

**Handling Instructions: For Independent Audit Committee use only
FOIA – Open**



Independent Audit Committee

**Tuesday, 7 April at 10.00am
Teleconference**

Attendance

Helen Donnellan (Chair) (HD)	Committee Member
Tom Grainger (Vice Chair) (TG)	Committee Member
Amanda Gallaher (AG)	Committee Member
Linda Williams (LW)	Committee Member
Gordon Mattocks (GM)	Committee Member
Malcolm Smith (MS)	Committee Member
Sandy Goscomb (SG)	Director of Finance and Resources (Devon and Cornwall Police Force)
Nicola Allen (NA)	Treasurer (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Devon and Cornwall)
Helen Morgan (HM)	Executive Support Officer (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Devon & Cornwall)
Julie Strange (JS)	Treasurer (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Dorset)
Simon Bullock (SB)	Chief Executive Officer (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Dorset)
Karen James (KJ)	Head of Audit, Insurance and Strategic Risk
Jo George (JG)	Senior Audit Manager
Neal Butterworth (NB)	Head of Finance (Devon and Cornwall and Dorset Police Force)
Lucinda Hines (LH)	Head of Technical Accounting (Alliance)
Steve MacKenzie (SM)	Interim Assistant Chief Officer (Dorset Police Force)
Laura Wicks (LAW)	South West Audit Partnership
Alex Walling (AW)	Grant Thornton

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Apologies

Frances Hughes

Chief Executive Officer (Office of the
Police and Crime Commissioner,
Devon and Cornwall)

Mark Bartlett

Grant Thornton

01/07/01 Election of Chair

KJ conducted the election of the Chair. TG proposed HD and MS seconded. No other nominations were received and Helen Donnellan was appointed as Chair of the Committee 2020/21. HD expressed her thanks.

01/07/02 Election of Vice Chair

HD conducted the election of the Vice Chair. GM proposed TG and AG seconded. No other nominations were received and Tom Grainger was appointed as Vice Chair of the Committee 2020/21. TG expressed his thanks.

01/07/03 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received as recorded above.

01/07/04 Declarations of Interest, Equality and Health and Safety Obligations

No conflicts of interest were declared nor were there any Equality and Health and Safety Obligations raised.

Additional Item: PCC Elections 20/21

NA advised the PCC elections have been postponed for 12 months and everything will move by 12 months. A new Police and Crime Plan will not be required and the current plan will continue. When the elections are held in 2021 the new term will be for 3 years only. JS advised that Martyn Underhill had intended to stand down, but will now continue in his position as Dorset PCC for the next 12 months. TG proposed the Committee is made aware of any new initiatives for both PCCs that arise in this additional year. NA stated although this is not normal practice it may be appropriate in these circumstances.

Action: -To bring to this Committee any refresh of the Police & Crime Plan during the forthcoming year.

01/07/05 Open Minute Items [FOIA – Open]

The draft open minutes from the meeting of the Independent Audit Committee (IAC) held on 17 December 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record, with one

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amendment to Page 3 (b) to note the Working Together meeting on 26 March was postponed.

01/07/06 Open Items of Chair’s Business [FOIA – Open]

HD asked for it to be noted the Independent Audit Committee meeting had gone ahead by teleconference. It was highlighted that the content of the 2019-20 annual report will reflect the current situation and it is anticipated a draft of this annual report will be available for the July meeting. The 2018-19 annual report has been published and the annual appraisals of Committee members have commenced. HD welcomed the imminent implementation of Mod.gov which would provide a secure method for the delivery of committee papers in the future. HD acknowledged concern about the wellbeing of individual police officers and staff as a result of the current situation.

01/07/07 Internal Audit Plan and Charter [FOIA – Open]

LAW presented the paper and welcomed questions. Members were asked to consider the timetable for the production of the Internal Audit Annual Opinion and whether sufficient work had been undertaken to support the wider responsibility of the committee in relation to the adequacy of the governance, risk and control environment.

GM asked for clarification on the diagram shown on Page 4 of the report, which shows the Internal Audit Coverage in 2020/21 and where else the Committee would expect to obtain the assurances marked as “No Coverage”. LAW explained it is anticipated other assurance providers, such as HMICFRS will be covering those areas marked as Red (no coverage). GW asked for the diagram to be amended.

Action: LAW to amend the document to indicate the Committee need only to be concerned with areas marked green and blue and possibly amber but not red.

HD asked for assurance on delivery and timescales. LAW advised the steer for SWAP and Chief Finance Officers is to continue with business as usual for the moment. LAW had been in contact with JG and proposed assigning a specific quarter for each piece of work. LAW will continue liaising and providing assurance to deliver the plan on schedule. HD expressed her appreciation to LAW for her work on the responses to their questions raised on her reports to this committee. SG raised the SWAP Directors Board meeting. KJ confirmed that a meeting had taken place and a document is being drafted which will be circulated to section 151s advising of the outcome of those discussions, and how SWAP intends to operate during this period of time.

01/07/08 Internal Audit Quarterly Update and Highlights [FOIA – Open]

LAW presented the paper and welcomed questions. SG asked how much of quarter 4 work has now been completed. LAW advised some documents had already been finalised and the remaining documents are in hand to be completed on schedule. SG asked if it can be presumed there will be a considerable carry forward of days. LAW

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stated the carry forward will be the 10 days already shown. There had been a request to undertake additional work which has already started to use some of those days. The audit will not be delivered by year end and will continue but will not be a formal carry forward. HD had no further questions to add but asked to reserve the right to come back for further assurance should this be required.

04/19/09 External Audit Plan and Timetable Update FOIA – Open]

AW had just received notification from CIPFA that a new code expected to significantly simplify regulations for the completion of the 2019/20 annual accounts and recognise COVID 19, had been rejected by the Regulators and Auditors. Hence Grant Thornton will continue to use the existing code. Accounts have been pushed back to the end of August and Audit Opinions to the end of November. This poses issues around resourcing requirements as the audited accounts are being provided later than anticipated. Auditors will be looking into factors including COVID-19 and then consider how to resource the delivery of their external audit work. AW clarified the current plan included in these papers will now be reviewed and feedback given on any changes, as the plan does not currently reflect the implications of COVID-19. AW is currently considering the impact of COVID-19 and additional risks and how they are delivered. The Grant Thornton team is set up well to work from home with modern technology. However, some aspects such as Property, Plant & Equipment (PPE) evaluation work need to be physically seen, to enable completion of this work. The way in which the organisation is dealing with this is having an effect on accounts, and additional risk needs to be factored in and consequently the team are looking at potentially up to November to provide their audit opinion.

HD asked if AW will be providing appendices to go with the existing plan. AW explained that at the time of publication the plans are final. There is a process to go through and when this has been completed there will be a better understanding about what is required from the auditors, at this stage there will be a considered written response. The auditors will be able to assess on what is known and able to identify the risks. However, this will be in due course as there is a need to give a considered response rather than working to an arbitrary deadline.

SG raised the need for the Force to produce accounts. The Force is attempting to plan on the operational release of officers to front line and adhere to the 31 May deadline for the accounts. SG would welcome a revised audit plan to coordinate all the work that is needed, as the current plan is not fit for purpose. NA stated a balance is needed for considered response against the timescales. AW stated auditors will be able to progress once clarification of the code has been received, however if the new code is rejected the existing external audit plan is unlikely to change significantly.

SG raised additional questions around COVID-19 and requested an understanding of timescales to factor into the Force plan. AW stated that as soon as clarity has been received about additional work needed, that information will be shared. It was agreed

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that information from both perspectives needs to be factored in and AW will work with the Section 151 Officers to identify realistic timescales.

ACTION: HD suggested Section 151 officers and AW have conversation to identify realistic times scales in the context of the situation that everyone is facing.

01/07/10 External Audit Quarterly Report [FOIA – Open]

HD asked when the report will be available. AW confirmed part of the report has been completed and no issues have arisen. AW advised there is no more to report at this stage and an update will be given at the next audit committee unless issues arise, in which case AW will report back at an earlier date.

01/07/11 Statement of Accounts Preparation [FOIA – Open]

LH updated on the review of policies and statement of accounts and informed the committee that steps have been taken to address the recommendations made by Grant Thornton, and the 2019/20 Statement of Accounts incorporate the feedback from the 2018/19 accounts. All recommendations were accepted and have been completed, apart from the purchase order process which subject to an internal audit review. LH stated there were two changes to accounting codes last year and there has been an extension to timelines. LH also confirmed all the team are well, they are still working towards 31 May for producing the 2019/20 draft set of accounts. The team are receiving information and guidance about investments to avoid and have also taken advice about investment strategy from ArlingClose. LH will continue to act on guidance when it is released. HD expressed the Committee's appreciation to LH for producing such a clear and concise paper, with the changes clearly emphasised.

01/07/12 Update on Fraud and Corruption Investigations [FOIA – Open]

KJ presented the reports and the reports were noted.

01/07/13 Insurance Programme [FOIA – Open]

KJ highlighted the regional programme of work. All classes of insurance are now in place as of April, as required. Motor insurance remains the same provider, other main classes of insurance have moved to Mavern. The retendering programme was challenging, however, it has delivered the best outcome that could be hoped for both Forces with overall savings in excess of £100K. All the Forces in the region now carry the same insurance companies for each class of insurance, and where possible excess levels. There are no direct insurance issues arising from Coronavirus at this time. The only request from insurance underwriters is that they are notified promptly

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of any claims made which are either directly or indirectly COVID related. The excellent work of the Insurance team was highlighted.

**01/07/14 Force Protected Disclosure Policy [FOIA – Open]
DEFERRED**

**01/07/15 Data Analytics Sub Group Update [FOIA – Open]
DEFERRED**

At 11:15am the open section of the meeting concluded and the Committee adjourned.

The Committee reconvened at 11:20am.

01/07/16 Closed Minute Items [FOIA – Closed (various)]

01/07/17 Action Log [FOIA – Closed s.22]

01/07/18 Items of Chair's Business [FOIA – Closed (various)]

01/07/19 Draft Annual Governance Statement [FOIA – Closed s.22]
a. Devon and Cornwall (Joint)
b. OPCC Dorset
c. Dorset Police Force

01/07/20 Risk Registers [FOIA – Closed s.31]
a. Devon and Cornwall Police Force
b. OPCC Devon and Cornwall
c. Dorset Police Force
d. OPCC Dorset

**01/07/20 Update on Internal Financial Management Arrangements
for Dorset [FOIA – Closed s.22]**

01/07/20 National Fraud Initiative [FOIA – Closed s.22]

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12:10.

Next Meeting is scheduled for 29th July 2020 10:00am, Devon & Cornwall Police, Homer House, Middlemoor Headquarters

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DRAFT