

**MINUTES OF THE ETHICS, TRANSPARENCY AND AUDIT PANEL (ETAP) POLICE
& CRIME MEETING held on Wednesday 9 December
(Virtual meeting held on MS Teams due to Covid19)**

Present:

ETAP members	Officers
Alan Edwards (AE)	Victoria Farrar - SCO Head of Governance & Assurance (VF)
Bob Simpson (BS) Chair	Glynn Dixon - SCO Chief Executive (GD)
David Davies (DD)	David Greensmith - SCO Director of Finance (DG)
Emma Christmas (EC)	Emma Barnett - Deputy Chief Constable (EB)
Jane Barr (JB)	John Bloomer - Force Chief Finance Officer (JBL)
Jane King (JK)	Justine Kenny Director of People and Resources (JKE)
John Wheatley (JW)	Corrina Bradley - FARS Financial Services Manager (CBR)
Sue Finney (SF)	Deb Wilne - Force Governance, Planning & Policy Manager (DW)
Sue Westacott (SW)	Jean Cass - SCO Governance Lead (JC)
Tony Wilmot (TW)	Also in attendance
	Helen Henshaw - EY Associate Partner (HH)
	Angela Ward - RSM Audit Manager (AW)
	Daniel Harris - RSM Partner (DH)

SCO - Staffordshire Commissioner's Office
Force - Staffordshire Police Force

1. Declaration of interests, apologies, minutes and actions.

- i. Declarations of Interest: No declarations of interest were received.

Apologies: ETAP member Craig Brown (CB) and Chief Constable Gareth Morgan (GM).

Minutes & actions of the meeting held on the 28 October 2020

AGREED - That the minutes of the meeting held on the 28 October 2020 to be confirmed as an accurate and true record.

Updates to actions from previous meetings

- **Item 1** – To present at a future ETAP meeting details of the revised Force Governance Structure – on today's agenda, item 5 complete

- **Item 2** – To supply the Executive summary of the Force Management Statement for the next ETAP meeting in December 2020 – on today's agenda, item 4. complete

2. Deputy Chair's feedback

i. Chair of the Finance Panel - Alan Edwards (AE)

AE advised that the Finance Panel have met once since the last ETAP meeting in October.

The Panel received the budget monitoring report for period 7 which confirmed a relative stable position with a relative underspend. The Panel were pleased in the forecast to note a small under spend by the year end and a significant contribution to reserves.

The Panel received a verbal update on the sign off of the statutory accounts, Members expressed their frustrations that the sign off process would be missing the deadline of the 30 November 2020. The Panel agreed to support a letter from the ETAP Chair to the EY Partner.

The Panel received a verbal update on the Home Office consultation document on the role of the PCC. The formal response has been delayed but is now imminent. The PCC Review is a two-part process, the response to the first part is due now via a Ministerial Statement and the second part will be looking ahead after the PCC elections in May 2021.

On behalf of the ETAP members, AE added his congratulations to the Force's Finance Team. The Team have recently won the Local Service Team of the Year. This was awarded by Public Finance – the professional magazine for CIPFA members. The Panel also welcomed the team's investment in training and extensive use of CIPFA and AAT apprenticeships.

BS added, the reporting structure has greatly improved from the Finance Team and their award is very much deserved.

BS thanked AE for this report

ii. Chair of the Thematic Review - Jane King (JK)

JK advised that ETAP members are currently working in three areas:-

Complaints – The initial meetings have been held and members will be agreeing the terms of reference in the New Year and commencing the review.

Covid19 – This will be looking at how the three services are dealing with the Covid crisis including staff welfare. This will also take into account the overall picture and will include both the local and national issues.

Ethics review – Members have been taking a fresh view of their 'E' (Ethics) area dimension of the work of the Panel. This has included desktop research comparing the work of other PCC's offices. Some Commissioner's offices are taking a traditional audit committee approach and others are undertaking some interesting work with a more ethical approach. All ETAP members will be reviewing the results of this work during their P&D session later on today and will report back at the next ETAP meeting in February.

Q: BS, what contact have you had with the three organisations on the Covid review?

A: JK, ETAP members working on the review, CB has had information through from FARS and TW has had contact from VF and DW.

BS thanked JK for her update.

A copy of all ETAP thematic reviews published to date can be found on the SCO website <https://staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk/transparency/etap/>

3. Police, Fire and Crime Panel - (PFCP)

SF advised that the PFCP have not met since the last ETAP meeting in October.

BS thanked SF for her update

4. Force Management Statement (FMS)

DW advised that there is no current requirement from the HMICFRS for the Force to produce a Management Statement. The deadline for this document is now May 2021.

DW advised that the Force are producing a document that is part of their Strategic Planning process.

DW confirmed that the Executive Summary of the Force Management Statement will be shared with ETAP members at their meeting in May 2021.

Q: SF, during this process ordinary, would Staffordshire Force liaise with other forces, during Covid has this gone ahead?

A: DW, yes this has gone ahead, we are part of the SFM National Group and everyone in the group has taken the opportunity of sharing their experiences of good practices and build upon their the statements.

BS thanked DW for this update and asked for copy for the statement at the ETAP meeting in May 2021

ACTION: DW to supply a copy of the Executive summary of the Force Management Statement at the meeting in May 2021
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5. Force Governance Structure

EB confirmed that the Force Governance has recently been refreshed and presented today the latest version of the structure. EB advised that this is living document and there is a separate document on how the Force operates at a regional level

EB advised that in additional a number of other meetings also take place where the Commissioner's office is present.

Following EB presentation, members were given the opportunity to ask questions.

Q: DD, looking at the Evidence Based Practice and Innovation Board, could you advise what are the driving factors around this group please?

A: EB, a range of colleagues including academics sit on this group. The group focuses on strategic priorities including Public Confidence and Victims & Witnesses. The Force are harnessing the work on academics studies into operational objectives. A recent topic was Roads Policing with Keale University whilst other work has been carried out with Staffordshire University. Moving forward this group is going to be chaired by ACC Scott Green.

Q: JB, can you advise what the SLT stands for?

A: EB, SLT stands for the Senior Leadership Team

Q: SF, you mention the decision making and group of 90 people in the same sentence, how do you balance large groups with decision making and moving the business forward?

A: EB, the group of 90 is the Force's Leadership Meeting, this is an information sharing group and is not a decision making forum.

Q: SW, do all of these meetings in the structure produce minutes?

A: EB, we do have more work to do on how they all connect together. Where actions and notes are produced, but we need to achieve a better read out for transparency on how we get the information beyond the meetings and how information is shared.

Q: SW, looking at the role of the Section 151 Officer, we would like assurance that the officer does not have to wait to be invited to meetings.

A: EB, I do want to give assurance that the 151 officer does not wait on an invitation to meetings and is has wider access and the ability to be involved.

Q: JK, looking at the structure, where is the focus on ethics?

A: EB, there is nothing separate on ethics in this structure, ethics work is ongoing with Colin Matterson. EB offered to have a conversation with ETAP members outside of this meeting

Q: TW, do you have any thoughts on how ETAP role may develop on the Force Governance arrangement within the Force structure?

A: EB, I will give this area some thought and update you at the May meeting.

GD, reflecting on the Section 151 role and issues raised by HH from External Audit, both the Commissioner and I are aware of the statutory nature of the role and we will be picking up this issue through our governance structure with the Force.

GD, reference to the discussions on ethics, this is clearly part of the group's role. There are clearly more conversations needed in this area on how we ensure that there is an independent input in Staffordshire.

BS asked if we can look again at the governance structure in May 2021

ACTION: JK to discuss with EB and Colin Matterson on ETAP's involvement and input on an overview of the force's ethics work.

ACTION: EB to consider and update on ETAP's involvement and review role of the Force's Governance Structure

ACTION: EB to give a further update on the Force's Governance Structure in May 2021.

6. Force Governance Update (1.02)

DW advised that her last CC Governance update was made to the Panel at the meeting in February 2020.

The highlights of the report covered:-

1. HMICFRS reports and recommendations
2. Internal audit reports and recommendations
3. External audit report and recommendations
4. ETAP reports and recommendations
5. Strategic Risk, Issue and Opportunity (RIO) management

AE commented that it was good to see, from a Finance Panel perspective, the large number of recommendations from Internal Audit reports being signed off as complete.

Q: AE, looking at the Risks and Opportunities, what do you want to change within the culture and what are the pension risks that you are looking at?

A: JK, the overall culture is around building a Safer Staffordshire around Modern Policing this is defined within the Modern Policing Strategy.

Q: TW, is it possible to have sight of minutes of meetings around Covid matters from the Strategic Governance Board (SGB)?

A: DW, I will investigate the sharing of minutes and look to share these on Huddle.

ACTION: JBL to advise what the current pension risks the force is facing

ACTION: JKE to circulate to members the Force's Modern Policing Strategy

ACTION: DW to provide copies of the minutes of SGB meetings covering Covid matters to ETAP members

BS thanked DW for her report

7. SCO Governance Update (1.25)

VF presented the highlights of the report

Since last SCO Governance update, the office has received the results from three audits. The results from these audits and recommendations are contained within the report.

The ICVA Quality Assurance (QAF) work is ongoing, however our submission has been delayed due to Covid19.

Three actions have been added from this year's AGS and actions from the Collaboration and Savings Report these are all work in progress. Update in these areas will be given in the next Governance report.

The SCO has started a Dog Welfare Scheme but has not been able visit to the dog handlers due to Covid. The Appropriate Adult Service (AAs) has transferred from Staffordshire Police to the SCO to give this independence from the Force.

BS thanked VF for this report.

8. SCO Expenses, Gifts and Hospitality Report

DG presented this report and confirmed that there is very little transactions to report during the period April 2020 to September 2020.

Q: SW, is there a policy on what meetings should be accepted or declined?

A: DG, there is a guidance in place for officers in this area.

BS thanked DG for this report

9. Force Expenses, Gifts and Hospitality Report

JBL presented the report covering April 2020 to September 2020.

JBL advised that the credit card spend expenditure relates to PPE purchases, as suppliers would only accept payments by credit cards.

Donations made on behalf of the Force and makes small size donations.

Q: JW, are the credit card payments parts of the procurements?

A: JBL, yes the credit card payments are all subject to procedures.

A: SW, guidance with gifts and hospitality, would some sort of guidance be helpful for staff?

Q: JBL, my personal point of view there is sufficient guidance in place already, including Code of Ethics on professional relationships.

EB, added that there are policies in place around the acceptance of Gifts, Gratuities and Hospitality. We will take another look at this to check that it is fit for purpose, but there is always a sense of personal judgement here.

10. Internal Audit

i. Progress update from Internal Audit

DH summarised the report;-

There are four reports finalised year to date, one report has been issued in draft recently and two further reports have drafts currently in progress, this leaves three topics are to be finalised in quarter four;

We are planning are issues a clear report at the year end.

DH advised that they may be able to do some independent follow up work from the Asset Management Report. This findings from the report will impact their opinion, but will no way lead to a qualification on the year end report.

AW presented the audit reports to date

ii. Key Financial Controls

AW commented on the Controls Report and advised that there was only one issue found during the audit. The details of this issue are included in the report as a medium priority.

AE, commented that this is a really clean report and an excellent result for the Finance Team.

JBL, the results of this report are fantastic and all credit to the Finance Team.

iii. Asset Management

AW, this was an advisory audit as the Force know that there are problems in this area. We have worked with Force to identify a route map to prioritise actions and move forward.

EB, added that she recognised the value of the Asset Management report. This will be reported through the Information and Asset Management Team.

Members asked for update including a timetable and priority list report back to ETAP

ACTION: EB to report back to ETAP on the progress against the Asset Management Report
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BS thanked DH and AW for these reports.

11.AOB

i. Accounts update

DG advised that there are some outstanding items on the accounts and HH has been working on some final adjustments on the accounts.

DG, noted that 55% of public bodies did not meet the extended dead line of the 30 November 2021.

HH, the accounts are almost ready for signed off and advised that nothing new has been added to the final adjustment list as presented at the to the last Finance Panel meeting.

HH advised that the CC accounts are ready to be signed and the Group accounts just need final checking and will be signed off with the CC accounts.

BS, requested that DG notify ETAP member when the accounts are complete and signed off.

ACTION: DG to advise ETAP members when the CC and Group Accounts are signed off and published

ii. Recruitment update

TW raised a question regarding on local recruitment and in particular asked what the BME intake levels had been.

EB advised that the Force had met their committed levels this year and had been able to recruit to the different levels. She didn't have the figures to hand on the BME levels of recruitment, but would be able to advise ETAP members following the meeting.

ACTION: EB to provide an update on BME levels on recruitment

iii. Thanks to David Davies (ETAP member)

BS paid his thanks to DD who has served on the Panel for the last six years and today is attending his last Force Panel meeting. BS thanked DD for his personal support and for in particular his positive attitude in his Deputy Chair role on Thematic Work.

iv. Date and time of the 10 February 2021 starting at 10.30