

## PFCC Decision Report

**Report reference number:** 145-21

**Classification** (e.g. Not protectively marked/restricted): Not protectively marked

**Title of report:** Delayed Notice regarding the publication of the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Group and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

**Area of county / stakeholders affected:** Countywide

**Report by:** Julia Berry (Head of Finance)

**Date of report:** 30 September 2021

**Enquiries to:** Julia Berry (Head of Finance)

### 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek the PFCC's approval to publish a Delayed Notice regarding the publication of the Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2021 for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Group and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (hereafter referred to as the Statement of Accounts).
- 1.2. The Statement of Accounts is required to be published each year by 30 September, in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The PFCC should not publish the accounts on 30 September 2021, and should approve the publication of the Delayed Notice attached at Appendix 1 regarding the publication of the Statement of Accounts.
- 2.2. The Chair of the Joint Audit Committee should be advised and briefed about this recommendation.

### **3. Benefits of the proposal**

- 3.1 The proposal will mean that the PFCC will not be approving the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021, which has two outstanding assurance issues still under consideration by the External Auditors, one of which is potentially material.

### **4. Background and proposal**

- 4.1. The Statement of Accounts was reviewed and recommended by the Joint Audit Committee on 24 September 2021 and by the PFCC / Essex Police Strategic Board on 27 September 2021. At that time, the only issue that was impacting on the completion of the audit was the delay in receiving the letter of assurance from the audit of the Essex Pension Fund. Therefore, it was recommended that the Statement of Accounts be approved with a "subject to" statement detailed in decision report 144-21.

- 4.2. Since this time, two further issues have arisen. One relates to the Police Officer Pension Valuation and the other relates to provisions. The matter relating to provisions can be treated as an unadjusted error and therefore does not require any change to the accounts. However, the Police Officer Pension Valuation still requires assurance by the external auditors.

- 4.3. With the potential impact being unknown, the S151 Officer of the PFCC is now recommending that the PFCC does not approve or publish the accounts at this stage.

- 4.4. As it is recommended that the Statement of Accounts is not approved at this stage, we are required to publish a notice stating that it has not been possible to publish the Statement of Accounts and the reasons for this.

### **5. Alternative options considered and rejected**

- 5.1. We have considered publishing the Statement of Accounts on 30 September 2021. This option has been rejected due to the uncertainty over the final audit findings.

### **6. Police and Crime Plan**

- 6.1. Once published, the Statement of Accounts will show the income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2021, which includes financial resources used to support the required performance to meet the priorities and strategies within the Police and Crime

### **7. Police operational implications**

- 7.1. There are no direct operational implications arising from this decision report.

### **8. Financial implications**

- 8.1. As set out in the Statement of Accounts.

## **9. Legal implications**

- 9.1. The Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. To meet statutory reporting requirements for the Accounts, they are required to be published by 30 September 2021
- 9.2. As we are recommending that the Statement of Accounts is not approved at this stage, we are required to publish a notice stating that it has not been possible to publish the Statement of Accounts and the reasons for this.

## **10. Staffing implications**

- 10.1. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this decision

## **11. Equality and Diversity implications**

- 11.1 The delay in publishing the Statement of Accounts is not expected to have any inequitable impact on individuals with protected characteristics.

## **12. Risks**

- 12.1. There is a reputational risk of this decision, as the Joint Audit Committee and the PFCC / Essex Police Strategic Board recommended the approval of the accounts subject to one outstanding issue. There are now two outstanding and separate issues. The second issue will need to be explained to the Joint Audit Committee as it is the reason we are no longer approving and publishing the Statement of Accounts at this stage. Members of the PFCC / Essex Police Strategic Board were appraised at an urgent, extraordinary meeting on 30 September 2021.

## **13. Governance Boards**

- 13.1. The Statement of Accounts and Audit Findings report were reviewed and recommended by the Joint Audit Committee on 24 September 2021 and by the PFCC / Essex Police Strategic Board on 27 September 2021.
- 13.2. The Delayed Notice was considered by an urgent, extraordinary meeting of the PFCC / Essex Police Strategic Board on 30 September 2021.

## **14. Background papers**

Decision report 144-21 (Approval of the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Group and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner)

Appendix 1 – Delayed Opinion Notice

**Report Approval**

The report will be signed off by the PFCC’s Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the PFCC / DPFC.


Chief Executive

Sign: 

Print: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 30 September 2021

Chief Finance Officer / Treasurer

Sign: .....

Print: ..Julia Berry.....

Date: ..30 September 2021.....

**Publication**

Is the report for publication?

YES

NO

If ‘NO’, please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State ‘None’ if applicable)

.....  
.....N/A.....

If the report is not for publication, the Chief Executive will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

**Redaction**

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

1. Of Decision Sheet? YES   
NO

2. Of Appendix? YES   
NO

If ‘YES’, please provide details of required redaction:

.....  
.....N/A.....

Date redaction carried out: .....

**Treasurer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only**

If redaction is required, the Treasurer or Chief Executive is to sign off that redaction has been completed.

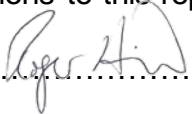
**Sign:** .....

**Print:** .....

**Chief Executive/Treasurer**

**Decision and Final Sign Off**

I agree the recommendations to this report:

**Sign:**  .....

**Print:** Roger Hirst

**PFCC**

**Date signed:** 1 October 2021

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

.....  
.....  
.....

**Sign:** .....

**Print:** .....

**PFCC/Deputy PFCC**

**Date signed:** .....