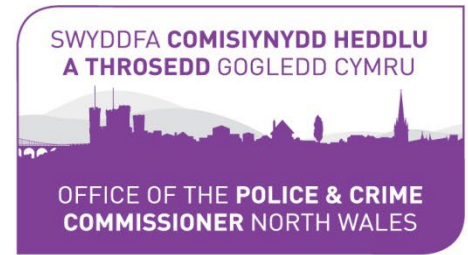




**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU**
**NORTH WALES
POLICE**



JOINT GOVERNANCE BOARD

**1st March 2023 @ 10:00
ONLINE**

PRESENT:

Helen Cargill, TIAA [HCa]
Helen Corcoran, Corporate Services Chief Superintendent [HCo]
Sarah Davies, JAC Governance and Ethics Lead [SD]
Guto Edwards, Head of Finance [GE]
Stephen Hughes, OPCC Chief Executive [CEO]
Kate Jackson, OPCC Chief Finance Officer (**Chair**)
Sian Jones, Risk and Business Continuity Coordinator [SWJ]
Phil Kenyon, Force Solicitor [PK]
Stephanie Maddix, NPCC PA [SM] (minutes)
Seb Phillips, Director of Finance and Resources [DFR]
James Sutton, Assurance Board Chair [JS]
Helen Williams, Finance Control Accountant [HW]

APOLOGIES:

Rachel Barber, Joint Audit Committee Chair [RB]
Anne Matthews, Finance & Budget Officer [AM]

333. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 9 NOVEMBER 2022

The board reviewed and approved the accuracy of the previous minutes.

334. ACTION LOG

Refer to separate action log for updates.

335. INSTIGATE REVIEW OF THE MANUAL OF GOVERNANCE

The Chair informed the Board that there is an annual requirement to review the Manual of Governance, which are the overarching rules of business for the OPCC and the Force. We have a new chief constable since the current versions were ratified, so she may also have a view. The Chair invited members to provide any feedback or suggested updates to her by 31st March 2023. The current documents remain in place unless there is a requirement to update.

ACTION: Members to provide feedback and suggested updates on the Manual of Governance documents to the Chair by 31st March 2023.

336. INSTIGATE REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The draft terms of reference for the 2023 North Wales Police Governance Review were circulated with the agenda pack. CEO provided the following observations:

- The background should reflect that we also have a new Police & Crime Commissioner and a new Police & Crime Plan since the last extensive review of the Force governance arrangements back in 2019.
- It would be remiss not to make specific reference to COVID within the background of the terms of reference, and the impact that had.
- Add the following under the Stakeholders list: OPCC; PCC and JAC.

ACTION: SWJ to update the NWP Governance Review terms of reference to reflect the observations made above.

It was confirmed that as part of the review, we would be looking at examples of how other forces' governance structures are setup, particularly those that were graded as outstanding in the recent HMICFRS PEEL inspection under Question 12. SWJ confirmed that she had already met with Humberside Police and is in the process of setting up meetings with other forces to discuss their governance structures and to pick out some of their good practice. SWJ is also mapping some of our meetings in the first phase of the review, to identify what is being duplicated and where there is divergence from terms of reference.

337. CONSIDER UPDATES FOR THE 2022/23 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Chair explained that the OPCC and the Force publish an annual governance statement alongside the statement of accounts which identifies what governance is in place and its effectiveness. CIPFA guidance is followed to ensure all the required areas are covered. This Board oversees the action plan that sits with the AGS. An updated AGS will be prepared to accompany the 2022/23 draft accounts and will include updates against the actions noted in the 2021/22 action plan.

ACTION: Members to provide any feedback or suggested updates on the annual governance statement to the Chair, DFR or GE.

338. MONITOR THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN

A Working Group, managed by the Business Services Staff Officer, has been established to provide an oversight of the AGS Action Plan and to monitor progress of the actions.

The three actions highlighted in the action plan are all live issues and are progressing.

- Governance: Efficiency and Effectiveness – significant work is being done to progress this action, through the wholesale review of our governance and responding to the HMICRS PEEL inspection report.
- Understandability of Statement of Accounts – we continue to improve on the understandability of the statement of accounts and the readability of the annual

governance statement. We would look to link in with those forces identified as outstanding by the HMICFRS PEEL report, as well as the other Welsh forces, to draw upon good practice.

- HMICFRS Inspections – this action is progressing and is working through the force governance forums and an update will feed into the Audit Committee later this month too.

Updates from the AGS Action Plan Working Group will be reported to future Joint Governance Board meetings.

339. SELF ASSESSMENT AGAINST FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CODE

The Financial Management Code was introduced in October 2019 and there is an annual professional requirement to demonstrate compliance against the FM code. The purpose of the FM code is to ensure that forces and local authorities are financially sustainable and that there are plans for future funding. There are six key principles which are broken down into a set of 17 standards and below those, 68 questions. GE explained that a detailed assessment was completed back in 2021 and there is a spreadsheet matrix behind it to respond to the questions with evidence; the medium-term financial plan is our main evidence resource to demonstrate our compliance against the questions.

Following the self-assessment, we consider ourselves to be compliant. The areas highlighted for continuous developments will be tracked into next year and would be included in the annual governance statement.

DFR provided the following observations:

- Consider incorporating the grading for Q12 of the HMICFRS PEEL report into section 2.1 as one of the underpinning elements, making reference to their statement around value for money.
- Consider incorporating the response to TIAA recommendations where specific management action is required as an evidence example in section 2.14.

ACTION: GE to update the responses to the questions in the FM code to reflect the observations made above.

GE responded to the feedback and queries received from RB outside of the meeting:

- The main evidence sits in the detailed spreadsheet matrix that sits behind the main document shared in the agenda pack.
- As it is a self-assessment there is no independent review. However, it has been prepared in a way that it could be reviewed by Audit Wales, so the evidence provided is robust. There is a major overlap with what is provided to Audit Wales for the value for money assessment.

340. GOVERNANCE OF JAC ACTION PLAN

There is a JAC evaluation that takes place on an annual basis and an action plan has been developed in conjunction with the OPCC, the Force and the JAC Chair to review the effectiveness of the committee. The Business Services Staff Officer would oversee the practicalities of progressing the identified actions and future Joint Governance Board meetings would receive an update / highlight report, as the overseeing forum. A number of the actions will be reported on at the closed session of the JAC meeting later this month.

341. a) REVIEW OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS
b) REVIEW OF PUBLICATIONS ISSUED BY INTERNAL AUDIT

GE spoke through the report circulated with the agenda pack, highlighting that 7 audits have been finalised since the last meeting, 5 of which received a substantial assurance grading, 1 received a reasonable assurance grading and 1 received a limited assurance grading – Property Subject to Charge. All but one of the actions from the limited assurance audit have been completed, so there is quite a bit of change and improvements taking place as a result.

Six draft audits have been received, one of which is graded as limited – HR Absence Management linked to Agility. This will be reported on at the next JAC meeting. There are 8 other audits due to be completed by the end of the year.

HCa added that the Firearms Licensing and the collaborative audit on Payroll have now been issued as draft audits. The Treasury Management audit will begin this week and the ICT Change Management audit has been delayed due to some change in staff. HCa confirmed that there would be no cause for concern, should the ICT Change Management audit be deferred into next year.

It was noted that RB had requested an update on seized property at the next JAC meeting, given the previous limited assurance audit.

DFR added that the plan for the collaborative audits for next year is progressing and will be discussed at the Wales F&R Group and potentially a separate meeting involving Directors of Finance, Heads of Finance and the Force Audits Leads.

342. REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE

DFR presented the open actions relating to governance from the JAC meetings to give visibility to members of this Board and provided updates where appropriate.

343. ASSURANCE UPDATE (BY EXCEPTION)

SWJ spoke through the report shared within the agenda pack explaining that the various processes are now well embedded and working well. She added a couple of updates since the circulation of the report:

- The terms of reference for the independent review on our Risk Management Process by the Force insurers, Gallagher Bassett, have been approved.
- The Gov.uk notify system practice guide was agreed at the Assurance Board yesterday. The Business Continuity Manager will now begin working on testing that system with SMTs over the next couple of months.

344. HMICFRS UPDATE (PUBLICATION OF PEEL REPORT)

Corporate Services Chief Superintendent delivered a presentation highlighting the key points from the HMICFRS PEEL report relevant for this meeting. The main area relevant for this forum was 'Strategic planning, organisational management and value for money' which received an adequate grading. We had been graded differently against this area in the draft report and there were

significant differences around some of the areas for improvement, some of which we did not feel were valid. These were escalated through to the HMI and significant further pieces of work were completed with additional evidence provided which subsequently resorted in a re-grading and changes to the associated areas of improvement. Overall, we received 11 areas for improvement from the full report, the ones relevant to this forum are:

AFI 10: The force needs to fully understand its capability and capacity to ensure it uses resources more efficiently to provide better services to its communities.

AFI 11: The force needs to improve how it communicates its financial plans and the challenges it faces in delivering its services.

Actions to mitigate against these AFI's will be managed through the Strategic Planning and Organisational Learning Board, which will report into the DCC Performance Board and the Strategic Executive Board.

The Governance Review, referred to earlier in the meeting, is in part a response to some of the feedback received from HMICFRS through the governance section of the PEEL report.

HMICFRS have this week published the value for money dashboards on their website. We are working through those to understand how we compare against other forces and details have been shared with the optimisation team as part of their review.

Value for money covers economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, however GE advised that the HMICFRS VfM profiles just cover economy, so it is a simplified document. They are useful to point us in the direction of where to look at in more detail, but he advised not to take them at face value as errors have been identified on previous versions.

345. REVIEW FORWARD WORK PLAN

It was agreed that the forward work plan remained current. However, it was noted that it should be pending any outcomes from the governance review, expected around June/July.

ACTION: Secretariat to liaise with Corporate Services Chief Superintendent on the outcomes from the Governance Review, to bring forward to a future agenda setting meeting.

346. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was raised.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS:

Wednesday 28th June 2023

Wednesday 6th September 2023

Wednesday 15th November 2023