PFCC
POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX

DRAFT MINUTES – PART A

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JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE

18 December 2020, 10.00am to 12.30pm, via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Jonathan Swan (JS)	Chair
Julie Parker (JP)	Independent committee member
Simon Faraway (SF)	Independent committee member
Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer, PFCC's office
Janet Perry (JPe)	Strategic Head of Performance & Resources, PFCC's office
Elizabeth Helm (EH)	Interim Head of Finance and S151 Officer, PFCC's office
Ben-Julian Harrington (BJH)	Chief Constable, Essex Police
Tom Simons (TS)	Ch Supt Strategic Change, Essex Police
Debbie Martin (DM)	Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police
Jules Donald (JD)	Chief Information Officer, Head of IT Essex Police
Dan Harris (DH)	Internal Auditor, RSM
Anna O'Keeffe (AOK)	Internal Auditor, RSM
Carla Bailey	Minutes, PFCC's office

Apologies:

Mark Gilmartin (MG)	Director of Shared Services (Essex and Kent Police)
Dr Vicki Harrington (VH)	Director of Strategic Change, Essex Police
Paul Grady (PG)	External Auditor, Grant Thornton
Parris Williams (PW)	External Auditor, Grant Thornton

1   Introduction and Apologies

1.1   JS welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions took place.

1.2   Apologies were accepted from MG, VH, PG and PW. It was clarified that PG and PW were unable to attend the committee due to mandatory leave being taken at Grant Thornton.

2   Declarations of Interest

2.1   There were no declarations of interest to note.

3   Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

3.1   In response to a question raised, RH confirmed that the Joint Audit Findings Report would be shared with the committee members.

3.2   RH provided an update on recruitment. An offer has gone to a full-time S151 Officer who was going through the vetting process. Once a start date was agreed arrangements will be made for the candidate to meet with JS, JP and SF.

3.3   The closing date for recruitment for independent audit committee members was on 20 December 2020. This will be reviewed and potentially extended. It was confirmed that the interview panel would comprise of RH, BJH, JS and the Chief Fire Officer (CFO).

3.4   20200925 – Part A Minutes

3.4.1   DM – wording on page 6 for Action 15/20 would have revised wording as follows:

         "*JPe to join the monthly finance monitoring meeting and include cash flow reporting as part of the meeting.*"

3.4.2   JPe confirmed the action was on page 7 and she was intending to suggest the change of wording herself and therefore agreed with the change.

3.3   20200935 – Part B Minutes

3.3.1   JS remarked that that wording in relation to the new Brexit risk should be more specific, but this will be addressed further down the agenda.

3.3.2   The Part A and Part B minutes, subject to the above amendments, were approved.

4   Action Log

         06/20   Part B Minutes
                  BJH provided the revised wording on cyber crime. Close.

         07/20   Delivery of the Local Business Case
                  Agreed that this is forward planned for June 2021. Also to be added to the work to be reported on an annual basis. Remain open.

         08/20   GDPR (PFCC's office)
                  Agreed that this is forward planned for being annually in December. Close.

         09/20   Joint Audit Committee Work Plan
                  New Technologies was on the agenda for 18 December 2020. Close.

         10/20   PFCC Risk Register
                  The operational risk relating to COVID-19 was added. Close.

         11/20   PFCC Risk Register
                  The new risk relating to Brexit was being developed. Remain open.

         12/20   Internal Audit – Regional Distribution for PPE

All five recommendations now completed. Close.

13/20   Internal Audit – EP Highlight Report
Reflected in the December highlight report. Close.

5   Joint Audit Committee Work Plan

5.1   The Committee suggested that due to a large quantity of reports going to the March 2021 meeting it would be sensible to defer the first background briefing to June 2021.

5.2   It was agreed that Estates would be the first background briefing topic, with recruitment/deployment/retention being added to the forward plan for 2021.

Action: 16/20
EP to prepare background briefings on Estates in June 2021. Further agreed that Police Recruitment/Deployment/Retention would be added to the forward plan for background briefings.

6   Risk Register

6.1   PFCC Risk Register

Dealt with under Part B

6.2   Essex Police Risk Register

Dealt with under Part B

7   Internal Audit Report (RSM) and Highlight Report (EP)

7.1   DH confirmed that there were still a number of reports to come which will be on the agenda for the March 2021 meeting. DH further confirmed that the IR35 was going to be a joint report with Kent Police.

7.2   DH added that further work was to take place around movers and leavers, which will take place in Q4.

7.3   AOK presented the audits that had been finalised as follows:

7.3.1   End User Computing (EUC) Device Allocation and Refresh Programme Review (Joint)

7.3.1.1 AOK outlined that there was a high priority action around leavers and movers. For Essex Police, out of 20 leavers/movers there was no record of kit being returned.

7.3.1.2 In response to a question raised, AOK confirmed that it was not necessarily the case of the kit not being returned, it was more likely that there was no record of it happening, therefore it was the expectation that this was an issue with form filling and process.

7.3.2 Risk Management

7.3.2.1 JS raised a query around the difference appearance of the risk registers and whether the versions provided show the full picture. In response, BJH confirmed that the committee is being presented with the full versions.

7.3.2.2 AOK confirmed that the auditors did not evidence any difference in the versions of risk registers other than some of the fields having different titles. AOK further added that the risk management system did not have the functionality to record assurances but Essex Police were going to speak to Kent Police as they have had the same issue.

7.3.2.3 AOK outlined that the area highlighted for the PFCC was whether the Senior Management Team (SMT) had reviewed the amber and red risks.

7.3.2.4 AOK confirmed that good progress was being made on the 18 actions being looked at.

7.3.3 Firearms and Tasers – Storage and Destruction

7.3.3.1 AOK confirmed that when this was looked at it came out as a reasonable assurance and the medium priority action was around items being listed as disposed.

7.3.4 Performance Management and Analytical Resources

7.3.4.1 AOK confirmed that there were just two lower priority actions for this.

7.3.5 Grants

7.3.5.1 AOK outlined that this related to the PFCC, there was partial assurance with two high priority actions. This focused around there not being any evidence that the grant money was spent on what it should have been spent on.

7.3.5.2 JS added that this was an internal issue related to the organisations requesting the grant money and was not an internal issue with the PFCC's office.

7.3.5.3 In response to a question raised, RH confirmed that this was not an issue exclusive to the PFCC, however more rigorous documenting of the communication between the PFCC and grant organisation,needed to be in place.

7.3.6 7 Force Procurement

7.3.6.1 AOK confirmed that this was a joint audit across the seven forces and thanks went to Dave Levy for his hard working in co-ordinating the audit. There were four medium priority actions and nine low priority actions. These focused around lack of evidence being provided as where information is held locally the auditors did not always receive everything requested.

7.3.6.2 AOK added that there was no Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place however that was currently being developed.

7.3.6.3 In response to a question raised, AOK confirmed that the SLAs for individual forces would need to have the same standards as the centrally governed 7 Force Procurement SLA.

7.3.6.4   A discussion ensued in respect of the single tender action mentioned on page 72 regarding the competitive tender process. JPe confirmed that financial regulations have been produced which included single tender actions. EH added that she had asked to be kept informed of single tender actions where Essex Police was involved.

7.4   Highlight report (EP)

7.4.1   DM outlined that the report focuses on how Essex Police was managing the recommendations made. The nine recommendations past the due date were from previous years

7.4.2   Section 3 of the report detailed the following reports and recommendations outside of due dates:

Financial Year 2018/19:   IT Disaster Recovery and Critical Systems

Financial Year 2019/20:   Body Worn Video (Joint)
                            Business Services Finance Review (Joint)
                            IT Deliverability (Joint)
                            Creditor Payments (Essex)
                            Delivery of the Local Business Case (Essex)

7.4.3   JS remarked that good progress was being made and it was pleasing to see that the oldest recommendation only dated back to August 2019.

8   Single Tender Actions

8.1   JS confirmed that there were none to report.

9   Background Briefing – New Technologies

9.1   TS presented a briefing to the committee on new and emerging technologies. This included an overview of the Force's communications software and hardware with a summary of some of the key projects underway.

9.2   The projects noted were:

Analytics for Everyone
ATHENA – Innovations
Body Worn Video (BWV)
Digital Asset Management System (DAMS)
Digital Forensics Unit (DFU) – Platform
Digital Interview Recording (DIR)
Essex Centre for Data Analytics (ECDA)
Microsoft Office 365 (O365)
Mobile First
Single On-Line Home (SOH) Website
Vetting

9.3   A lengthy discussion took place in respect of Analytics for Everyone and how this worked. TS explained that this was a single search engine style format, so that Police Officers and Staff were able to research in one area rather than separately on each police system. TS further explained that it had the ability to pull through data from all current systems into one place.

9.4   BJH commented that Analytics for Everyone would be a massive benefit to the Force and will enable front line officers access to information in an easier format, as well as assisting in duties planning.

9.5   JD reported that another system that had gone live recently was Agile Solutions, which was an app that enable officers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) in respect of COVID-19 breaches and enforcement matters. This was rolled out within four weeks, whereas in the past this may have taken up to six months.

9.6   JS commented that when it is possible it would be useful for the committee to see live demonstrations of the systems.

10   Any Other Business

10.1   JP commented that she was unable to make the meeting on 24 September 2021. It was agreed that the date would be looked at with a view to re-arranging.

        Action: 17/20
        Date for the September 2021 Joint Audit Committee to be re-arranged.

10.2   There being no further items of business the meeting closed at 12.35pm.