

## Joint Audit Committee

29<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Responsible Officer:	Impact on Business:		Risk Register Reference & RAG
James Haylett Chief Executive for the OPCC	High		
	Medium	X	
	Low		
Lead Manager:	Report Type:		
James Haylett Chief Executive for the OPCC	Governance	X	
	Strategic		
	Operational		
Previous papers to Committee:			
December 2015, March 2016 on previous election transition and 28 <sup>th</sup> January 2021.			

<b>Report summary</b>	To update the Committee on the transition plans in place for the election of a new Police and Crime Commissioner in May 2021.			
<b>Related Police and Crime Plan objective</b>				
<b>Action</b> (tick one box only)	Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Assurance <input type="checkbox"/>	Approval <input type="checkbox"/>	Decision <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Recommendation</b>	To note the report.			

## **PCC Election Transition Planning Update**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This report updates the Joint Audit Committee (“the Committee”) on the management of risks associated with the transition between Police and Crime Commissioners leading up to and following the election in May 2021.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 Police and Crime Commissioner elections are to be held on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The incumbent A/Police and Crime Commissioner term of office ends on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2021, with the new Commissioner taking up office on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021.
- 2.2 The PCC’s office (OPCC) is well-versed in managing transition, with many of the existing Senior Management Team (SMT) having led the transition following the previous election in 2016.
- 2.3 On the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021, the Government announced the outcome of the review that had been undertaken regarding the role of Police and Crime Commissioners. Overall, the recommendations made in Part 1 of the review will result in Commissioners being more accountable to the communities they serve and also strengthen and potentially extend their role. The recommendations will be implemented after the May elections; the second part of the review will also then take place. Further details of the review can be found on the link given in section 7 below.
- 2.4 The Joint Audit Committee is appointed by the Chief Constable and Commissioner and remains in existence until disbanded. The incoming Commissioner may have views on the future terms of reference and composition of the Committee and these will be reflected in due course.

### **3. Governance**

- 3.1 As reported previously to the Committee, the OPCC has an Election Project Team which is overseeing the both the strategic and granular detail of the transition using a project management approach. The Project Team consists of the OPCC’s Chief Executive, and members of the OPCC and the Constabulary. The Team has met nearly every week to track progress through the action log, and to update on any matters or emerging risks arising both internally and externally, and any policy decisions that need to be taken. This has enabled the the Chief Executive to take into account and consider any matters that require him to action in his capacity as Monitoring Officer.
- 3.2 An external Election Board has continued to meet every month. This Board oversees effective working arrangements for the transition from the current A/PCC through to the election. The Membership of this Board includes the Chief Executive, members of the OPCC and the Constabulary, and the Police Area Returning Officer (PARO). The Board has considered risks and emerging issues and actively monitors progress against actions. Again, it provides an opportunity for the Monitoring Officer to consider any matters.
- 3.3 The OPCC Senior Management Team and the wider OPCC Team are kept updated on a regular basis regarding progress on election planning and any emerging risks and issues.

#### **4. Risk Management**

- 4.1 Risk management is embedded into both the work of the Constabulary and that of the OPCC on an ongoing and continuous basis. Risks are captured and reviewed in the Joint Strategic Risk Register.
- 4.2 As mentioned above, an Election Project Plan has been developed, which manages risks and issues, amongst other matters relating to the transition between the A/PCC and the new Commissioner. This aims to manage 'the manageable' in terms of what is required including workstreams relating to statutory requirements, communications, engagement with potential and declared candidates, organisational readiness, and governance.
- 4.3 This Plan and the staff responsible for delivery of the workstreams have put the groundwork in place to facilitate and enable the key relationship between the new Commissioner and the Chief Constable to be as effective as possible. Nonetheless, it was thought appropriate to identify a new potential risk on the Joint Strategic Risk Register regarding this change in personnel in case of a lack of understanding of respective roles and responsibilities. This should be seen as good strategic risk management at a time of transition, and not a reflection on the actual people potentially involved at that point of transition or thereafter. The risk is identified on the Risk Register at SR3.6 as follows:

*There is a risk that the Commissioner and Chief Constable fail to work together effectively.*

- 4.4 Robust Controls and Controls Assurance are captured in SR3.6, one of which includes the Election Plan.
- 4.5 One key principle of election planning, which runs through and is embedded into the Election Plan itself, is the need for transparency, accessibility, and parity to all candidates regardless of their status at any one time (i.e. prospective, nominated, or declared) throughout. Therefore, the OPCC created a dedicated web page for candidates which provides a vast amount of information regarding the election, guidance for candidates, signposting to useful websites for further information, and an Election Protocol. This website has been updated regularly.
- 4.6 In March 2021 the Chief Executive gave a presentation to candidates (who the OPCC were aware of at the time) on the governance framework required for a Commissioner and their office; the Chair of the Police and Crime Panel also provided input into this session. The Chief Constable also gave a presentation on the work of the Constabulary. These presentations, along with anonymised questions and answers from those sessions were published on the OPCC's website.
- 4.7 As the OPCC and Cambridgeshire Constabulary remain politically independent at all times, the Election Protocol is a key document for both bodies, and for candidates. The aim of this document is to provide some overarching guidelines and principles along with sources of advice in order to maintain transparency and equality throughout. This document, and the principles within, enables the management of risk, in particular by putting safeguards in place to avoid allegations of bias. This document has been shared internally with the Constabulary's officers and staff, OPCC staff, and is published on the OPCC's website.

## **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1 The Election Planning transition work will continue up to when the new Commissioner takes up office.

## **6. Bibliography**

‘Concluding Part One of the Police and Crime Commissioner Review’, Written Ministerial Statement, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-03-16/hcws849>