

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

**Minutes of the JOINT INDEPENDENT AUDIT COMMITTEE
held on Thursday 23 September 2021 at 2.00pm via Microsoft Teams**

Present: Mr K Bellamy (Chairman), Ms K Amey, Mr A Blair, Mr J Colquhoun

In Attendance: Phil Wilkinson (Police and Crime Commissioner), Kier Pritchard (Chief Constable), Mr C Barker (Chief Finance Officer), Mr N Darwish (OPCC Deputy Chief Executive), Ms A Walling (Grant Thornton), Ms G Hawkins (Grant Thornton), Mr D Hill (South West Audit Partnership), Ms Laura Wicks (South West Audit Partnership), Miss S Kyte (minutes), Ms Caroline Long (Major Incident Planning – Item 5 only)

PART I: Items to be considered whilst the meeting is open to the public

1. **Apologies:** Mr D Line (Independent Member) and Ed Nicholls (SWAP). The Chairman was aware that Ed was due to commence a secondment shortly and wished him well for this.
2. **Declarations of Interest** There were no declarations of interest.
3. **Minutes of the Joint Independent Audit Committee meeting held on 21 July 2021**
Resolved: *To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2021 as an accurate record and for the Chairman to sign the minutes.*
4. **Outstanding Actions**
Meeting Date: 17 July 2020
Minute 12b (External Audit Planned Fee 2019-20): Grant Thornton confirmed the MTFs analysis / comparison would be done as part of the value for money work which was due in December and would be reported on at the following Committee meeting in March 2022.
Resolved: *To note the update provided with regard to the outstanding actions and for this to be updated accordingly.*
5. **Business Continuity Review**
Caroline Long attended the meeting to give an update to Members on progress against the recommendations made from the external business continuity review and the subsequent improvement plan which had been developed. The following key points were noted:
 - The Force was on track to action all recommendations within the given timescales with the exception of the training of new Subject Matter Experts
 - The Terms of Reference for the Strategic Group had been strengthened and the Group renamed as 'Internal Resilience Board' where all Force departments were represented

- The Business Continuity Plan template was being redeveloped and aligned to QlikSense so the information produced could be analysed and better inform senior management and decision making
- Subject Matter Experts would be trained in business continuity and to implement local business continuity plans on behalf of Departments – training was due to take place in January 2022

Questions from Members:

In response to a question Ms Long stated that the Force responded well to the impact of Covid19 but it was clear that the business continuity plans in place were not providing the right information to allow senior management to make informed decisions. There were clear discrepancies and gaps between plans. It was felt that business continuity and internal resilience could do better which was the reason for conducting the external review.

The Chairman asked at what point business continuity plans would be reviewed. Ms Long confirmed this would be annual from when they were written and not aligned to the financial or calendar year due to the number of plans in place. It is expected that following the training of Subject Matter Experts plans would be reviewed in February / March 2022. The Chairman asked for an update on the progress of this at the next JIAC meeting.

- Resolved:**
- a) *To request a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations at the March Committee meeting.*
 - b) *To note the update provided.*

6. Police and Crime Commissioner Update

The Chairman welcomed the Commissioner to his first meeting of the Committee. The Commissioner stated he had been in post four weeks to the date of this meeting and gave his initial impressions. The following key points were noted:

- Hugely impressed by OPCC ELT team and Force ELT and that there was already a good platform in place from which to launch the new Police and Crime Plan
- Community engagement plan being developed to enable the Commissioner to seek the views of all the communities and ask for their views on policing and what they would like to see achieved
- Speeding was one issue that was frequently mentioned – the Commissioner was already starting to address this with his announcement of the appointment of more dedicated officers to deal with enforcement
- The PCC has a broad portfolio but the Commissioner had every confidence in his team and the Chief Constable in delivering his Plan

Resolved: *To note the update provided by the Commissioner.*

7. Chief Constable Update The Chief Constable provided a verbal update and the following key issues noted:

- *Covid19:* Local Resilience Forum was still in response phase and the Force was still experiencing front line staff falling ill with Covid and issues with track and trace. Restrictions on ways of working (eg. social distance, operating and wearing of PPE) had been extended to Spring 2022

- *Op Fairline and Op Fortis*: Counter Terrorism team had recently announced that a third Russian National would be charged in relation to the Novichok poisonings
- *Cold Case Reviews*: The Force had recently had two successful outcomes to two cold cases
 - The burglary and rape of a 71 year old victim in 1980. Due to a breakthrough in DNA technology the Force secured the charge of an individual who pleaded guilty to all offences and was due to be sentenced on 1 October.
 - Sexual assault of two young boys in 1980 – defendant pleaded guilty.
- *Op Vigilant*: This was the Force focus on night time economy and protection of women and vulnerable people. The recent HMICFRS report on violence against women and girls made a number of recommendations to all Chief Constables.
- *Force Management Statement*: Submission was currently being prepared with responses received from senior leaders across the Force highlighting where investment was required and what it would achieve.
- *HMICFRS PEEL Inspection Process*: Strategic briefing to be provided to HMICFRS in December with fieldwork taking place on 22 January 2022.
- *HMICFRS Crime Data Integrity Inspection*: Scheduled to take place in November 2021 and would look at how the Force takes information from the public at crime scenes and complies with Home Office guidance.
- *Firearms*: The Force had been encouraged to review processes around firearms licencing and had responded to a letter from the Home Secretary about the number of licences held in Wiltshire and Swindon. New guidance was due to come out where the applicant would be required to submit medical information with their firearms application.

Resolved: *To note the update provided by the Chief Constable.*

8. PCC Risk Register

The Deputy Chief Executive stated that the risk register would be worked through to ensure all risks were up to date following the election of the Commissioner. The risk register would also be aligned to the new Police and Crime Plan and priorities and objectives once these had been set by the Commissioner. The risk policy was due to be reviewed in relation to the checking and testing of the approach to risk and risk appetite. As always, feedback and input would be welcomed from Members.

Members requested more information on timeframes be included within the risks – for example, when updates were due or expected.

Resolved: a) *That more information on timeframes should be included within the risk mitigation and controls section.*

b) *To note the report and the update provided by the Deputy Chief Executive.*

9. Community Policing Team Review

The Chief Constable delivered a presentation to Members and set the context of the review. Since the improvement plan had been introduced in 2019 it had been a complex operating environment so it was difficult to assess the impact and success of the changes. The post implementation review was conducted in 2020 but it wasn't

possible to say whether the anticipated benefits had been realised due to the changes brought about by Covid19.

Methodology included engagement with officers and staff, stakeholders, a questionnaire to community groups who had regular interactions with CPTs, data gathering and analysis through QlikSense, horizon scanning and research.

Benefit	Outcome
Benefit 1: Reduced demand on CPT due to increased neighbourhood activities reducing crime and incident reporting	Not realised
Benefit 2: - Increased Neighbourhood and community engagement producing increased community confidence and engagement	Realised
Benefit 3: Quicker response times and quicker resolution/investigative processes	Not realised
Benefit 4: Increased effectiveness through increased use of tools, techniques and approaches to delivering preventative community policing	Not realised
Benefit 5: Cost Savings due to reduction in overtime and Unsocial Hours Payment (USP) costs through changes in shift pattern and improved deployability	Realised

The Chief Constable suggested this presentation be treated as a progress report and that Members ask for a further report on the detail of the next phase of the CPT improvement plan. The Improvement Board chaired by ACC Smith would continue to meet and look to deliver rapid change within the investigation process. Recent changes to disclosure now meant that a significant amount of time was being spent by officers in preparing a disclosure schedule prior to files being submitted to CPS for advice or a charging decision.

Ms Amey stated she would be keen to see some tangible performance measures or KPIs that would allow benchmarking with other forces. The Chief Constable supported this observation.

- Resolved:**
- a) *That the Chief Constable's presentation would be circulated to Members.*
 - b) *For a further update on the CPT improvement plan which would include performance data allowing for benchmarking, to be given at a future meeting.*
 - c) *To note the content of the presentation.*

10. Joint Audit Findings 2020-21

Grant Thornton reminded Members that the audit was originally planned for late October / November but due to an auditor returning who had previously worked with the Force they were able to bring this forward. Alex Walling thanked the CFO and his team for accommodating the request to bring the audit forward.

The audit identified some adjustments to the accounts and raised some recommendations. The work was substantially complete and following the presentation of the report, Grant Thornton would then be able to give an opinion on the accounts. It was anticipated that the audit opinion would be 'unmodified' subject to the completion of the Value for Money work.

The Value for Money conclusion was a substantial piece of work and could not be conducted alongside the statement of accounts. The auditors though were satisfied

there were no significant weaknesses that would impact on the accounts. This work would now be undertaken and included in the Auditor's Annual Report.

Three issues and risks had been identified by the auditors resulting in three recommendations being made which the CFO had responded to in the report. Two of these risks had been assessed as high but the CFO disagreed and believed these to be medium. He confirmed to the Committee he did not believe these were of material issue. These were duly noted.

- Resolved:**
- a) *The Committee noted the accounts and the findings of Grant Thornton.*
 - b) *The Committee wished to place on record their thanks to the CFO and his team, particularly the Senior Accounting Technician, Andy Massey, and Grant Thornton for their hard work and completing the accounts earlier than anticipated.*

11. Statement of Accounts for 2020-21

As discussed at Agenda Item 10.

12. Internal Audit: Update Report

Two reports from 2020-21 were still to be signed off (HR Recruitment and Regional Vetting) which the CFO had not done as the reports did not provide the necessary information to provide assurance. He recognised that this could have been because the scoping of the audit was not correct and should have been more specific in the first place.

With regard to the vetting audit, the subjective view from people in the organisation was that vetting took too long and Wiltshire does not seem to be good at this. The CFO wanted to know from the audit whether this was true or a national position. Regional PSDs had been approached for information but one Force had replied to say they did not hold the relevant data so it would appear that records were not being maintained.

It takes Wiltshire Police about four months to replace a member of staff – is it right that it does? The CFO had hoped the HR Recruitment audit would identify some objective data but there would seem to be insufficient data available from which to draw a conclusion. The assurance opinion was altered to recognise this.

Resolved: *To note the content of the report and the update provided by the CFO.*

13. Outstanding Audit Recommendations

Resolved: *To note the content of the report.*

14. Audit Costs for 2021-22 and Future External Audit Provision

The CFO talked Members through the circulated report and the pros and cons of selecting external auditors as a region as opposed to nationally or individually. It was felt it would be worthwhile to produce a Gate One procurement paper and see what the outcome of this would be. This process would also provide some re-assurance that existing arrangements had been checked and tested. A decision as to how Wiltshire wishes to procure this service does not need to be made until March 2022.

Resolved: *To note the approach being taken by the CFO in considering the future procurement of external audit services.*

15. Change in Committee Name

In order to better reflect the work of the Committee, the Chairman suggested the Committee change its name to the 'Joint Independent Governance, Risk and Audit Committee' (JIGRAC). This was unanimously agreed by Members.

Resolved: *It was unanimously agreed by Members to amend the name of the Committee to the 'Joint Independent Governance, Risk and Audit Committee'.*

16. Date of Future Meetings

Friday 26 November at 10am (amended from Thursday 16 December 2021)

17. Exclusion of Public

Resolved: *In accordance with Standing Order 6 of the Committee's Standing Orders to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in Item 18 below because it is likely that if a member of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 7 (information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime) of Appendix 2 of the Committee's Standing Orders.*

18. Force Risk Register

The CFO spoke to the previously circulated report and the following key points were noted:

- *PSD Investigative Capability:* The PSD Superintendent had provided an update to the CFO which resulted in the risk being reviewed and scoring 24 overall.
- *CPT Deployability:* As reported by the Chief Constable earlier in the meeting, the issue of disclosure was causing a resource issue but this was being looked at. CPT capacity should be much improved in the near future due to conclusion of training courses in November and January 2022.
- Members observed that statements such as 'plans in place to mitigate' did not provide them with enough information to feel confident that the risk was being mitigated.

Resolved: a) *Members requested a more detailed update on the potential malware security risk at the next meeting and how the newly implemented system was mitigating that risk.*

b) *To note the content of the report.*

The meeting commenced at 2.00pm
and concluded at 4.25pm



Keith Bellamy
JAC Chairman

GLOSSARY

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
CFO	Chief Finance Officer
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CPT	Community Policing Team
ELT	Executive Leadership Team
HMICFRS	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services
HR	Human Resources
IPCO	Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office
JAC	Joint Independent Audit Committee
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MTFS	Medium Term Financial Strategy
OPCC	Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PEEL	Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy
PPE	Public Protection Equipment
PSD	Professional Standards Department
SWAP	South West Audit Partnership

