

Cambridgeshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner



JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE

APPROVED MINUTES

Date: 24 September 2015

Time: 10.30 hours

Location: Conference Room 3, Police Headquarters, Huntingdon

Members : Nicola Scrivings Chair
Mike Hindmarch
James Morgan

In Attendance: Brian Ashton Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Niki Howard Director of Finance & Resources, Constabulary
Josie Gowler Director of Finance, OPCC
Alec Wood Chief Constable
Mark Hopkins T/Deputy Chief Constable
Dorothy Gregson Chief Executive, OPCC
Mark Hodgson Ernst Young
Anna O'Keeffe Baker Tilly
Paul Ormerod Chief Inspector, Corporate Development
Michelle Parker Senior Financial Accountant
Nancy Leversha Strategic Accountant, OPCC

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

Nicola Scrivings welcomed everybody. Apologies were received from Members Ansar Ali and Nicola Mullany, and also Suzanne Lane and Daniel Harris from Baker Tilly. It was noted the committee was quorate with three members.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Approval of the minutes from the last meeting held on 29 June 2015

The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

4. Review of Action Log

22. Treasury Management training is available with Capita at a cost of £1,000 or the Director of Finance for the OPCC offered to undertake an informal presentation. The members requested the informal session with the Director of Finance.

5. Internal Audit Progress Report

Two reports from 14/15, Complaint Handling and Seized and Lost property have been finalised. Two reports from 15/16 have also been finalised, Estates Management and Communications Strategy.

Future audit activity for Cambridgeshire is shown at page 4 and Collaboration audits at page 5. At the end of the Internal Audit report is a benchmarking report providing comparison of Cambridgeshire across Baker Tilly police client base.

The members were reassured there are processes in place for monitoring outstanding actions. The Director of Finance and Resources stated the committee used to have regular updates but as the Constabulary had dealt with the recommendations the update had ceased. It was therefore recommended that a progress report on implementation of internal audit recommendations became a standing item again. It was noted that this also would give the opportunity for the committee to call managers to the meeting to hold them to account over the progress.

The committee appreciated the benchmarking report.

Resolved:

- (i) The group noted the report.*
- (ii) Progress report on implementation of Internal Audit recommendations to become a standing agenda item. This will be two separate reports, financial recommendations and non-financial recommendations.*

6. POCA Cash Seizure Update

It was noted that there was one high action and two medium actions outstanding from the internal audit on POCA and cash seizures. Difficulties had been noted as it was a partially tri-force unit and at the time of the audit there was no Head of unit. Since the audit a Head has been recruited and the unit is now Tri-force. All recommendations have now been implemented and a new Standard Operating Procedure is in place and working.

The committee asked whether this could be monitored by a future internal audit. It was noted that this was already in the internal audit programme.

Resolved:

(i) The group noted the report.

(ii) NH to find out how much money is seized under the POCA seized property procedure and report to members.

7. Statement of Accounts

Nicola Scrivings reminded the members of their responsibilities from the Terms of Reference.

The Director of Finance welcomed Michelle Parker to the meeting and thanked her and her team for their work in preparing the final accounts.

The Director of Finance re-iterated the PCC is the parent entity of the Chief Constable and together they form a group. Regular monitoring of revenue and capital reports go to the PCC Finance Sub-Group through the year. Following additional guidance there has been a prior period adjustment from the Chief Constable's accounts to the PCC's, as set out at 3.8 in the paper.

The accounts were advertised as available for public inspection and also posted on the PCC's Website. Nobody requested viewing them in person and there were no objections made.

Letters of representation were signed and there were no specific representations made by the External Auditors.

Resolved:

(i) The group noted the report.

(ii) JG to find out if there were any 'hits' on the Website draft accounts.

8. External Audit Results

The representative from Ernst and Young reported that he had spoken to the members prior to the meeting starting and there were no concerns raised.

He added that it was a good audit and thanked Michelle Parker and her team and confirmed they were issuing unqualified opinion on both single entity and group accounts.

He also reported that Value for Money was sufficient and they were satisfied with arrangements in place for savings.

Resolved:

- (i) *The group noted the report.*

9. Use of Reserves

The OPCC Director of Finance presented the paper on Reserves. Several reserves have been 'tidied up' and rationalised. It was reported that usable reserves have increased by £1.4m and that there has been a deliberate strategy around savings to build up the Budget Assistance Reserve to prepare for further austerity anticipated in 16/17 and 17/18.

The General Reserve Fund runs at about 5.6% of net budget requirement for 2015/16 which is recognised as a prudent proportion.

It was noted that £13m has been saved through the budget in the last three years and the Budget Assistance Reserve of £10m is cash backed which is regarded as a healthy position for the future which is unknown. Cambridgeshire have the same number of officers as in 2006, this compares favourably against a National average which shows Cambridgeshire are 4-5% more effective at retaining police officers.

The Director of Finance and Resources reassured the committee that there are plans showing various potential police grant reductions but until the Comprehensive Spending Review later in the year nothing is definite.

Resolved:

- (i) *The group noted the update.*
- (ii) *Budget Strategy paper for Police and Crime Panel to be shared with JAC members.*

10. Published HMIC Reports

Chief Inspector Ormerod reported there had been four published HMIC reports which were in HMIC old style reports. These were Crime Data Integrity, Strategic Policing Requirement, Police Integrity and Corruption and Crime.

The process of monitoring the recommendations was explained to the committee and they were assured that control measures are in place. The Crime inspection will be reported within the PEEL assessment which is due for publication in February 2016.

Resolved:

- (i) *The group noted the report.*

11. Strategic/Environmental Update

The report was noted as comprehensive and that there is a lot going on. Devolution is seen as the biggest uncertainty. It is seen as a tremendous opportunity but there are areas such as finance that are not clearly determined.

The forthcoming PCC elections in May 2016 are being planned for with transition arrangements in place, and the Committees role in monitoring the management of risks within this was noted.

Resolved:

- (i) *The group noted the report.*

12. Strategic Risk Register

The committee noted how it was clear this is a 'live document'.

A discussion regarding publishing the full risk register was held. The members suggested that a comprehensive summary report be made available which would be more relevant to any members of the public wishing to access it.

Resolved:

- (i) *The group noted the report.*
- (ii) *A comprehensive summary risk register report would be prepared and published at its December meeting.*

13. Public Accountability/Transparency

The report confirmed the work to ensure all required information was available on the PCC website. However, it recognises the need to improve the accessibility of the website.

There have been iterative improvements increasing transparency and the types of information shared but it was noted that a new website post the PCC election will be needed.

Resolved:

- (i) *The group noted the report.*
- (ii) *Agenda item to be added to September 2016 forward plan for Annual report.*

14. Review of Joint Audit Committee Terms of Reference

Nicola Scrivings stated the committee had progressed in the three years and considered the terms of reference as mainly fit for purpose.

It was requested that Code of Conduct be added to the forward plan and that a separate integrity subgroup was no longer needed.

Resolved:

- (i) *The group noted the report.*
- (ii) *Code of Conduct to be added to Forward plan.*
- (iii) *The section in ToR Integrity Management to be reviewed.*

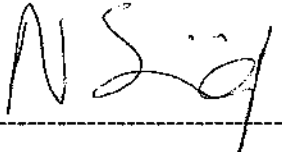
15. AOB

There was no AOB.

16. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Joint Audit Committee will be Thursday 10th December 2015 @ 10.30 hours in the Monkfield Room, South Cambs District Council Offices, Cambourne.

Members are invited from 10.00 hours for a pre-meet.



Nicola Scrivings