR to be edited to include clearer **anchor themes** (e.g. race equality, trust risks) and Nolan Principles to be explained as OPCC governance standards, then recirculated LH

Action 3: Development of a **forward work programme** to sit alongside ToR LW/RG/LH

Agreed Position

- ISOB to continue under its current name for now.
- Formal transition to occur once members are content.

Recruitment & Retention Deep Dive (CM)

A detailed presentation was delivered on workforce diversity, recruitment, progression, and retention.

Key Highlights

Representation

- Overall workforce diversity broadly stable.
- Ethnic minority representation remains below Thames Valley population levels:
 - Asian: 11.7% population vs ~3% workforce
 - Black: 3.7% population vs ~0.8% workforce
- Female representation broadly aligned with population.

Recruitment

- Increasing applications from women and ethnically diverse candidates.
- Targeted recruitment shifted towards Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.
- Positive Action Engagement Team refocused on under-represented groups.

Selection

- Ethnically diverse candidates show **strong pass rates** at in-force interview stage.

- Enhanced fairness measures:
 - Mandatory panel training
 - Unconscious bias training
 - Independent panel members from staff networks

Retention

- Significant improvement in attrition rates.
- 289 stay conversations held since Sept 2024:
 - 145 colleagues retained
 - 91% still serving after 6 months
 - Estimated £11.6m in avoided replacement costs
- Main drivers of leaving:
 - Work-life balance
 - Personal development
 - Cost of living

Exit Data

- Multiple points of data collection during exit available (leavers app, surveys, interviews).
- No strong evidence of discrimination cited as a primary reason for leaving, though under-representation among leavers remains a concern.
- Further work planned to improve data granularity and intersectional analysis.

Action 4: Share full presentation and notes (with minor correction) CM/LH

ISOB recommend consideration of future reporting on:

- Vetting outcomes by ethnicity
- Progression and promotion data
- Targets and benchmarks for positive action

Any Other Business

Custody Visit Feedback AJ

- Positive practice observed
- Concerns raised about lack of BAME representation on Maidenhead Independent Custody Visiting Panel

- Suggestion to improve visibility of scrutiny reporting.

Upcoming Event Invitations LH

- **Community scrutiny event** planned for April (Q&A panel format including ICVS and scrutiny & advisory board members). Invitation to follow.
- **Facial Recognition briefing** (live and retrospective) scheduled:
 - **10 February 2026, 18:00–19:30 (Teams) send invite**

Meetings Format

Agreement to continue primarily with Teams meetings and hold one in-person meeting per year (suggested summer).

Next meeting to be extended to **10:00–13:00**, with a break, due to volume of business.

3 Key Messages

1. The Community can feel assured that the work around Trust & Confidence is being well-documented and evidenced to our satisfaction. The internal scrutiny is making sure assurance can be given by evidence.
2. The work around Recruitment and Retention is being given serious and thorough consideration with a focus on improving the experience of staff, and the feedback from us on matters related to attraction and diversity are an area of focus and improvement.
3. We want to encourage the community to connect with their relevant Community & Diversity Officer and Community Panels now we have a full complement.
- 4.

Meeting closed: 12:11

[FEEDBACK FORM LINK FOR CHAIR ONLY](#)

Date of Next Meeting


