

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP

MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
JOINT AUDIT & SCRUTINY PANEL
HELD ON THURSDAY 9 JUNE 2015
AT GEDLING BOROUGH COUNCIL,
NOTTINGHAM
COMMENCING AT 2.00 PM

MEMBERSHIP

(A - denotes absent)

Mr Stephen Charnock (Chair)
A Mr Leslie Ayoola
Mr John Brooks
Dr Phil Hodgson
Mr Peter McKay

OFFICERS PRESENT

Paddy Tipping	Police and Crime Commissioner
Phil Gilbert	Head of Strategy and Assurance, OPCC
Charlotte Radford	Chief Finance Officer, OPCC
Chris Eyre	Chief Constable, Notts. Police
Paul White	Strategic Support Officer
Mike Clarkson	Mazaars
Simon Lacey	KPMG (External Audit)
Andrea Naylor	T/Head of Finance
Paul Murphy	PSO
Alison Fawley	Democratic Services, Notts. County Council

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Stephen Charnock was elected as Chairman of the Panel for 2015/16.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Leslie Ayoola

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

The Chair reminded Panel members of their duty to ensure their declarations of interests were up to date.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 12 February 2015, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed and were signed by the Chair.

5. INTRODUCTION OF NEW INTERNAL AUDITORS

Mike Clarkson from Mazars was introduced to the Panel. Mr Clarkson gave apologies for his colleague Brian Welch and gave a brief description of the work they have done in the public sector.

6. IPCC INVESTIGATIONS

Paul Murphy introduced the report which informed the Panel regarding complaint and conduct matters referred by Nottinghamshire Police to the IPCC between 1 October 2014 – 31 March 2015 and the relevant recommendations and actions.

During discussions the following points were made:

- IPCC had not been critical for timeliness but it was acknowledged that improvements could be made.
- A visit had been made to Leicestershire Force to examine their triage approach. A similar system had been implemented from May and this had created capacity to focus on more serious issues.
- The Panel noted a 7% reduction in cases referred to the IPCC compared to the previous period and asked for the trend to be shown over the previous two years. It was also noted that criteria had changed and would be likely to change in the future.
- Themes emerging from investigations were recognised as areas of opportunity for organisational learning.

RESOLVED 2015/013

That the Panel had received assurance of the processes in place relating to IPCC investigations as detailed in the report.

7. FORCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY LESSONS LEARNED

Paul Murphy introduced the report which informed the Panel in respect of force improvement activity, lessons learned monitoring and the implementation of learning from the IPCC Lessons Learned bulletins during the period October 2014 to March 2015.

During discussions the following points were made:

- The strategic aim was to ensure best practice across the organisation by sharing knowledge and learning with relevant business areas.
- Lessons Learned Bulletins were shared with departmental leads and used to form action plans including scenario based training.
- It was important to ensure that people picked up the correct messages from the Bulletins.
- ACC Torr was developing a consistent approach between the Force and East Midlands Ambulance Service and other groups particularly around vulnerable groups.
- An HMI inspection focussing on vulnerability was expected within a few weeks.
- The five forces in the East Midlands had procured body video equipment and the roll out in Nottinghamshire would start in the autumn.

RESOLVED 2015/014

That the report be noted.

8. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING PROCEDURE (WHISTLE BLOWING)

Paul Murphy introduced the report which informed the Panel regarding Whistle blowing and outlined how the Force in general and the Professional Standards Directorate managed and dealt with members of the organisation who made reports concerning breaches of Professional Standards and in particular how they could be provided with support and confidentiality when appropriate and necessary.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- It was noted that during the period 1 October 2014 - 31 March 2014 the number of referrals made to the Counter Corruption Unit was 33 compared to 40 referrals in the previous six months.
- The 'supporters' process had been reinvigorated as an HMIC report in November 2014 had identified that the process was not widely known. Measures taken included development of a more comprehensive training

package and a review of communications and promotion of the supporters programme.

- Integrity Messenger allowed officers and staff to report unethical behaviour in a confidential and anonymous manner which enabled rapport and confidence to be built with the referee.

RESOLVED 2015/015

That the Panel had received assurance from the processes in place relating to confidential reporting as detailed within the report.

9. ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY – REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE

The Chief Constable introduced the report which informed the Panel of the level of compliance against the East Midlands Strategic Commercial Unit (EMSCU) Fraud and Corruption policy for the period December 2014 – July 2015.

RESOLVED 2015/016

- 1) The Panel noted that EMSCU's Commercial Director had received no reports of any fraudulent activity following any audit of procurement activity undertaken by the Force.
- 2) The Panel noted that EMSCU's Head of Supplier Services (to which the Policy directs any individual wishing to report any suspicion of fraudulent activity) had advised that there had been no reports of any fraudulent activity in relation to procurement activity undertaken within Nottinghamshire Police.
- 3) The Panel noted that EMSCU's Head of Supplier Services had written to suppliers to reiterate the Force position in relation to gifts, gratuities and hospitality and that the relevant Force procedure stated that police officers and staff should not accept the offer of any gift, gratuity, favour or hospitality as to do so may compromise their impartiality or give rise to a perception of such compromise.
- 4) The Panel noted that EMSCU's commercial awareness training programme which was launched in December 2013 was being delivered on an ongoing basis and included content on the prevention of fraud and corruption in the procurement process.
- 5) The Panel noted that EMSCU had included reference and guidance to conflict of interests and gifts and hospitality on procurement documents in relation to suppliers notifying us if they have any relationship with any member of the Forces and that links to the Code of Ethics had been included.

10. DRAFT GROUP ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENTS 2014-15

Charlie Radford introduced the briefing which gave Panel members the opportunity to identify items for inclusion in the annual governance statement from assurances they had received during the year and which had not been included in the draft statement.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- Presentation inconsistencies between the two reports would be resolved in line with statutory guidance.
- Both statements identified significant governance issues that had been identified by internal and external audit and were being addressed as a priority. The Panel would receive updates on progress during 2015-16

RESOLVED 2015/017

That the draft Annual Governance Statements for 2014-15 be approved.

11. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL ASSURANCE REPORT 2014-15

Charlie Radford introduced the report on behalf of Angela Ward who had sent apologies.

The report was the final one from internal auditors Baker Tilly and provided an adequate assurance rating for the OPCC and the Force.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- Areas of weakness concerning partnerships had been identified which would be followed up during 2015-16.
- Governance arrangements were not as clear as they could be and addressing this was considered a healthy challenge although it would be important to get the balance right between strong governance/control and forging strong partnerships.

RESOLVED 2015/018

That the report be noted.

12. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN 2015-16

Charlie Radford introduced the report which informed Panel members of the proposed plan of work for 2015-16. Members were also provided with a new audit charter following the change in internal audit providers.

RESOLVED 2015/019

- 1) That the audit plan for 2015-16 be approved.

2) That the Audit Charter be approved.

13. UPDATE ON THE CLOSE OF ACCOUNTS 2014-15

Charlie Radford briefed Panel Members on the progress of closing the accounts. The draft accounts had been produced during a period of significant change within the finance department and although the changes did not impact on the statement for 2014-15, there would be significant changes to future years statements.

Each year the draft statement of accounts was provided to the Audit & Scrutiny Panel members for comment prior to the final version being provided to Panel in September. This year the panel meeting was earlier than usual in June and it was requested that a member be nominated to discuss the draft statements with the Chief Finance Officer prior to sign off.

RESOLVED 2015/020

That Stephen Charnock and Peter McKay would meet with the Chief Finance Officer and acting Head of Finance to go through the draft statement of accounts prior to the draft accounts being signed off.

14. EXTERNAL AUDIT – PROGRESS REPORT AND FEES 2015-16

Simon Lacey introduced the report which informed Panel members of the progress made in relation to the external audit work plan and the proposed fees for 2015-16.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- Responsibility for determining fees had moved to Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA), an independent company established by the Local Government Association.
- The context for the larger fee for PCC reflected the group accounts.

RESOLVED 2015/021

1) That the report be noted.

2) That the fees as detailed within the letters attached at appendix A of the report be approved.

15. RESERVES AND PROVISIONS OUT-TURN REPORT 2014-15

Charlie Radford introduced the report which informed Panel members on the level of reserves and provisions balances held at the end of the financial year 2014-15.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- Provisions were held for risks known to be accruing and where the financial impact can be reasonably calculated.
- Reserves were held for potential risks and for items which may become provisions but where the full cost cannot be accurately calculated. The most significant risk held in relation to this is in respect of the A19 judgement.
- Reserves and provisions held were considered healthy but not excessive.

RESOLVED 2015/022

That the report be noted.

16. AUDIT AND INSPECTION REPORT

Paul White introduced the report which provided the Panel with an update on the progress against recommendations arising from audits and inspections that had taken place within the Force.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- There were two actions off target which continued to be progressed but required revised target completion dates from the action owner.
- There were two items at risk of being off target and although work was progressing it was likely that they would require new target completion during the next reporting period.
- There were four items reported as proposed for closure and will be progressed through the Force's established action management process.
- It was agreed to look at the format of the appendices to make them easier to read.

RESOLVED 2015/023

1) That the progress made against audit and inspection recommendations be noted.

2) That the forthcoming audits and inspections be noted.

17. SURVEY OF POLICE AUDIT COMMITTEE CHAIRS (VERBAL REPORT)

The Chair informed the panel that he had completed an online questionnaire and the summary report would be brought to a future meeting.

RESOLVED 2015/024

That the verbal update be noted.

18. WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE

RESOLVED 2015/025

The work programme would be revised to reflect new reporting deadlines.

The meeting closed at 4.15pm

CHAIR