

Draft V03

Item 1

**MINUTES OF THE ETHICS, TRANSPARENCY AND AUDIT PANEL (ETAP) POLICE & CRIME MEETING held on Wednesday 27 May 2020
(Virtual meeting held on MS Teams due to Covid19)**

Present:

| ETAP members | Officers |
|------------------------|--|
| Alan McEntire (AM) | Victoria Farrar - SCO Head of Governance & Assurance (VF) |
| Alan Edwards (AE) | Glynn Dixon - SCO Chief Executive (GD) |
| Bob Simpson (BS) Chair | David Greensmith - SCO Director of Finance (DG) |
| Clare Cowley (CC) | Nick Baker - Deputy Chief Constable (NB) |
| Craig Brown (CB) | John Bloomer - Force Chief Finance Officer (JBL) |
| David Davies (DD) | Justine Kenny - Force Director of People and Resources (JKE) |
| Emma Christmas (EC) | Deb Wilne - Force Governance, Planning & Policy Manager (DW) |
| Jane Barr (JBA) | Jean Cass - SCO Governance Lead (JC) |
| Jane King (JK) | Also in attendance |
| John Wheatley (JW) | Helen Henshaw - EY Associate Partner (HH) |
| Sue Finney (SF) | Angela Ward - RSM Audit Manager (AW) |
| Sue Westacott (SW) | |
| Tony Wilmot (TW) | |

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

1. Annual Election to the position of Chair, Deputy Chair Finance Panel and Deputy Chair Thematic Reviews.

VF introduced this item to address the annual election of ETAP members to the positions of Chair and two Deputy Chairs for the coming year.

Members had the option to express their interest in these positions by email between the 15 May and the 22 May 2020.

ETAP Chair one expression of interest from the existing chair BS.

Deputy Chair Finance Panel one expression of interest from the existing Deputy Chair AE.

Deputy Chair Thematic Reviews one expression of interest from the JK. (The existing Deputy chair, DD, had chosen not to stand for this position)

VF advised that no ballot was required as only one member per position had expressed an interest.

AGREED: The Annual Election of ETAP members to the posts of Chair, Deputy Chair Finance Panel and Deputy Chair Thematic Reviews (next election in May 2021)

Additional item

BS, before starting the formal agenda, asked GD and NB for their updates on how the SCO and the force are dealing with the effects of the current crisis.

GD, advised that since the start of lockdown the SCO has been closed with officers working from home. This has been challenging, but we are getting use to this way of working and we are managing well. Technology has been an issue but we are now holding effective meetings regularly using MS Teams. We are fully involved in the force and Fire's governance structure which involves online attendance at the force's Gold/Silver/Bronze meetings and at the Fire's Tactical Cell meetings.

GD, advised that an update to the policing and fire plans setting out how the Commissioner and his office will provide support during the Covid-19 pandemic. This update can be found on the following link; <https://staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk/covid-19-response-2020-21/>

Q: BS, are all the officers working from home?

A: GD, Yes all officers are working from home. This is proving difficult for some as not all have laptops and we are having to find work arounds for them.

BS thanked GD for this update

NB, advised that initially the force had significant increases in absence levels. However this was not staff being sick but staff who were following the public health guidance in terms of assessment. Following medical assessments and disbursement of staff through safe working arrangements, sickness and absence levels have returned to normal levels.

NB added that the force experienced an initial drop in demand during the early stages of lockdown. As lockdown is now easing, crime is now increasing and we are now moving from a reactive element to more recovery element to a sense of normality.

Q: CC, looking at the number of public notices issued, does the force's action have any impact on the public confidence?

A: NB, if people are reasonable and accept they are breaching and go home immediate, it's best to let them do that. If is someone who is repeat offender they will get a notice. We have invested in lots of community engagement, if people call in, they will get a call back.

Q: TW, are the absence rates now at a normal level and is there a larger police presence out and about?

A: NB, whilst absence rates were initially higher at the start of the lockdown, the rates are now back to normal levels with low levels relating to Covid19. At the start of lockdown we did have lower levels of demand therefore had the capacity to be more visible.

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

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

Apologies: Chief Constable Gareth Morgan (GM)

Minutes & actions of the meeting held on the 5 February 2020

AGREED - That the minutes of the meeting held on the 5 February 2020 to be confirmed as an accurate and true record.

Updates to actions from previous meetings

- **Item 1** – Relating to the SCO's Expenses, Gifts, & Hospitality Report, the credit card spend under Contributions to Partnership related to the SPACE Scheme - complete
- **Item 2** – Data Quality Niche Implementation Report – an updated report with a revised page 5 has been received and posted to Huddle for ETAP members - complete

Any updates from last meeting - members held a pre-meeting today from 10.00

ii. **Chairs Annual Report**

BS presented his Chair's Annual report. The Chairs annual report in addition to quarterly reports to Strategic Governance Board the annual report supports ETAP governance's arrangements. The Chairs report contains a summary of ETAP's actions during the year.

Members confirmed they had no questions to his report.

3. **Deputy Chair's feedback**

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

AE advised that the contents of his report are also covered on today's agenda. He wanted to add that the force and the Group are now in much stronger position than when he started in the Finance Panel. He expressed his thanks to the Finance Team for being able to deliver a set of accounts to members today.

BS added that due to the improvements made by the Finance Team and the confidence that members had in their work consequently the Finance Panel are now only meeting Bi-monthly.

BS thanked AE for this report

ii. **Chair of the Thematic Review - David Davies (DD)**

DD advised that since his last ETAP report, two reports have been published.

The Local Partnerships report was published in February and the Commissioning Report, was published in May.

This leaves two outstanding reviews, Children and Young People in Custody which commenced in January and Desk Top Publications which was commissioned in March. Because of the current crisis, work on thematic topics has been suspended with no significant progress being

made on either project. The terms of reference Desk Top Publications have yet to be agreed agreed.

DD advised the meeting that his tenure with ETAP ends in December 2020. He has chosen to stand down as Deputy Chair for the forthcoming year to assist with a smooth transition of the role to the new Deputy Chair.

BS personally thanked DD for the support he has given him and members during his time as Deputy Chair.

iii. Commissioning Report (JK)

JK presented the findings of the Commissioning Report that has recently been published on the SCO website.

On the report, there were a number of recommendations, which have been accepted. Overall, the review found that there is a robust process in place for the commissioning of services but emphasised the need for closer working arrangements across all the agencies involved. This is needed to ensure delivery of an effective service whilst maintain efficient use of public resources.

A copy of ETAP's latest thematic report can be found on the SCO website: <https://staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk/cms/wp-content/uploads/ETAP-Commissioning-Thematic-Review-FINAL.pdf>

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

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

SF advised that the last meeting PFCP was held on Monday 10 February, items on the agenda included:-

- Termination of the Boeing contract;
- Budget 2020/21 and Precept proposal.

The PFCP approved the precept during the meeting.

Papers can be found on the SCC website:

<http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1150&MId=11301&Ver=4>

SF advised that the next meeting of the PFCP is on the 13 July 2020.

GD advised that the agenda for the next meeting is currently being put together and will include a review of the Boeing contract.

BS thanked SF for her update

5. Presentation to include a summary of the Group Statement of Accounts

JBL advised that two sets of draft statutory accounts, one for the force and one for the Group had been produced and circulated to members prior to the today's meeting.

JBL presented an overview of the Group's statements of accounts, these included the following key points:-

Financial Context

Over the last decade, the Policing Grant has reduced in real terms from £199m in 2010/11 to £197m to 2019/20.

Revenue Budget Group

Overall group net revenue budget of £196.994m

- £171 per person spend by Staffordshire Police
- £7 per person spend by the Commissioner's office
- £6 per person on Capital Financing

Funded from:

- £107.139m Home Office Grant
- £79.607m Precept (Inc. freeze grants)
- £8.423m Revenue Support Grant
- £1.825m Pension Grant

Revenue Outturn

- A headline underspend of £0.440m (0.2%) to go into the General Fund Reserve
- Pay underspends against budgeted staff costs - £3.574m
- Fully recruited to Officer TOM at year end including 30 FTE Uplift Officers
- Non-pay costs that are £0.534m over budget
- Overspends in leased buildings, vehicle service and repair and insurance provision
- Operational cost underspends, some due to delays driven by pandemic
- Capital financing savings of £0.5m saving as no in year borrowing + higher investment returns
- Income overachievement of £4.137m
- Additional Grant funding – Uplift, Serious Violence and other grants and partnership income
- Reimbursements – Boeing settlement, collaboration income, service credits and secondments
- General and earmarked reserves increased by £7.687m

Capital Spend

- Capital spend continues to be dominated by IT spend (77% of the total) predominantly driven by NICHE, server refresh and continued ESN costs.
- Delayed NICHE 'go live' responsible for underspend vs budget on IT capital
- Significant underspend on Estates capital programme (only 31% of budget spent)

Financial Performance/ Value for Money

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) awarding the force a 'Good' rating for the use of resources in their most recent inspection.
- Based on Home Office data Staffordshire Police has delivered over £1m of procurement efficiencies over the past 12 months, ranking at number three out of forty three forces in terms of savings delivered; Staffordshire force is the twenty first largest in terms of net revenue budget
- Savings of £816k delivered to date across the three organisations of Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service and the Staffordshire Commissioners Office through collaboration with Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service on shared services and governance changes.
- Further additional savings from those above from the shared estates solution within Tamworth following the opening of the new joint Fire and Police station in December 2019.

JBL advised that since the start of 2012 when PCC's were established, out of 43 PCC's nationally, Staffordshire have had the second lowest level of precept increases. This is set against Staffordshire being 1 of only 4 forces nationally where crime is falling.

Following the presentation, JBL added that the LGPS would not be available until the following day; this will need to be added to the accounts prior to their publication. JBL also confirmed that some of the collection fund data has been slow coming through, this will be adjusted upon receipt. As far as we are aware, the additional cost of the age discrimination case is expected to be funded centrally but to be confirmed.

ETAP members had no further questions for JBL on the Group accounts.

BS, thanked JBL for his presentation and congratulated all concerned on the the good year-end financial position of both organisations. This is a significant improvement over previous year's accounts and reflects not only the efforts of the finance team but better financial management across organisations

6. Draft Annual Governance Statements

(i) Draft SCO Annual Governance Statement (AGS)

VF advised that all ETAP members and stakeholders have had already sight of the draft the statement and asked if anyone had any further comments.

SW reminded that members have had ample time to view the AGS and to make comments. She commended the office on meeting the timescales for the production of the statement and for the continued improved quality of the AGS statement.

JBA, added that she and SW had previously met with VF and JC and had made suggestions on earlier drafts of the statements which were taken into account. She also commended the SCO for reflecting in the statement the effects of the Covid19 virus.

BS thanked VF for this document

(ii) Draft Force Annual Governance Statement (AGS)

DW advised that she had verbally updated members on the force's AGS the previous week at the Finance Panel. She apologised that the production of the draft AGS was approx. 4-6 weeks behind schedule as set out in corporate planning. This year delay was due to the Covid19 crisis.

DW confirmed that the statement had been updated to include reference to Covid19, the IT in-house transition from Boeing, Niche (record management system), results from Int/Ext audit, the light touch Governance Review in December and environmental scanning capabilities and link to the National Police Chief Council.

DW added the statement has been through the force's Governance Structure and the Chief Constable had signed off the statement. The draft AGS had also been prepared to ensure it was consistent with the Force Management Statement as submitted to the Home office. The AGS was now a final draft and would be available for publication on the web site at the end of May. The document would be updated with any comments from ETAP members at

Q: JBA, looking at last year's recommendations, the online Home Platform, has this led to more information being accessibility to the public and what improvements this led to?

A: DW, yes, the online Home Platform has effectively freed up a lot of capacity within the staff in the Control Room. The force is making far more use of the digital platform now.

Q: SW, asked for ETAP members to see an earlier version of next year's statement.

A: DW, noted comments on the timing and availability of earlier drafts of the AGS of next year's statement.

Q: JW, could you provide an update on both the Niche project and In-house IT transfer from Boeing?

A: NB, the implemented of Niche has gone smoothly, the work force have been well engaged. There had been some issues with data quality which we were aware of. The in-house solution is tightly governed and we are confident are at the moment with progress being made towards the transfer.

Q: AE, question number 1 of the statement, is there some performance data that ETAP members should be aware of?

A: NB there are some changes in legislation on how the forces handles complaints, with this now moving to the SCO. Happy to explore a move to ETAP should this be an area for members to look at.

BS agreed this is a subject that ETAP will consider for future review

Q: SF, could you confirm what is covered by the Gold/Silver/Bronze meetings please?

A: NB, these terms are used to deliver a well-established critical management process; Gold meetings look at the strategy, Silver meetings relates to the tactical requirements to deliver the strategy and Bronze is the delivery of responses to the tactical elements of the strategy. They do not specifically relate to Covid19, but any high risk incidents or significant public incidents including floods, public order, firearm incidents etc.

BS thanked DW for this document.

7. Internal Auditors RSM

AW presented three reports to the panel;

i. Workforce Planning Report

AW advised that there is positive opinion on this report looking at how current and future workforce requirements are met.

'Taking account of the issues identified, the force can take substantial assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage the identified area are suitably designed, consistently applied and operating effectively'

AW confirmed that there were two low level recommendations in the report, so overall a very positive report.

Q: AM, I understand that the current recruitment process can take up to 12 months to get through. Could you comment please if anything is being done to speed up process please?

A: JKE, there has been change in the way we recruit police officers since the move from the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) to the apprenticeship and degree holder routes. We are now in a slightly different place but we are still restricted by a number of factors including by National Assessment Centers and at the moments we can't run physical assessment due to Covid19 restrictions.

In general people are moving through the system a little quicker but this is not like recruitment into others sectors but we have made improvements.

Q: AM, you mention the new intake, what's the implications of Covid19 in reference to social distancing, what are your thoughts?

A: JKE, we have a new cohort of 48 officers joining on 1 June and we will have to make sure that we have sufficient classroom space on site to allow for social distancing. In addition the work is ongoing with the university to understand the impact for new recruits and the need physical tutoring.

ii. Follow up Procurement Contract Management

AW advised that this was a follow up for the report that was carried out originally 19/20. Action continue to move in the right direction.

Overall out of the 16 recommendations, 8 had been implemented, 3 were being implemented, 3 were not and 2 were superseded.

BS added that this reports show how effective internal audit is as half the recommendations have been already been implemented within the current year.

Q: SF, could you confirm the date of the originally report please. This was to clarify that you consider the progress to be adequate since the originally report?

A: AW, the originally report was in October 2019. There has been so much work in this area, I am confidence that when we look into these this areas again in Qtr. 3 we expect to see more areas completed.

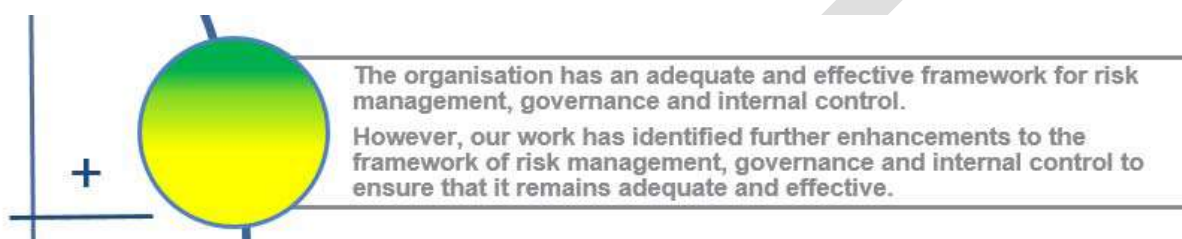
Q: SF, are there any lessons to be learnt from managing the Kier Team?

A: JBL, the biggest lessons we have learnt, when we took over the management of the contract on the back of the initial audit report, was that if you create a Center of Excellence that you should use this. The other thing to reflect on is to be clear with suppliers; Kiers are now meeting all of their targets in April 2020. This includes their response on cleaning and the services they provide meeting the demands of Covid19.

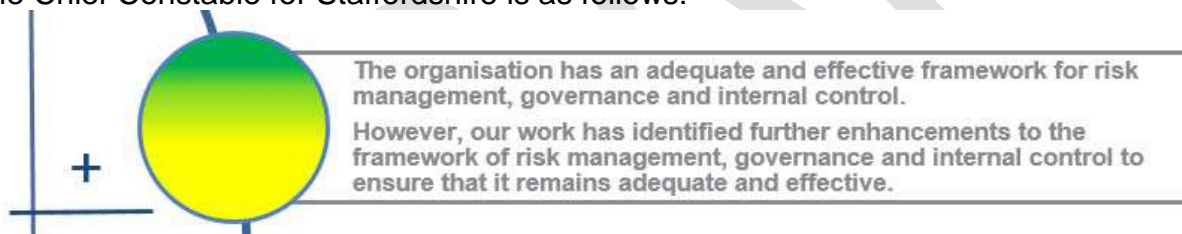
iii. Draft Internal Audit report for 2019/20

AW confirmed that the opinions as following:-

For the 12 months ended 31 March 2020, the head of internal audit opinion for Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (SPFCC) is as follows:-



For the 12 months ended 31 March 2020, the head of internal audit opinion for the Chief Constable for Staffordshire is as follows:



Q: TW, can you comment on the Collaboration report please?

A: The Collaboration report is currently in draft and was undertaken with Staffs County Council Audit Team. We need to agree the advisory action with management before this report is finalised and presented to ETAP.

BS added that the draft report is with Management Team and will be presented to the next ETAP meeting in July.

BS thanked AW for this report.

8. External Audit EY

i. External Audit Plan 2019/20

HH talked through the key points of the plan;

HH thanked JBL and DG and said well done for getting the accounts prepared for today's meeting and advised that they are her only public sector client who had achieved this. The timetable for the audit remains unchanged and work starts from next Monday, 1st June.

HH advised that whilst the audit will continue to the agreed timetable, there may be a delay due to the impact of Covid19 and working arrangements, she may still be going through a consultation process to sign off the opinion signed off in readiness for the next ETAP meeting for the 27 July.

BS thanked HH for her update and commented that members should have confidence that the audit should be completed to the agreed timetable.

ii. Police Sector Audit Committee Briefing

HH advised that the sector briefing was supplied for.

BS thanked HH for her reports

9. AOB

BS added his thanks to the Governance and Assurance Team for their help with setting up today's meeting on MS Teams.

BS added that if any members have any issues that they wish to raise from today's meeting to drop him an email and he will direct to the appropriate officers.

Date and time of next meeting Wednesday 29 July 2020 at 10.30am.