



Draft V02

Item 2

**MINUTES OF THE ETHICS, TRANSPARENCY AND AUDIT PANEL (ETAP) POLICE
& CRIME MEETING held on Wednesday 25 May
Conference Room 2, Block 7, Police HQ**

Present:

ETAP members	Officers
Bob Simpson (BS) Chair	Chris Noble - Chief Constable (CN)
	Mark Burslem - Staff Officer (MB)
Ben Thompson (BT)	John Bloomer - Force Chief Finance Officer (JBL)
Chris Gill (CG)	Deb Wilne - Force Governance, Planning & Policy Manager (DW)
Craig Brown (CB)	David Greensmith - SCO Director of Finance (DG)
Emma Christmas (EC)	Ralph Butler - SCO Temporary Joint Chief Executive (RB)
Jane Barr (JB)	Jean Cass - SCO Governance Lead (JC)
Jane King (JK)	Victoria Farrar - SCO Head of Governance & Assurance
John Wheatley (JW)	Also, in attendance
Sue Finney (SF)	Neil Harris - EY Associate Partner (NH) Item 8 only on Teams
Sue Westacott (SW)	Daniel Harris - RSM Head of Internal Audit (DH)
Terry Stock (TS)	Angela Ward - RSM Audit Manager (AW)
	Alice Archer - Finance and Commercial Apprentice (Observer only)

SCO - Staffordshire Commissioner's Office

Force - Staffordshire Police Force

BS advised that ETAP members, prior to the morning's Fire meeting, had a private meeting with RSM Internal Auditors, DH & AW. BS also welcomed CG to his first ETAP Public meeting.

BS confirmed the ETAP Annual Chair's election results were given during this morning's Fire meeting. BS will continue as Chair, JK in the post of Deputy Chair and the Chair of the Ethics and Review Panel and EC will take up the post of Deputy Chair and the Chair of the Finance Panel.

1. Chief Constable update

CN update included: -

Current challenges continue from protesters, various campaigns including AntiVac, policing of football matches and HS2 demands.

Core key priorities for the Force include, the Contact Centre, New local Policing model starting 27 June, Public protection - including items covered in HMICFRS reports and the rebuilding of the Corporate Development function.

Future challenges include the Commonwealth Games and the summer months when the Force can expect the demand for service to increase by 20%.

Q: SW, can you comment on the Child Protection provision following the HMICFRS inspection report?

A: CN, real challenges were raised by the HMICFRS report, a follow up report was undertaken and HMICFRS will return for a formal visit later on in the year to test the Force's progress.

Q: CB, how will you handle the strain on resources with the additional challenges in the forthcoming months?

A: CN, part of this is a reactive process with daily management systems to enable best use of available resources. In the medium-term the Force is well connected with 200 additional officers in the front line and the ability to tap into national resources.

Q: CB, does tapping into the resource cost the Force?

A: CN, this does dependent upon the level of engagement, at the moment the Force is coming out with a net benefit. The Force does have specialist services already in place which have made a net income over the past few months.

Q: SF, do you get any specialist funding for example for the Force officers supporting the Commonwealth Games?

A: CN, the Commonwealth Games is a primarily a West Midlands Police operation, but supplying Force specialist officers for the event allows does allow us to recover some of the costs.

Q: JK, how do you explain the new model to members of the public?

A: CN, all the feedback from the local communities has been very positive, including feedback from a soft launch in January 2022. This is a real opportunity to reconnect with communities and to have more resources in place.

Q: BS, you have mentioned that Force may have areas of concern for ETAP members to assist with?

A: CN, the Force does have a gap around the quality of capabilities around assurance. For example, I want to be able to put some quality assurance around investigations with a blend of people who can help challenge/support this work.

ACTION: BS & CN to talk to meet to discuss member's involvement in areas of Force assurance work.
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2. Declaration of interests, apologies, minutes and actions.

i. Declarations of Interest: None

Apologies: ETAP member Martyn Rochelle (MR), Justine Kenny, Force Director of Enabling Services (JK).

Minutes & actions of the meeting held on the 29 March 2022

Page 4, Fleet Management will be completed as part of the 22.23 plan

AGREED - That the minutes of the meeting held on the 29 March 2022, with one correction as above, was confirmed as an accurate and true record.
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Updates to actions from previous meetings

Item 2 – meeting 16 Feb 2022 – on today's agenda following ETAP meeting

Item 4 – meeting 16 Feb 2022 – New Policing Firing Range - JBL confirmed that the business case will be presented to the Finance Panel meeting

Item 1 – completed & action plan updated

Item 2 – completed & action plan updated

Item 3 – completed & action plan updated

Item 4 – completed & action plan updated

RB advised that the appointment of the new Chief Executive has been confirmed by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel. Louise Clayton will start in the SCO on the 4 July 2022.

(ii) Chairs Annual Report for ETAP

BS introduced his annual report on the performance of ETAP members during the past 12 months up until 31 March 2022. This has been written with assistance of his deputies. This report summaries the work of the panel during the year including the panel's statutory role and also the work of ERP panel.

BS confirmed that his report will go to the July's meeting of the Strategic Governance Board (SGB) for information.

3. Deputy Chair's feedback

i. Chair of the Finance Panel

BS advised that the Finance Panel meet last week.

The highlights of the meeting included: -

Monthly Financial Statement – the reports have been ‘spot on’ thanks to the excellent reporting from the Force’s Finance’s Teams.

External Audit of Accounts – 2020.21 – despite assurances from EY the accounts are still not closed. Members requested that BS write to EY expressing their displeasure with the ongoing delays.

Review of the Capital Budget process – this has been deferred until after the summer months due to the current workload of the Finance Team.

ii. Chair of the Ethics & Review Panel - Jane King (JK)

Gifts and Hospitality Review update

JK confirmed that feedback from reviews is now being taken at the July meeting of the ERP meeting.

On the current workplan for future months are the following items: -

July - follow up areas for the Complaint Review and Covid reports on Force Staff Welfare and Well-being

September - Briefing update on the Whistle Blowing Policy

November - Vetting

The Gifts and Hospitality review report is now in draft and just awaiting feedback from officers.

BS thanked JK for her update report.

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

EC attended the last PFCP meeting on the 25 April 2022.

The main items on the agenda included: -

The confirmation for the appointment of new Chief Executive to the Office of SCO.

The Commissioner his update to the Police and Crime Plan and confirmed that the new policing model will be in the place by the end of June 2022.

BS confirmed that members will extend an invite the chair of PFCP to attend a future meeting of the ETAP.

BS thanked EC for her update.

5. CC Governance Highlight Report

DW presented the key highlights of the reports as follows: -

1. HMICFRS reports and recommendations
2. Internal audit reports and recommendations
3. External audit report and recommendations
4. Strategic Risk and Issue management
5. Force Management Statement and Annual Governance Statement

DW confirmed that the Force are finalising the Force Management Statement and this will be sent to the HMICFRS. The AGS is in draft format at the moment, and will be forwarded to members in mid-June when this is finalised.

DW confirmed that the Force are no longer holding Strategic Risk Board meetings. Reporting on Risks and Issues will now take place at the monthly Executive Management Board (EMB).

The Risk on the register currently are: -

- Emergency Services Network: Risk of compromised operational viability due to delays in decommissioning of Airwave.
- Origin ERP Upgrade: Current version of Origin used by the force is not fit for purpose.
- IT failure: Risk that infrastructure failure due to end of life hardware may impact on delivery of operational and support activities.
- Sexual misconduct: The abuse of position for a sexual purpose

Current Issues:

- Poor Data quality: Issue relating to the requirement to address inaccurate and incomplete information held across systems.

Following a discussion during the meeting it was agreed that EC and DW would meet up outside of today's meeting for an update on the Data Quality issues.

Action: EC to meet with DW for a catch up on data quality issues.

BS thanked DW for her report and update.

6. SCO Governance Highlight Report

VF presented the highlights of the SCO Governance reports: -

Completed since the last Governance report to the Panel have been one ETAP report on Covid responses and also two RSM internal Audit reports. Both Internal Audit reports received 'Substantial Assurance' opinions from the auditors.

In section 2, the second item on the AGS on Sustainability, has been reworded to consider some more information and best practice and guidance that has recently come to light. This action has not been fully completed, it has been reworded and rolled forward into the 21.22 AGS.

The highlight report does not capture Fire’s White paper as the Governance report was written before the release. This will be covered in the next Governance report from the SCO.

Members thanked VF for her very readable report and presentation.

7. Internal Auditors Report

AW presented three audit reports with audit opinion findings as below: -

i. Pensions - Injury Award

Taking account of the issues identified, the Commissioner and 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

ii. Safer Streets Funding Grants

Taking account of the issues identified, the Commissioner 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.

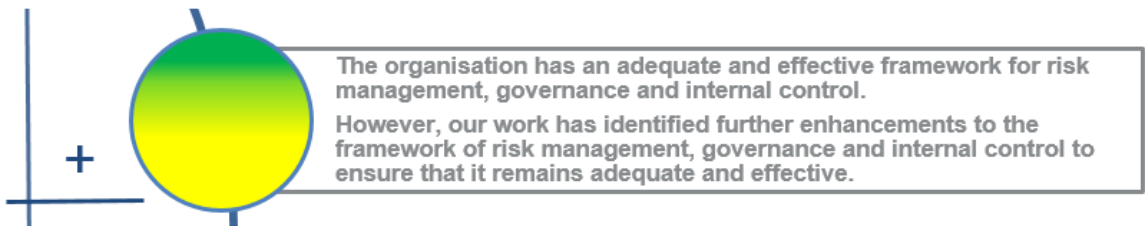
iii. Governance (Force)

Taking account of the issues identified, the Chief Constable of Staffordshire 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.

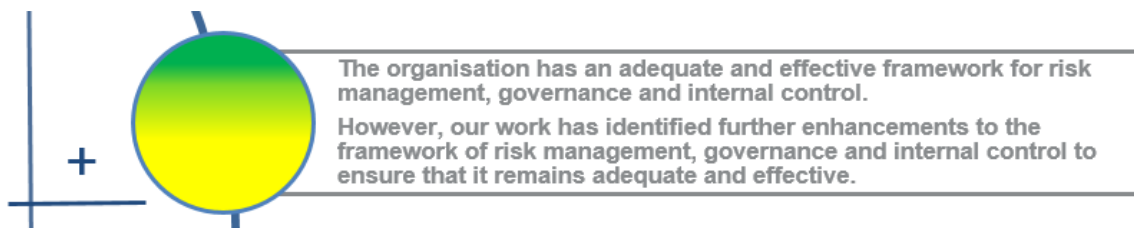
iv. Annual Report

DH presented the following audit opinions in RSM’s Annual Report: -

For the 12 months ended 31 March 2022, the Head of Internal Audit opinion for Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner of Staffordshire (SPFCC) is as follows:



For the 12 months ended 31 March 2022, the head of internal audit opinion for the Chief Constable of Staffordshire is as follows:



Q: CB, regarding the Internal Audit Crime Report, what is plan of action is to address this?

A: JBL, Crime Recording, this was a follow up report in light of a forthcoming HMICFRS report. This report was done to get the 'service' match fit. The plan is to get the back log covered in the next 6-8 weeks, the reporting will then be in a better place.

BS thanked AW and DH for their reports and presentations.

8. External Auditors

NH joined the meeting on Teams and gave a verbal update today on the progress toward the sign off of the Statutory Accounts 20.21

NH gave his apologies for the further delays in progress the signing off of the accounts.

Since the last Special ETAP meeting on the 14 May: -

- Discussions have taken place regarding the valuations of offices. The valuation is now based upon individual blocks with a service potential rather than an asset than is seen as one site. The disclosure in the accounts now reflects this adjustment.
- Events after the balance sheet date and an asset held for sale, have been corrected and reflected in the accounts.
- The valuation of a car park has been correctly addressed in the accounts.
- Amendments to the notes have been tidied up.

NH confirmed that he was hoping to have final audit opinion available for this public meeting. Regrettably this has not been achieved. NH advised that his manager has been unable to conclude matters due to his sickness and annual leave. NH confirmed to members a date to conclude his manager's work would be in week commencing 10 June.

Q: BS, what time is then needed to complete the NH's final review?

A: NH, his manager needs a couple of days and so does NH, in total the time is a week and a half.

DG thanked NH for an update and asked NH for a final set of account by the 17 June, rather than the end of June.

Q: SF, asked if NH would be willing to put the details from today's meeting in writing so that the Force's Finance Team start can start on the annual accounts for 21.22.

A: NH, agreed to this action.

ACTION: NH supplies to JB & DG receive written confirmation on the opening balances for the current year

ACTION: NH to aim for a signing of the accounts for the 17 June

BS also discussed the external audit of the 21.22 accounts and asked for an earlier clearance. Is the deadline for 21.22 of the 30 November as realistic deadline?

NH advised that in light of the queries raised during the meeting today, he will be able to confirm in writing to the Panel when the 21.22 External Audit will be finalised.

ACTION: NH to confirm in writing the timescale for the 21.22 External Audit

Q: SF, are the Force accounts, being available on time, a victim of their own success?

A: NH, across the board, they are implications on the whole of public sector of accounts with a number of police and fire services audits having been pushed back.

BS thanked NH for attending the meeting today.

9. AOB

Date and time of next meeting is Tuesday 26 July 2022.

DRAFT