



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Chief Constable

Annual Governance Statement

2020/21

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SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Constable has an overarching responsibility to serve the public interest in adhering to the requirements of legislation and government policies. It is essential that appropriateness of all actions can be demonstrated and mechanisms are in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and to respect the rule of law.

In discharging this overall responsibility the Chief Constable is required to put in place proper arrangements for governance and risk management of the force's affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions.

The Chief Constable has adopted a governance framework, which is consistent with the principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government and Police' 2016. The framework outlines seven principles (as set out below) of good governance and aligns to the wider public sector Nolan principles of good governance.

1. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law (integrity)
2. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
3. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
4. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
5. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
6. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
7. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

The seven areas have been used to form the basis of the following review of the effectiveness of the force's governance arrangements.

A copy of the governance framework can be accessed via the force website www.staffordshire.police.uk

INTRODUCTION

As the 2020/21 annual governance statement covers the period up until 31 March 2021, it is appropriate to acknowledge the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on policing nationally, regionally and locally. This has, during the course of the year, instigated an unprecedented policing response to the national crisis. In order to ensure appropriate governance arrangements have been in place, Staffordshire has in turn stood up a robust command governance structure, with an Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Gold Command Lead. Beneath this is a silver and bronze level framework headed by senior leaders across the organisation. Through this mechanism, the force has been able to review information

and make force wide decisions on a daily basis along with partners and regional colleagues adapting at pace to the changes in legislation in addition to delivering on its normal 'day to day' business. The structure has also co-ordinated the force's internal response to supporting officers and staff in order to enable services to be maintained whilst also considering welfare and risk issues. This has accelerated new and agile ways of working across the organisation supported by the roll out of new technology. National and local organisational learning has been used to ensure that the force has had a comprehensive recovery plan in place.

Running alongside the gold command structure the force has ensured that arrangements have been in place to deliver 'business as usual governance'. The force's strategic boards and directorate boards have remained in place, with revised interim arrangements during the early stages of the pandemic with a return to a full and comprehensive governance framework by the end of spring 2020. Scrutiny activity has continued with the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office (SCO) to ensure key accountability mechanisms remain.

The remainder of this statement will reflect and reference where appropriate the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and the measures undertaken by the force to ensure that good governance has been applied and maintained throughout.

REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

1. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

The force has 3 statutory officers, these being: the Chief Constable (CC), Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) and a Chief Finance Officer, Section 151 Officer (S151 of the Local Government Finance Act 1972).

- The Chief Constable is responsible for maintaining the Queen's Peace, and has direction and control over the force's officers and staff. The Chief Constable holds office under the Crown, but is appointed by the Staffordshire Commissioner (SC). The Chief Constable is accountable to the law for the exercise of police powers, and to the SC for the delivery of efficient and effective policing, management of resources and expenditure by the police force. At all times the Chief Constable, his officers and staff, remain operationally independent in the service of the communities that they serve.
- The Deputy Chief Constable is a statutory post to act on behalf of the Chief Constable in his absence, thus ensuring there is a senior executive officer available at all times to exercise the post of Chief Constable.

- The Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) is appointed under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 which requires every local authority to appoint a suitably qualified officer responsible for the proper administration of its affairs. The S151 Officer has statutory powers of intervention under S114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

There is strong leadership from the Chief Constable with the tone and culture of the force clearly set out and demonstrated by the Executive Officer Team. Staff are aware of the standards expected of them and the importance of the national Code of Ethics (introduced nationally across the service in July 2014). The Code of Ethics is built on the Nolan principles of public life.

The Modern Policing Strategy is a key part of the Policing Plan which sets out how the force will deliver a modern and transformed police service fit for a changing future, able to address existing and new issues and the threat and harm that impact from local, regional, national and international activity. The force is committed to building authenticity, responsibility, and trust (the ART of policing) within every part of the force and modernising the culture to deliver better performance and outcomes for local communities. This approach has supported the force in developing new ways of working throughout the pandemic.

Officers and staff are trained to make ethical operational decisions within the framework of Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement (THRIVE). The National Decision Making Model (NDM) was also introduced across the service in 2013 which assists in making dynamic ethical decisions around a given situation or as a situation progresses.

The force's Professional Standards Department (PSD) monitors compliance and consists of three areas:

1. Professional Standards which primarily deals with complaints from the public, misconduct and Death or Serious Injury Incidents (DSI's).
2. Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) which deals with corruption threats and prevention in line with the annual strategic assessment and identified priorities.
3. Force Vetting Unit which operates in line with the vetting code of practice.

The department reports directly to the Deputy Chief Constable and is co-located with Human Resources (HR) to provide a joined up approach to the management of our people. The department works across the force with all roles and ranks, actively engaging in order to highlight themes of concern, deliver interventions and reaffirm the values of the organisation aligned to the Modern Policing Strategy.

The force actively examines information and intelligence from a broad range of sources, analysing the data, developing and testing the intelligence and utilising best practice to ensure resources are directed effectively. The focus is to problem solve early in collaboration with partners and where necessary to identify staff who may be at risk of wrongdoing or vulnerable to corruption.

The Professional Standards area of business runs a successful triage process to ensure the very earliest assessment, appropriate management and potential outcome for all dissatisfaction.

The ACU team has successfully identified and brought proceedings against officers and staff during 2020/21 where their behaviour has fallen below the standards that are expected of them. Counter-fraud arrangements are also periodically independently reviewed by the Ethics, Transparency and Audit Panel (ETAP).

The force uses the National Crime Agency (NCA) threat assessment, supported by regular regional threat assessments to focus the forces resources around the three key identified areas; information management; abuse of powers or police authority; and inappropriate associations. The area linked to sexual misconduct is overseen by a cross force task group led by the DCC to ensure a holistic and sustained approach is achieved.

The PSD's monthly tasking process chaired by the DCC and attended by key stakeholders provides an opportunity to identify harm reduction strategies and to develop preventive or proactive methods to identify and investigate corrupt practice.

The force has a whistleblowing policy which is supported by a whistle blowing system (Bad Apple). The force has an effective, ongoing dialogue with the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) who also have a confidential hotline.

During 2020, the department undertook significant change following the introduction of the new national regulations. The changes will better align resources to the anticipated demand across the department. Robust processes and a good working relationship with the SCO (review body under the 2020 regulations) have been developed. The relationship has seen welcome challenge balanced with support and leadership in delivering the best service to the communities of Staffordshire.

The force experienced an initial increase in complaints around the perception of over and under policing of the government Covid-19 guidance. This balance in reporting has given some confidence that the force has been maintaining a proportionate response to the challenges faced. Specific themes have been fed back into the policing response to Covid-19 in order to minimise the reports of dissatisfaction.

2019/20 Action 1: As part of the force's change programme, the Professional Standards Department will be reviewed to allow further reinvestment into the prevention and intervention of counter corruption.

2020/21 Update: The ACU now have two additional Detective Constable providing investigatory resilience. This has increased the capability and capacity of the department for proactive development of intelligence against keys areas of the control strategy.

Status: COMPLETE

The force's approach to misconduct cases is one of transparency. Regular updates are provided across the force from the Chief Constable via "news from the executive" to demonstrate the nature and outcomes of upheld misconduct cases.

The force requires that all gifts and gratuities are recorded for transparency, even where declined. There is an online system for recording this activity. This is regularly reported to ETAP for transparency and scrutiny. Executive officers' expenses are available publicly and are also reviewed by ETAP. PSD undertakes regular dip samples of expenses and other systems. Any agreed secondary employment is recorded and a process for authorisation of new business interests is in place.

Support around legal matters is provided to the Chief Constable through the Head of Legal Services. The Head of Legal Service's role is delivered through a contract with West Midlands Police and is a joint legal services between the two forces. The Chief Constable has access to the Head of Legal Services as and when required and there have been no issues with regards to the level or quality of support in this area.

The force has direct links to the College of Policing and reviews all Authorised Professional Practice in the context of its own policies and procedures. All policies and procedures are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and are reviewed in the context of the Code of Ethics and signed off at Executive Officer level. There is a dedicated Policy Review and Development Team for the area of Public Protection which ensures that all local and national lessons learned and recommendations around serious case and safeguarding reviews for both adults and children are used to enhance service provision to those most vulnerable in our communities.

The annual programme of inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) was largely suspended from March to October 2020 due to the appreciable input required by forces during the early stages of the pandemic. Internal and external audit has continued with more remote ways of working, but has remained able to give assurance or raise issues to ensure that laws, regulations, policy and expenditure are complied with lawfully.

The last Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy (PEEL) force inspection (2019) did not highlight any areas of concern from HMICFRS and the force was judged as 'Good' in terms of legitimacy.

2. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

The Code of Ethics is embedded across the force and is a key strand in training and policy development. The Chief Constable makes clear expectations of standards of behaviour in line with the code. The Code requires all officers and staff to act with openness, fairness and respect. The standards within the code are accessible to staff via a dedicated intranet site. Through the force website the public can access the Code and assess the level of professionalism in how services are provided. In executing the Code, the Chief Constable

sets out clearly the message that staff and officers are here to keep communities safe and reassured and to protect those who are most vulnerable.

Staffordshire Police publishes a number of key documents in line with the force publication scheme, this includes Executive Officer expenses, responses to inspection activity, and minutes from strategic level meetings.

The introduction of Single Online Home in August 2019 and the forces digital 101 service enables the public to report crime and incidents online, seek advice and guidance on the force website and via social media channels, Facebook Messenger and Twitter, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This decrease in telephony 101 has moved to online services and digital channels which has delivered on the public's preference for more online interactions and greater digital services.

The force endeavours to respond to all Freedom of Information requests in the required time frame. This ensures that the public are able to access the information that the legislation entitles them to.

The force has continued to conduct specific consultation with victims of crime and anti-social behaviour against the back drop of the pandemic albeit at a reduced level compared to the previous year and with some changes to methodology. Safer Neighbourhood Panel activity was postponed, however this has allowed a review of progress and development in this area by the Commissioner's Office.

The force has a public confidence strategy which has a specific strand which covers community engagement and how the force undertakes this (see section 3 also). During the latter part of 2020/21 the force has committed to introduce a local public confidence survey.

The force has refreshed the community engagement plan which sets out in detail how the force engages with diverse communities. Face to face engagement has been challenging throughout 2020/21 due to the pandemic however there has been a significant increase in virtual engagement and the force is working with partners to ensure opportunities are maximised and the learning influences future engagement methodology.

The implementation of Niche RMS has delivered an opportunity to record community engagement and community priorities in a different way. The force intends to maximise benefits from the new technology to provide greater insight and understanding around what matters to communities.

2021/22 NEW Action: The force will enhance its engagement activity to develop greater insight and understanding around what matters to communities building this in to planning for the future.

The force continues to strengthen work with communities through active citizenship, for example through Speed Watch, Neighbourhood Watch, Staffordshire Smart Alert and Mutual Gain. The number of specials continues to increase and the aim is to further

develop the Police Support Volunteers scheme during 2021/22 to given further opportunities for members of the public to be involved in policing their local communities.

For the last HMICFRS PEEL inspection (2019), the grade of good from the previous inspection was carried forward for this area based as part of a risk based assessment approach.

3. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

The Policing Plan sets out clearly five priorities as set out below to ensure that the force focuses on what matters to the people of Staffordshire. This plan supports the Commissioner's broader Safer, Fairer United Communities strategy, which looks to bring public agencies, the voluntary sector, businesses and the community together to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and improve community safety. The Chief Constable is held to account by the Staffordshire Commissioner against the delivery of this plan.

Each of the five priorities has a specific strategy to make clear to the public and the officers and staff across the force, how desired outcomes will be achieved. Each strategy is owned at ACC or police staff equivalent level with specific thematic delivery leads. These are supported by a performance framework to monitor delivery and success.



Areas of operational focus are identified through a process of strategic risk assessment. Delivery and outcomes against these areas are overseen via a strategic tasking and monitoring process led at ACC level.

The force has a robust annual business planning cycle in place which is underpinned by an annually updated force management statement (FMS). This statement has been refreshed during 2020/21 and used to inform the investment and savings areas for 21/22 and beyond. The FMS utilises a futures thinking approach which the force is developing further for the year ahead.

Action 2: To ensure the FMS process influences the rhythm of the corporate planning cycle to enhance the forces capability to make timely and informed strategic decisions.

2020/21 Update: The force has remained committed to producing and FMS during 2020/21 and has built in early indications of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on original forecasting. More work is planned to develop the forces capability around 'futures thinking' as part of this process.

Status: Carry forward with a focus on futures thinking

The force continues to hold directorate leads to account for the delivery of services within their delegated budget. Finance Business Partners are aligned to directorates to give support and advice to management teams on the use of financial resource aligned to outcomes, as well as to provide a link back to the force corporate centre.

4. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, culture and values by which the force is directed and controlled and its activities, through which it accounts to, engages with and leads its communities. It enables the Chief Constable to monitor the achievements of the force strategic priorities and to consider whether those priorities have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money.

The force continues to pursue an ambitious change programme which is largely predicated on a significant change to police systems and core IT (Information Technology) platform. During 2020/21, as planned, IT was brought back 'in house' to support the force's future plans around significant investment in both IT staffing capacity as well as infrastructure and systems. This long term strategy will further build on the good work undertaken previously, to meet the needs of Staffordshire whilst enabling working better together as a sector on a regional and national basis. The in house transition (overseen via the Strategic Risk Management Board with a specific and time limited governance structure in place led by the Director of People and Resources) was delivered successfully as planned. IT governance is now docked back into the mainstream governance arrangements of the force.

Action 3: To bring back 'in house' the force's IT function to better align capability and capacity to support the delivery of the policing plan and national enabling programme.

2020/21 Update: The IT in house transition was successfully completed in July 2021 and is now driving the force's digital and technology transformation programme.

Status: Complete

The force has completed a significant amount of data legacy and quality review work and has moved to a new records management system. This system supports more effective management and analysis of information to inform decision making at all levels.

Facilities management continues to be delivered by Kier on behalf of the force. Additional collaborative partnerships are successfully in place with other blue light services and local authorities to deliver around areas such as safeguarding, regional organised crime, counter terrorism, and motorways policing.

The force has forged further partnerships with academic establishments to help understand and develop culture and is leading the national agenda around forensics in partnership with

Staffordshire University to develop upstream solutions to digital forensics which assist around safeguarding issues and increase capability and capacity.

The force's Service Improvement and Performance Board oversees how the force is delivering improvements. This board is serviced from a number of areas including the Evidenced Based Practice and Innovation Board, which includes academic partners.

The directorate structure for the force provides clear direction to deliver policing services to the community through engagement with partners and enhancing partnership relationships. To ensure the force is maximising the benefits from these arrangements a partnership register has been developed.

Action 4: To continue to develop the current partnership framework incorporating an enhanced partnership register to identify the resource input from the force balanced against the benefits realised.

2020/21 Update: Work has continued throughout 20/21 to enhance this capability led by the force's Corporate Planning Function along Partnership Leads. More work will be undertaken in this area to capitalise on the learning from partnership working during the response to the pandemic.

Status: Carry forward

The force has a system of internal control which is a significant part of the governance framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. Internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Staffordshire Police's policies, aims and objectives, including partnership and other joint working arrangements.

5. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Staffordshire Police has a Modern Policing strategy which supports the delivery of the policing plan.

The strategy has 8 interconnected themes which contribute to modernising the forces organisational culture and developing an integrated workforce that will align the right skills, powers and experience to meet the changing police demand.

Strong positive leadership and culture is encouraged and supported by building authenticity, responsibility, and trust within every part of the force (the ART of policing). This builds on the values outlined within the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Behaviour, and outlines the force approach to modernising policing and delivering the force's ambitions, enabling

Staffordshire to become more effective and deliver a better service to the public, by policing and leading differently.



We are Authentic

Authenticity is critical to creating an environment where we are open and transparent, have the confidence to innovate, and where we develop a strong and unified force.



We are Responsible

We must all shoulder the responsibility vested in us, and contribute to the development of a modern organisation where people are empowered and accountable for what they deliver.



We are Trusted

Trust Driven Policing is a vital part of our approach to working across the force, with a real focus on ensuring people have the autonomy to deliver results in a way that is collaborative and agile.

Staffordshire Police has a workforce planning approach which supports the force in identifying skills gaps and workforce changes. Workforce Planning and recruitment/promotion activity is underpinned by the forces turnover timeline and promotion predictions products which detail forecast officer numbers against the Target Operating Model alongside future demand activity as predicted by the Knowledge Hub and demand profiling.

Police Officers are being recruited through the new entry routes for new recruits which has significantly changed the employment model and has required extensive workforce planning and recruitment activity to ensure successful implementation.

2018/19 saw the first increase in warranted police officer numbers in Staffordshire since 2010, with numbers increasing through 2019/20 year as a result of increases funded from local taxation. 2019/20 saw the first 30 additional recruits arrive in Staffordshire as part of the Governments uplift programme to recruit 20,000 new officers over the next three years. 2020/21 has seen an additional growth from this programme of 60 in Staffordshire with an expectation that by the end of the programme Staffordshire will have an additional 300 Officers.

Workforce planning capability has enabled closer links between demand management/predictions to inform future skills and capacity requirements.

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly increased demand on those responsible for People and Organisational Development during 2020. The HR and Occupational Health teams have worked with the organisation during the Covid-19 crisis to maintain organisational resourcing levels, while supporting employees on an individual basis. The team has provided expert advice and guidance using a variety of communication channels and produced an extensive Covid-19 People Guidance document. This was updated regularly to keep employees and managers up to date with Covid-19 related matters. HR and Occupational Health have also supported managers in the completion of individual risk assessments, team and office recovery plans, as well as supporting and monitoring Covid-19 testing, local and national reporting and modelling.

The force has continued to hold regular Senior Leadership Team sessions to ensure a co-ordinated and focused approach to service delivery throughout the pandemic. As part of the a broader recovery plan, the force has harnessed national, regional and local learning to inform ways of working going forwards. Work has continued to ensure best practice and innovation are co-ordinated.

The force undertakes a daily scanning function which has been a crucial method of ensuring that the latest information relating to the pandemic is available to influence local decision making.

Executive Officers at Assistant Chief Constable level and above must successfully complete a national standard of Strategic Command. Business heads for HR, Finance and Legal services are all professionally trained and qualified.

Where appropriate, the force has standard operating procedures and information sharing agreements to enhance partnership working especially in order to identify vulnerability, this has been key to delivering safeguarding throughout periods of lockdown. The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub is a good example where together with other agencies, the force is jointly located and sharing information effectively to enhance capacity and capability. Partnerships with external providers such Kier have governance arrangements in place to ensure effective decision making and clarity of roles and responsibilities.

6. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

All key strategic decisions are made force strategy board level. During 202/21 the force largely continued with its full governance rhythm save for interim arrangements that were put in place between March and May 2020 while the force focused on its gold command structure requirements to co-ordinate activity as part of the national effort around the pandemic. The frequency of the Strategic Risk Management Board remained unaltered and performance information and trends were refocused to align with national and local data requirements whilst also maintaining a business as usual approach to reporting. In September small revisions were made to the governance and assurance framework to support further scrutiny around performance (see section 7 below also).

There is a weekly force Executive Meeting where socialisation of issues and direction setting takes place. By exception, this meeting can also review matters requiring expedited decision making outside of the governance cycle, where this is necessary relevant key post holder must be present such as the section 151 officer. Directorate level Boards are held monthly (some interim measures were put in place during the earlier part of the pandemic) which provide oversight and appropriate decision making at the appropriate threshold. Matters which exceed this threshold are escalated to the strategy level boards along with any matters by exception.

The force manages risk in a variety of ways to ensure that both operational and business risks are identified, controlled / mitigated and managed as appropriate and in accordance

with force policy. The following measures continue to be undertaken to ensure effectiveness in this area:

- Bi-monthly Strategic Risk Management Board chaired by the Chief Constable
- Individual risk registers for each directorate and department as well as specific registers for projects such as the records management system implementation
- Regular internal audit reports around risk management
- The Section 151 Officer ensuring the propriety and legality of financial transactions
- Financial regulations and contract standing orders supported by appropriately qualified finance and procurement staff
- Professionally qualified staff and business area leads in all key areas across the organisation
- HR procedures supporting terms and conditions of employment for staff supported by qualified HR specialists
- Reporting mechanisms and trained staff reviewing and taking action to address Health and Safety risks
- Risks from complaints and internal conduct issues investigated by the PSD or the ACU and appropriate action taken
- External audit arrangements

How the force identifies and manages risk is regularly monitored by the SCO along with external insurers and internal auditors upon their request for additional assurances. Additionally ETAP have an identified 'risk champion' to work closely with the force as required. The ETAP risk champion is invited periodically to observe the force's Strategic RIO Management Board.

Risk is a standing agenda item for the Strategic Governance Board (SGB) which is held monthly and has all force and SCO executive level officers and staff in attendance.

Along with the Performance Assurance Board, force performance and outcomes are scrutinised at a quarterly public performance meeting, chaired by the SC to hold the Chief Constable to account. There are a series of annual thematic inquiry sessions where the SCO also scrutinises the force's performance. These have continued throughout the year, although the frequency of these was affected in the very initial stages of the pandemic.

The force's monthly Service Improvement and Performance Board was introduced in September 2010, this replaced the bi-monthly Service Improvement and Organisational Learning Board and focuses in on holding to account force priority and thematic leads.

The force Knowledge Hub department provides the monitoring of operational performance and reports directly to Service Improvement and Performance Board.

There is a programme of force conducted internal reviews which cover a wide range of operational areas to ensure recommendations, especially from HMICFRS and Internal Audit are being progressed and service provision enhanced. The annual programme is formulated on a risk based assessment of where additional force scrutiny would provide best value.

Strategic level partnership meetings with Local Authorities, Health and other blue light services form part of the wider governance arrangements and set the direction for broader County and City wide issues, these have predominately focused on collectively addressing the issues and challenges of Covid-19.

The SC and CC work with other SCs and CCs on a regional basis (the West Midlands region – Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia and West Midlands). The SC for Staffordshire chairs the regional collaboration group and oversees with colleagues the performance of regional and national collaborations between police forces; these include the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU), the Central Motorway Police Group (CMPG), the National Police Air Service (NPAS) and the regional Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU). Regional work is a key aspect of the overall force delivery arrangement and is one that is growing given Government investment into regional activity and the expectation that local forces will transfer some activity, where appropriate, into a regional collaboration. Force leads on specific collaborations are required to bring performance and financial reports to each quarterly Regional Board meeting and the SC scrutinise and hold to account both those leads and Chief Constables for the activity and outcomes achieved.

The Deputy Chief Constable is the named officer responsible for data quality. The force seeks reassurance via its information assurance arrangements and Information Assurance and Assets Board that data is being used and shared appropriately and in line with data protection and information assurance requirements. In the event of any potential data breaches, the force has a record of early self-referral to the Information Commissioners Office for independent review and to ensure openness and transparency.

The force has implemented a new Records Management System (NICHE), which went live in June 2020. The system has addressed issues around double keying, data quality and a large resource intensive back office function.

The financial performance of the force and SCO is monitored through monthly budget out turn reports and refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Any variances or longer term gaps identified are reported to the Corporate Planning, Resourcing and Change Board (a hybrid of the previous Corporate Planning and Resources Board and Transformation Board). Financial control arrangements allow implications on budgets and value for money to be understood and corrective plans put in place where appropriate to either maximise or minimise the financial impact. There has been a clear focus to ensure that budget information is developed to inform at various levels of the organisation to support accountability in budget management and the demonstration of value for money decision making at that level. For 2020/21 internal auditors have again given an opinion of 'substantial assurance' around the key financial controls for the force.

The organisation's financial governance and management arrangements are all based on the CIPFA Financial Management Code of Practice for the Police Service of England and Wales as presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 39A(5) of the Police Act 1996 and Section 17(6) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. This identifies the roles and responsibilities of the Chief Constable and the Chief Constable's Chief Finance Officer separately from those of the Staffordshire Commissioner and the Commissioners Chief Finance Officer. The Code is based on a series of principles supported by specific

standards and statements of practice which are considered necessary to provide a strong foundation to:

- Financially manage the short, medium and long term finances of the force;
- Manage financial resilience to meet foreseen demands on services; and
- Financially manage unexpected shocks in their financial circumstances.

Whilst the Code is not statutory, for 2021/22, the force will work towards adopting the code and its principles in full to further enhance maximising the benefits of taxpayer's investment into policing the communities of Staffordshire.

The force will continue to further align itself with the Home Office Financial Code of Management and the relevant CIPFA codes of practice. The FMCP is issued under section 17 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, which permits the Secretary of State to issue codes of practice to all Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Chief Constables. As set out in section 17(4) of the 2011 Act, PCCs and Chief Constables must have regard to this code in carrying out their functions

In collaboration with the SCO the force reviews the Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation to ensure the organisation remains up to date with its strategic financial control environment. These are reviewed on an annual basis and approved via the Strategic Governance Board.

The force was given an overall judgement of 'Good' from the last HMICFRS inspection (2019) for 'how efficiently does the force operate and how sustainable are its services'. This looked at assessing future demand for services, understanding public expectations, prioritising, future workforce, finance plans, leadership and workforce development, and ambition to improve. This latest report acknowledges that the force has addressed an area identified for improvement in the previous inspection report around ensuring adequate plans are in place to provide services, whilst the force also makes necessary cost savings.

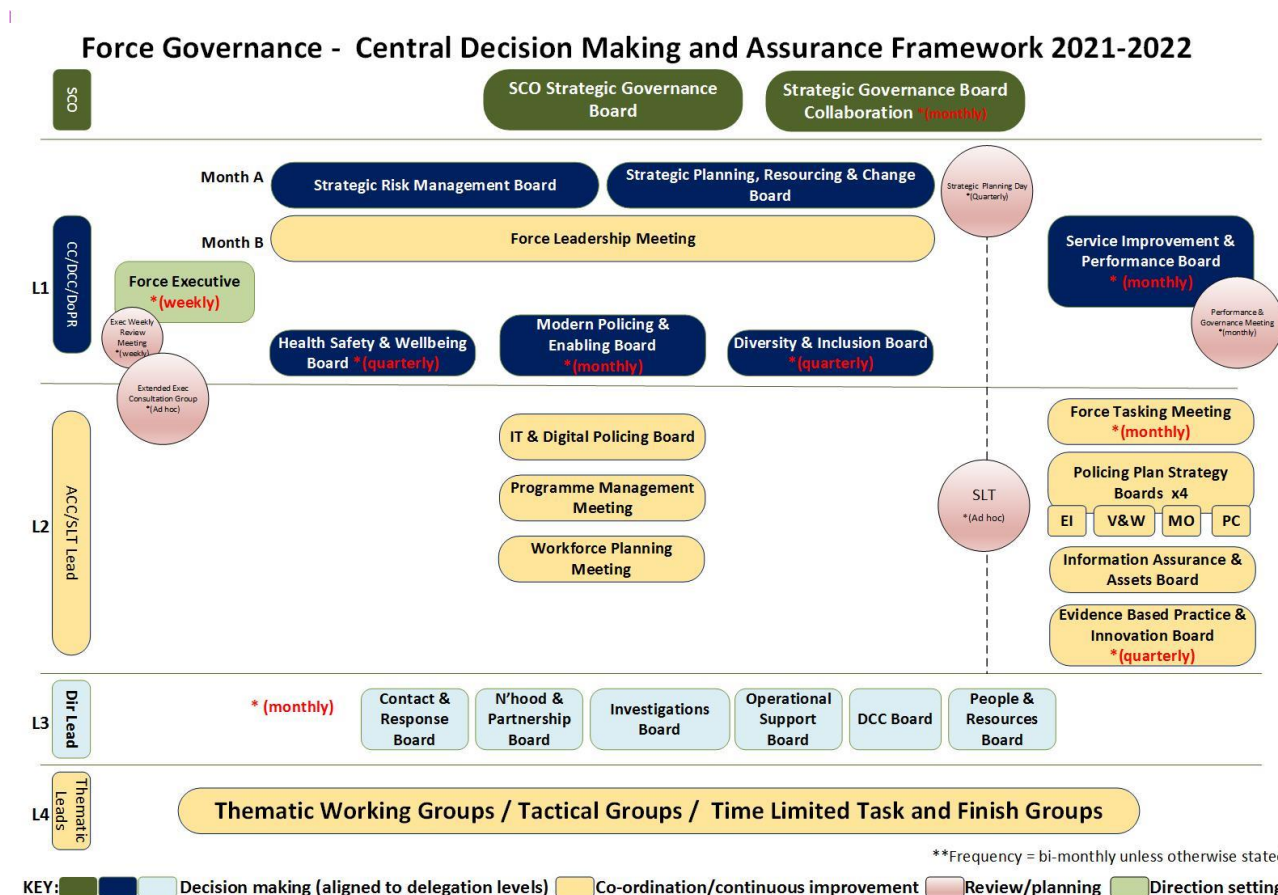
During 2020/21 the force Finance and Commercial Team, headed by the Chief Finance Officer, was nominated for and won a national Public Finance Award for 'Finance Team of the Year' underscoring the significant turnaround in performance since 2017/18, giving assurance that when benchmarked against other finance teams the finance team of Staffordshire Police is a high achieving team.

The force has a responsibility for the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework including the system of internal control. This process is ongoing and has resulted in a small number of changes being made during the course of 2020/21.

The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the senior management teams within the force and SCO who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment.

7. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

During 2020/21 a light touch review of decision making and assurance arrangements across the force has been undertaken, the current framework is shown below:



Some minor amendments were made largely to allow additional focus around performance and service improvement. This focus is likely to remain, however there may be an opportunity to revisit the framework to ensure that it remains closely aligned to the priorities of the new commissioner in 2021.

2021/22 NEW Action: Consideration will be given to any refresh of priorities from the Staffordshire Commissioner as part of the natural review process for the force's governance arrangements.

The Chief Constable is held to account by the SC formally via a number of scrutiny meetings including confidential inquiry sessions, public quarterly performance meetings, and the performance assurance board. The Chief Finance Officer also meets regularly with the Director of Finance for the SCO.

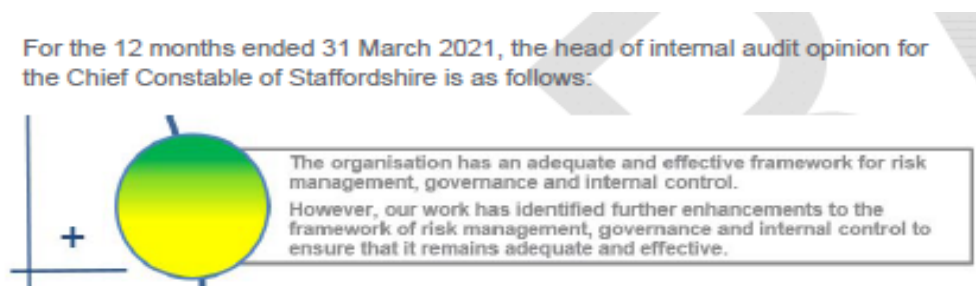
The force has a robust action planning system that tracks the implementation of external recommendations including internal audit and HMICFRS. This online tool is accessible to all managers across the force and is administered by the Governance Team.

The force has an embedded process for environmental scanning to ensure Chief Officers are kept informed of a broad range of national issues that may affect policing. The Chief Constable attends the quarterly National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) meeting to ensure a co-ordinated approach to policing beyond the force and the region. Any national changes or consultations from the NPCC are monitored and actioned via the daily scanning process over seen as part of a weekly Force Executive Meeting.

ETAP regularly review progress made against external recommendations and this forms part of the Chief Constable's Governance report tabled bi annually.

The role of internal audit is provided to the force via a contracted arrangement with a provider for 2020/21 this has remained as RSM (UK Group LLP). The Head of Internal Audit ensures that there is a strategy and plan developed on the basis of risk with appropriate levels of involvement from the force and the SCO. For 2020/21 all of the audit opinions have been reasonable or substantial. 'Good progress' has been noted against the management tracking exercise undertaken at the end of the year.

The Annual Internal Audit Report concludes that overall for the 12 months ended 31 March 2021, the head of internal audit opinion for the Chief Constable for Staffordshire is as follows:



ETAP undertakes the statutory functions of an Audit Committee and operates in accordance with the Financial Management Code of Practice for the Police Service and CIPFA's Practical Guidelines for Local Authorities. A Sub-Group of ETAP (Finance Panel) provides a particular focus on financial issues. The panel has a different chairperson than for ETAP, providing for a dual focus at different meetings.

ETAP continues to advise the SC and the CC according to good governance principles, including the monitoring of the Strategic Risk Framework, recommending for approval the AGS and the Statement of Accounts as well as putting decisions made by the SC and the force under the spotlight.

Staffordshire Police's external auditors for 2020/21, (Ernst and Young LLP), provide regular reports at ETAP. At these meetings panel members are given the opportunity to consider audit findings, challenge and ask for further clarification, and also make recommendations.

The external auditor management letter for year ended 31 March 2020 was subject to a change in reporting timescale to 30 November 2020. The auditors did not raise any matters

of concern within their results and conclusions and highlighted that proper arrangements are in place to secure value for money. During 2020/2021 external audit update has remained as a standing agenda item for each ETAP meeting.

From March to August 2020 HMICFRS stood down their inspection activity due to the operational requirements and context of the Covid-19 pandemic. No additional judgments were made against the force for 2020/21. Any recommendations resulting from external reporting are recorded onto The force's action planning system and are monitored via internal scrutiny mechanisms and assurance provided to ETAP and other independent reviewers where appropriate.

Peer inspections and the sharing and review of best practice within and across other forces is also undertaken where appropriate. During this period the force has been able to undertake remote reviews around custody and neighbourhood policing arrangements.

The force's has its own audit capability through the Corporate Planning element of the DCC Directorate. The annual programme is formulated on a risk based assessment of where additional force scrutiny would provide best value. Methodologies are also shared with key business areas to support the development of local self-audit. This programme and the resulting evaluations are overseen at the Deputy Chief Constable and feed into other governance arrangements as appropriate. This function was temporality suspended due to operational demand in quarter 1, however this was fully stood back up thereafter.

OVERALL LEVEL OF ASSURANCE

The Chief Constable can provide a substantial level of assurance that appropriate stewardship is being applied to the use of resources by Staffordshire Police in order to serve the public interest and to adhere to legislation and policy, and ethical values and respect of the law.

This opinion is given based upon the proactive work that has been undertaken by the force during 2020/21 despite the challenges presented as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

ACTIONS

Update against 2019/20 actions

Issue 1:

Action 1:

Update:

Status:

Issue 2:

Action 2:

Update:

Status:

Issue 3:

Action 3:

Update:

Status:

Issue 4:

Action 4:

Update:

Status:

Actions arising from 2020/21 review

Issue 1:

Action 1:

Issue 2:

Action 2:

Issue 3:

Action 3:

Issue 4:

Action 4:

CONCLUSION

The detail given within this statement represents a clear approach to ensuring that appropriate governance arrangements have remained in place for Staffordshire Police during

a year of unprecedented pressure on the delivery of services together with partners in order to keep the communities of Staffordshire safe. The force has undertaken and continues to progress a challenging programme of transformational change, the delivery of which requires robust governance. The force's decision making and assurance arrangements ensure robust monitoring and review of external recommendations, ongoing continuous improvement and change. The force values the independent views of others, and where a need to improve is identified, acts quickly to address these.

Signed:

Gareth Morgan
Chief Constable

Emma Barnett
Deputy Chief Constable

John Bloomer
Chief Constable's
Chief Finance Officer