

**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR WILTSHIRE
AND CHIEF CONSTABLE OF WILTSHIRE POLICE**

Joint Independent Governance, Risk and Audit Committee

Meeting minutes: Tuesday 26th of March 2024, 14:00 – 17:00

Devizes Police HQ, The Neville Room

• **Present:**

Name	Role
Mr K Bellamy (KB)	Audit Chairperson
Mrs C Baynes (CB)	Audit Member
Mr A Blair (AB)	Audit Member
Mr J Colquhoun (JC)	Audit Member
Ms Karin Takel (KT)	Audit Member

• **In Attendance:**

Name	Role
Mr. Philip Wilkinson (PCC)	Police & Crime Commissioner
Ms. Catherine Roper (CC)	Chief Constable
Mr. C Barker (CFO CB)	Assistant Chief Officer/Chief Finance Officer
Mr. A Street (AS)	Assistant Chief Officer/Chief Finance Officer
Mr. N Darwish (ND)	OPCC CEO
Mr. J Derryman (JD)	Chief of Corporate Staff: force
Mr. C Williams (CW)	OPCC Head of Strategy, Performance and Oversight
Supt. L Coles (LC)	Supt. People, Standards and Support
Mr. D Hill (DH)	Internal auditors: SWAP
Ms. C Wilson (CW)	Internal auditors: SWAP
Mr. C Sullivan (CS)	External auditors: Bishop Fleming
Mr. J Murray (JM)	External auditors: Grant Thornton
Ms K Eddie (KE)	OPCC Strategic Support Officer
Ms. N Parris (NP)	OPCC Strategic Support Officer
Ms. J Webb (JW)	PCC Executive Assistant

1. Apologies:

Name	Role
Ms. C Wilson (CW)	Internal auditors: SWAP
Ms. T Kirkpatrick (TK)	Internal auditors: SWAP
Ms G Hawkins (GH)	External auditors: Grant Thornton

2. Declarations of Interest:

- There were no declarations of interest.

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- There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Joint Independent Governance, Risk and Audit Committee meeting held December 2023.

- *Approved and signed*

PART 2: Official - Items to be considered whilst the meeting is open to the public - Official

4. Item 6: Outstanding Actions -

Audit chair: Item 07/06/2023 no 3. Was not covered in today's agenda. Will it occur in June 2024? ND – The review is to take place end of April and DO will bring to JIGRAC Sept 24.

5. Item 11: Internal Audit Annual Audit Plan: A report by the South-West Audit Partnership (SWAP) was circulated prior to the meeting. Mr D Hill provided a verbal update with the following key points.

- The new audit approach is proving to operate well. All partners confirm, we are focusing on the right areas and momentum is growing across the sector
- Gaps in coverage reflected for attention in Q3-4 are highlighted.
- 3 main reviews to take place Q1-2 2024 - ERP, recruitment, and ICT framework.
- 14 reviews in the pipeline prioritised by risk.
- The new ways of working, section 151 allowed us to evolve and at the next committee I will provide a performance overview.
- Just recently all SWAP staff received training on global audits, further training to come. – JIGRAC audit member's welcome.
- CFO CB used the new SWAP framework positively and involved further staff to understand the programme (CCS, CEO, etc.) identify areas to look at in the future. Completing a quick time piece on overtime.
- Interest in internal audit is keen. Resource we can use to improve services promoted.

Audit member question - With all the process improvements, changes to span of control etc., is there a wider role for SWAP going forward which would require more audit days and therefore cost?

CFO CB – An assessment of PEEL (Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy) / OP Evolve force work to date is ongoing, internally and HMICFRS. It is probably too soon to assess whether SWAP should be doing more especially with the Target Operating Model (TOM 2 about to be launched).

ACTION – CFO and CEO to consider whether the current level of audit days is sufficient in 18 months and bring conclusions to the 2025 September JIGRAC.

Audit member question – Is the CFO CB content with new SWAP audit process and emerging plan?

CB – The chance to add items for audit, review and approve is positive. This year we involved all the key senior players to capture the issues that really mattered. The plan before you represent the positive results of this additional dialogue.

JIGRAC Chair – committee agrees to approve the audit plan.

6. Item 12: Internal Audit Quarterly Audit report – A report by the South-West Audit Partnership (SWAP) was circulated prior to the meeting. Mr D Hill provided a verbal update with the following key points.

- Ongoing papers - the training needs assessment to be finalised, new recruit uniform review and overtime process improvements identified.
- Audit gaps to be resolved by the end of week. New auditors will be assigned where previous owners cannot support. To be completed by end of April subject to collaboration. No concerns.

AUDIT Chair – Committee happy to note report.

CFO CB – I have reviewed the outstanding audit recommendations. Training needs assessment – following a lot of change it is sufficient, but an opinion is not possible. Flagged to business for another review in 12 months.

Audit member question – Why cannot an opinion be offered?

DH - I do not have details I will put this on the rolling plan, so we do not lose sight of the issue.

7. Item 7: Police and Crime Commissioner Update - The PCC provided a verbal update with the following key points made:

- Following 31 months in post I am pleased to say force performance shows an improving trend with an upward trajectory.
- The new Chief officer group (COG) includes proper oversight management from top to bottom.
- Much better support and leadership offered to officers.
- New strategies in place and more to be done.
- P1 – Contact Centre improvements show 101 rates down to 8 mins from 28,
- The community commitment strategy is in place, and outward facing.
- Still waiting for mobile police stations.
- P2 - Crime that matters most – high harm and risk RASSO Further Action taken (FAT) rates were less than 2% with Wiltshire the worst performing force in country, now 13% in top quarter. Still more to be done to make this successful.
- P3 - Drug and county lines SOC (Serious Organised Crime) disruptions we are the top performing force. The Op Scorpion focus and collaboration means all five forces are in the top ten.
- ASB – Again through working collaboratively with councils and other agencies ASB is down significantly in Wiltshire.
- Road safety – in 2021, 1324 speed enforce sanctions were issued, last year this rose to 11,000. Residents were principally concerned about this.
- Two sorts of victims, the first subject of serious crime and the OPCC commissions support such as Horizon to support.
- The other victims those that experience crimes such as robbery, theft. The CC has improved investigations and follow up. This is the area of trust and confidence we need to fill with the Force on the up.
- New Chief of Corporate Services improving and sustaining work alongside supporting the CC with improvements.
- I am pleased with rather than making improvements, improving has become BAU. Performing as it should be with additional effort always required.
- Core components in place machine and CC driving. Force of the past replaced.
- HMICFRS PEEL have inspected, and they agree on the mend as a police force. Aware there are cultural issues but getting there.

Audit member question – 101 response rates are at 8 mins and indicative of real improvement. What would you like it to be?

PCC - 2 mins is the national average and may be aimed for. CC – Swift as it can be, would be the aim. A national ambition could produce adverse behaviours. Force 101 response technics vary, e.g., some put callers on a loop, etc. Our aim to drive the best quality service, is key.

PCC – The force CCC are up to full strength; many leave to be PCSO or officers. Two new initiatives are being deployed; a queue buster – “ring off and ring back” offer and a new data transfer package to streamline the data recording process.

Audit member question – Thank you for the hard work going on. Can I ask about retail and rural crime?

PCC – The force has a new retail crime strategy. I met with Interim ACC Staynings, Swindon BC, and retailers to formalise an agreement to progress the delivery plan. Another meeting has been arranged for Salisbury to gain the same agreement.

Rural crime – I am a member of the national rural crime network board, and we are developing a strategy. Wiltshire will host major conference in Tidworth, drawing together SW and SE PCCs to form a new Intel architecture focusing on Serious and Organized (SOC) rural acquisitive crime. OP Ragwort (another collaboration) from Wilts Police set up to understand the threat and be more pre-emptive.

8. Item 13: Professional Standards Department (PSD) Annual report - A report by Supt. L Coles was circulated prior to the meeting. Supt. L Coles provided a verbal update with the following key points.

- I am the new Supt. Responsible for PSD.
- I have reviewed the structure the dept. and submitted a business case to COG.
- The new code of ethics adopted into the force and are embedding well. PSD are driving the courage strand encouraging officers/staff to step forward and report concerns.
- The public eye is rightly focused on the quality of force vetting following Op Angelini.
- New app – professional practise in place. Working through implications and linking in with inquiry recommendations
- Safe to say reporting tool reimplemented – Dec 23. To date 51 anon emails.
- Notifiable associations and business interest data shows
 - Managing friends or family relationships - Input added to training providing advice on what we can do about relationships they cannot do anything about.
 - Business interests – we have seen a growth in second jobs.
- Culture and ethics – CCC and detention staff (unison engagement) also now receive random drug tests.
- I have embedded a more ethical culture through a delivery plan.
- Forward facing proactive approach to include how to we learn from the past to make improvements – IOPC (Independent Office for Police Conduct) recommendations included.
- The complaints manager and PSD now work closely together to improve the service we deliver. Complaints resolution team recover (56%) of complaints.
- The 44% move to PSD for reflective practise for officers or become misconduct or gross misconduct cases.
- The PSD team will continue to encourage and engage especially with new officers.
- Disproportionality data highlights 43% ethnicity as not known. Difficult to understand but we will continue to drive data improvements here.
- Conduct volumes show there to be a hearing every month. Analysis shows predominantly white males.

Audit member question – Are there thresholds to guide this work?

Supt. LC – Yes, we have an above threshold and below for misconduct or gross misconduct cases. Misconduct cases receive final written warning and gross misconduct cases are dismissed from force and cannot work in any force nationally.

Also, the Detective Inspector of Counter Corruption feeds into the Supt instead of DCI. This allows her/him independence to assess based on regulations and establish if over the threshold. If below it is managed by HR and individual line manager. Where misconduct is truly clear it will be fast tracked.

Audit member question – how historic are some cases?

Supt LC – the criminal side takes primacy, and the goal is it is managed quickly. In this instance the oldest case 12-18 months due to the crime type.

Audit member question – Are you able to consult away from police and gain an entirely external endorsement on cases?

Supt LC – IOPC would do this, and we have a close relationship with the IOPC. Public complaints, e.g., death or serious injury, receive a mandatory referral and they decide if an independent investigation is needed.

We do talk with families during in internal investigations to consider more factors. Public scrutiny occurs at the misconduct panel with the majority public and IAGs (Independent Advisory Groups). Huge oversight.

PCC – and the force also briefs the PCC and CEO every month for every case under investigation to ensure we maintain oversight.

Audit member question – In the present climate would you say officers/staff that might have been classified as misconduct cases previously are now more suited to gross misconduct?

CC – the environment has changed and quite rightly, the public demand impeccable standards. Vetting process following Op Angelini have become more expansive, and forces have improved Intel /info sharing. It is quite right that people recognised we must be able to locate a criminal (rapist) and we have worked harder because we must find them. An example we have an action plan with the VAWG (Violence Against Women & Girls) lead to look at our process for vetting.

Audit member question – Is there a demographic of more concern?

Supt. LC - Nationally the highest level of dismissals occurs between 1-5 years for police officers. We review this and other data.

Audit member question – Will we see rates come down?

Supt. LC / CC – Longer term. We would expect them to increase for at least 1-2 years.

PCC – one of the things I hear is that people no longer report. When confidence has grown, and people know they will be treated respectfully they will come forward. We can demonstrate this now, but people must feel safe through building trust and confident.

Audit member question – The nature of misconduct reports and hearing might allude to why people report. Analysis of demographic data compare to societies demographic you may see who is responding. People may not want to say why they cannot. Explaining this up front when disclosing can help.

Supt. LC – Where we have data analysis is conducted. But your right, we must ensure communities know and feel able to report.

9. Item 8: Chief Constable Update - The Chief Constable provided a verbal update with the following key points made:

- 07/12/2023 ACTION no.3 –addressing the culture of change in Wiltshire Police.
- The 2024 PEEL inspection took place over the last two weeks.
- This PEEL inspection does not negate what happens in 2022, they run in parallel, and this latest inspection assessed where we have improved.
- Ten areas are considered with a presentation from the CC and COG.

- Regarding strategic framework and governance (Qu 10) we put forward we do have what is expected and the oversight group identifies areas for improvement.
- Further questions will come following the inspection for clarity and evidence.
- Formal read out in a months' time. PEEL inspection this summer – July
- Alongside this inspection we are addressing the previous PEEL inspection recommendations, etc. where progress is large and small.
- We have a comprehensive performance framework, force priorities, the first 3 yr. business plan, monthly performance objectives. Making us a more organised force that is governed and gripped which we were not 12 months ago

Audit member question – How is staff confidence through these challenging times?

CC – internal reaction I think is galvanised. Obviously, some will not like the change needed, but many front-line officers like knowing what they need to focus on and the monthly perf. Meetings and documents show what we are delivering.

They know we are in it for the long haul because the aim is for the force to be considered “outstanding” and not just to come out of engagement process. A lot of our audit work shows we can become such a force.

On the 08th of Jan 2024 we launched TOM 1 and aligned frontline officers. The aim to ensure we had dedicated and bespoke officers in the right places, welfare improves, and we can support victims better; with victim's feedback improved. How are staff feeling – bruised but feeling what they are doing is working

Audit member question – Will the training needs assessment be used to measure the culture gap and allow you to structure training accordingly?

CC – When done it will focus what is needed. COG has recognised the leadership gaps and now trying to focus on refining it.

PCC – The public and Police want a force that represents the best of society and sets standards. Underlining drive in EDI to ensure we are truly representative in what we do.

CC – Overall force performance is improving in many areas. FAT rates are improving across the board we are one if not the top in our most similar grouped forces with there still work to do but so much better. With 95-97% attendance at all burglaries.

10. Item 9: External Audit: GRANT THORNTON Progress Report Nov 2023 - Further to the circulated report, Mr M Jackson (Grant Thornton) provided a verbal update with the following key points made.

- The 21/22 audit report builds on interim report of Sept 2022 with some of the information replicated.
- At the last JIGRAC I updated the committee that we were awaiting the pension letter. It was received end of last month with both teams have worked to get this to today's committee.
- GH has successfully passed her accreditation and will now sign audit opinions. As the long-standing auditor this would be the preferred outcome.
- Subject to today's discussion, receipt of the signed accounts and associated documents. The audit opinion will be issued tomorrow.
- The report provides detail on, key reasons for delay, levels of uncertainty displayed, risk highlighted, and errors corrected.
- Accounts have been updated to include valuations. Worked through agreed.
- Value for money valuations on pages 18 – 19 findings were presented last time with significant weakness listed.
- Report shared with JIGRAC will be updated and reissued. Commentary will remain unchanged.

- Page 22 – 28 shows various controls and recommendations with a management response included.
- Page 29 – 31 – follow prior recommendations and management responses. If ongoing and those closed not.
- Further – adjustments made to draft 32 - 40. 35 and 38 particular attention adjustments that have not been made. A para in letter not accumulative material not qualified.
- Page 36 from the prior period not adjusted.
- Pages 41 and 42 set out proposed audit fees. Set out for fee variations reported through audit plan. relate to audit issues – audit and management issues

CFO CB - we have responded to the recommendations, and this is shown as the management response. Some we will not implement with an explanation as to why. Missing statements are accountancy issues that have no impact on what is available or what we spend. Pension swings occur regularly and balance. If we were doing commercial activity (make money) we would be concerned. It is good to get the accounts signed off.

Audit Committee – endorse and well done. Have the Audit fees been approved?

CB – The PSA will negotiate, and we will pay whatever they decide.

Audit member question – Are the adjustments going to roll into 22/23?

CB – Yes some will.

- JM - 2022/23 accounts: back stop proposals were discussed at the Dec 23 JIGRAC. At that time, we suggested where the 22/23 audit not complete by March 24 it would be subject to backstop qualification.
- DLUHC (dept for levelling up, housing and communities) – ran a consultation on a back stop as did NAO (national audit office). DLUHC include a 30th Sept back stop date. This has not been confirmed but the consultation sent out.
- Unfortunately, we work on NHS (National Health Service) accounts to the end of June so further work would not start before July 2024. With back stop date end of Sept, we could not complete a full audit.

Audit member question – This is a significant disappointment. The delay due to the NHS audits on a further occasion, through no consequence of Wilts Police and impacting on audit downstream. Could Grant Thornton complete the audits needed?

- JM – there are over 700 audits outstanding nationally it is exceedingly difficult situation to be in. We could not do this.

CFO CB – I am also disappointed. If we could look at understanding if we could complete for the Sept 24 meeting before giving up, we would be grateful. BF (Bishop Fleming) will provide implications.

- JM - Financial authority to provide guidance to be published.

Audit Chair – in noting that the 21/22 Accounts were delayed by NHS priorities, he implored GT to do everything possible to complete the 22/23 Accounts before the backstop.

11. Item 10: External Audit: Bishop Fleming – Further to the circulated report, Mr C Sullivan provided a verbal update with the following key points made.

- Bishop Fleming is a key audit partner leading in the public sector.
- We have been part of the conversation on audit back stop attending the two DLUC (?) meetings.
- A review to enable simplification of the pension and property valuations is to occur.
- It is unusual to begin an audit in this position, but we have a plan for next year, despite not having the previous years' audit signed off.
- The report sets out work timetable, risks, caveats included.

- If GT can complete for Sept 24 that would be great. If they cannot we are awaiting FSC guidance on what we will have to do. Implications it will rattle into future years. A disclaimed audit of account will occur for several years.
- The indicative guidance – ISA standards.
- Gaining a clear opinion guidance needs to be clarified.
- FRC lead on approach that is consistent. We are having one to ones to ensure our views of audit are considered and we are all of a consistent view.
- Started to engage with management for samples

Audit member question – it seems a big wait and see for fees. Could it have significant financial implications?

CS – as we hear updates, we will share news.

Audit Chair: this new partnership will depend on timely communication, accurate exchanges of information and data and hopefully a “no surprises” culture.

12. Item 14: JIGRAC Annual Statement -

- Audit chair - Deferred and will run in concert with SWAP annual statement each year – deferred until the June meeting.

13. Item 15: Outstanding Audit Recommendations - CFO CB circulated a report prior to the meeting. The following key points were noted,

- Most of the remaining recommendations are progressing well.
- Some advice has been given and challenge

Audit member question – Many of the recommendations relate to HR and recruitment with an 18 month lay between target implementations. Is the HR field in stable hands?

JD – The new Director of People will be joining 2nd April 2024 and we have recruited several high calibre staff and business partners in recent months.

CC – the team driving this forward have seen strong recruitment. Following an external review in 2023 all recommendations have been implemented

Audit member question – how many people in HR?

JD - 31 on a head count of 2500 people

Audit member question – Do any of the HR recommendations require a relook?

CFO CB – I have reviewed them twice with the interim Head of People. All need to be completed and some are not far away.

Audit member question – The firearms licensing recommendation. Are you content with progress?

CC/PCC – Yes. PCC - we had a manual system which meant they took a long time to process license applications causing delays. A new database has been implemented leading to improved performance. CFO

CB – Confident the Supt. will deliver but to be held to account.

JD – An example of cross working. Robotics processing have been peer reviewed and taken best practise to turbo charge change.

Audit chair: Meeting close.

Audit chair: CFO CB as your last JIGRAC meeting the committee want to thank you for all your help and hard work over the years. Wishing you the absolute best in retirement.

Date of Future Meetings

- Tuesday the 25th of June 2024 at 14:00 – 17:00 (note the statement of accounts will be reviewed with the force accountant 13:00 – 14:00)
- Thursday the 12th of September 2024 at 14:00 -17:00
- Thursday the 17th of December 2024 at 14:00 -17:00
- Tuesday the 11th of March 2025 4:00 – 17:00.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution to the meeting.

The meeting commenced at 14:00 and concluded at 17:00

JIGRAC Chair Keith Bellamy

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Keith Bellamy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.