



**Durham Police & Crime
Commissioner/ Chief Constable**



Joint Audit Committee

Tuesday 1st November 2016

10.30 a.m.

Darlington Fire Station

Attendees

Mrs Elsie Davies - Chair

Members

Cllr E Bell, Mrs J Flynn, Mr R Humphries, Cllr D Regan

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Mr A Reiss, Mr C Oakley and Mrs J Connor

Durham Constabulary

Mr G Ridley, Mr S Winship

Auditors

Mr M Kirkham

Internal Auditors

Mr S Carter

Apologies: Mrs M Raine

Also in Attendance: Mr G Strange, Mr M Walkup

Mrs Davies asked the Committee if they had any Declaration of Interest.

Mr Ridley and Mr Oakley agreed to leave the meeting when the Review of Joint Chief Finance Officer was discussed.

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 20th September 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th September were agreed as a correct record.

2. Safe in Tees Valley Presentation

Mr Strange from Victims Care and Advice Service (VCAS) presented to the Executive Board information about the service they provided at VCAS.

Members wanted to know how sustainable the service was and were concerned that the service would be more accessible in Cleveland than Durham. Mr Strange provided assurance that this was not the case and an equal amount of referrals for the service were from both areas.

Members would like to see VCAS again and would like an annual progress report of this service.

3. Joint Chief Finance Officer Role

Mr Reiss update the committee on the Joint Chief Finance Officer (JCFO) role. He asked the Joint Audit Committee to note that it is possible that future legislation could remove the opportunity to have a Joint Chief Finance Officer. If this happens, the Chief of Staff and Chief Constable will need to consider how to proceed, in consultation with the existing JCFO.

The Committee agreed that with the protocol and current personnel in place they felt comfortable with this arrangement. They agreed that the Joint Chief Finance Officer Role should continue to be reviewed annually.

4. External Audit Progress Report

Mr Kirkham updated the Committee on the external audit progress report.

Members were reassured with the report and agreed there were no problems with internal controls.

Mrs Davies thanks Mr Kirkham and his team for their efforts in producing this report.

5. Annual Overview of Collaboration

Mr Ridley made the Committee aware that the Constabulary has a number of collaborative initiatives which have been in place a number of years. The most recent initiatives include a joint dogs unit, joint head of legal services who will sit above the current legal function and also further sharing of estates with other partners including the Fire Service.

Another area of collaboration is ICT, as work continues to grow with Cumbria Police in respect of Red Sigma, more interest is also being shown by other Police Forces in relation to its potential.

Mr Ridley highlighted to the committee that Cyber Crime work is ongoing with two other Police Forces to jointly develop additional Cyber Crime capability. This is subject to external funding support.

Mr Ridley also informed the Committee that early discussions are underway with a neighbouring Police Force in relation to sharing training resources to enable a consistent level of service delivery and sharing of ideas and knowledge.

Committee members raised concerns over the dog unit. Mr Ridley agreed there is a possible risk however to date the move had been a success.

Committee members have asked that this be monitored to ensure good value for money.

Mr Ridley agreed to this and informed the Committee the detail is on the force threat and risk register.

6. Budget Monitoring Report

Mr Ridley presented to the Committee the Budget Monitoring Report to 30th September 2016.

He highlighted that austerity brings with it risks such as rising service demand. Rising demand can mean rising or unexpected costs which requires a prudent financial planning process so as to offer a degree of flexibility should cost pressures emerge during the year.

Mr Ridley touched on the funding formulae which may impose additional budget pressure.

He also informed the Committee of the reserves and given the on-going imposition of grant cuts, council tax capping and nationally imposed cost increases the need to maintain reserve balances within the current year and over the short term is important.

The Committee agreed the report.

Any other business

- **Funding Formulae**
- **HMIC Efficiency Inspection**
- **New Deputy Chief Constable**

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 13th December

Time: 11.00

Place: Consett Police Station, DH8 5DL

Alan Reiss
Chief of Staff

G Ridley
Chief Finance Officer