

**Joint Audit Committee of the Police and Crime Commissioner
for Bedfordshire and Bedfordshire Police**

Minutes are restricted

Meeting of 25th March 2022 (Microsoft Teams)

Held between 13:00 – 15:00

Minutes

Present:

Jagtar Singh – Chair (JS)	Independent Committee Member
Judit Seymour (IM JSM)	Independent Committee Member
Gita Raja (IM GR)	Independent Committee Member
Wayne Brads (IM WB)	Independent Committee Member
Phil Wells (CFO PW)	Chief Finance Officer – Bedfordshire Police
Kirsty Slater (BDO KS)	BDO – External Auditors
Rachel Brittain (BDO RB)	BDO – External Auditors
Shalini Gandhi (RSM SG)	RSM – Internal Auditors
Anna Villette (CE)	Interim Chief Executive
Katie Beaumont (TM)	Transparency Manager
Tara Malciw (PA)	PA – Minute taker

	Part One – Not Restricted	
22/JAC/01	Introduction The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.	PCC/Members
22/JAC/02	Apologies There were no apologies noted.	PA
22/JAC/03	Minutes of the meeting held on 29.09.2021 (Restricted in part). The minutes of the previous meeting were approved with one amendment, to send apologies for IM GR at the last meeting.	Chair
22/JAC/04	Actions Log 21/JAC/46: Action closed	Chair

	<p>21/JAC/46: Action closed 21/JAC/49: Action closed 21/JAC/50: Action closed 21/JAC/50: Action closed 21/JAC/54: Action closed 21/JAC/33: Action closed 21/JAC/42: Action closed</p>	
22/JAC/05	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	Chair
22/JAC/06	<p>Declarations of Interest (verbal)</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	Chair
Part One – Not Restricted		
22/JAC/07	<p>a) Strategic Risk Register of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire</p> <p>TM advised changes were made to the SRR following a deep dive completed on 15th March 2022 where each risk was reviewed, a presentation of the changes was shared with the Independent Members for transparency.</p> <p>TM advised the risks were reduced to 5 as only some aspects were specific to the OPCC, and Force risks are discussed through business review meetings, the SRR is being reviewed and escalated regularly.</p> <p>SR05: TM advised the wording was changed to SR05 to detail the responsibilities of the PCC – regularly reviewed by the CFO.</p> <p>SR02: TM advised this was broken into 3 further risks within the SRR covering policing as a whole and the responsibility of holding the Chief to account, secondly, the responsibility of commissioning services and thirdly, the voice of the community.</p> <p>TM advised that the CEO is the Head of Paid Services and not the PCC.</p> <p>The Chair stated the paper was taken as read and accepted with verbal assurance.</p> <p>IM GR addressed SR05, asking for a Force update on staff retention efforts.</p> <p>TM stated the OPCC have reviewed all business areas and have understood the staffing impacts. The OPCC have since drafted new roles which are being advertised.</p> <p>CEO advised she reviewed the OPCC to ensure it is structured in a way that supports the PCC, gaps were recognised in commissioning, general governance, performance management and analysis</p>	CEO

	<p>alongside roles relating to democratic responsibilities and partnership/ authority work, subsequently 10 posts have been created.</p> <p>CEO advised TM has developed in her role, to become the Head of Governance and Transparency. CEO advised Simon Powell will become the Head of Victim Care and Commissioning and Wayne Humberstone with become the Director of OPCC Operations.</p> <p>CEO advised for resilience, the TM will also support the CE as the Deputy Monitoring Officer, TM will undergo training over the next few months, this will support absences and protect the OPCC from failure.</p> <p>IM JSM suggested it would be good to have a risk management policy to encapsulate the policies. IM JSM suggested SR02 and SR04 are more compliance issues and suggested a rewording, so the risk is apparent.</p> <p>The Chair accepted the above comments.</p> <p>IM WB asked what resilience there is to the CEO role? CEO advised her contract has been extended to April 2023.</p> <p>IM WB asked whether the Forces ICT risk should be replicated on the SRR for the OPCC as there is a dependency? TM advised additional assurances can be established for the OPCC once the Force considerations are reviewed.</p> <p>The Chair advised the JAC have assurance and reassurance from this update, noting comments from the Independent Members and the restructure proposed by the CEO following the identification of gaps in the OPCC.</p>	
22/JAC/08	<p>External Audit</p> <p>a) Audit Update – Progress</p> <p>BDO RB confirmed the audit had been completed, the final audit completion report will be circulated to all as per normal audit procedures.</p> <p>The Chair acknowledged all reports are complete, proactive work was completed to address concerns regarding the War in Ukraine, there are two area of potential impact, regarding pensions and supply, these were reviewed, and assurance is given that there are no issues for the Force. It is noted additional work is to be completed following the input of the CEO.</p> <p>IM GR asked whether unadjusted areas in the accounts will be carried forward to the next financial year? BDO RB confirmed they will, any incorrections would start as an unadjusted error in the following year.</p>	BDO

22/JAC/09	<p>Internal Audit</p> <p>a) Internal Audit Progress Report</p> <p>RSM SG advised 3 Bedfordshire Police and 2 BCH reports have been completed, 4 of the reports received positive assurance, and 1 report received a partial assurance opinion.</p> <p>RSM SG presented Appendix A, which is a progress report, the audit has been paused at management request and will be incorporated into the audit for 2022/2023.</p> <p>RSM SG presented a substantial assurance report, there are audit opinions with minor weaknesses identified. The Chair confirmed assurances have been given.</p> <p>RSM SG addressed the POCA report on page 26 of the progress report, some weaknesses were identified such as a discrepancy regarding BWV, overall, there was a positive audit opinion. The Chair advised these are minor issues to be addressed by the Force and will not occur in future audits.</p> <p>RSM SG address page 34 of report where a partial opinion was given for ICT collaboration, there were discrepancies with sample sizing. There were 5 medium and 1 high priority management request agreed, it was noted that Covid has impacted processes.</p> <p>IM GR asked whether items that are fully depreciated feature on the asset register? RSM SG advised asset depreciation was not featured on the asset register. The Chair asked whether this could be scoped in future audits? RSM SG advised it was be added to the agenda moving forward.</p> <p>CFO PW advised all assets are detailed on the asset register for the Force, depreciation rate is detailed accordingly.</p> <p>IM JSM asked for background on the management request detailed on page 6 of the report. RSM SG advised there are changes ongoing in this area, Hertfordshire therefore asked for the review to be paused until internal works were completed so actions weren't created for areas that are already being addressed.</p> <p>IM JSM stated Bedfordshire Police aren't included in the ICT disposal agreement currently in place, does this mean disposal have been completed outside of a contract? RSM SG advised disposals were taking place but at the time of the audit the supporting contract was not in place.</p> <p>IM JSM asked whether the actions recorded in the audit were completed in their deadline?</p> <p>The Chair advised assurance is given that full detail will be provided at the next JAC meeting.</p>	RSM
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	<p>ACTION: CFO PW and DCC to confirm that all actions detailed in the internal ICT audit report were completed before March 2022 as detailed.</p> <p>IM WB asked whether items should be stored until a disposal contract is in place?</p> <p>CFO PW confirmed the ICT collaboration is tri-force and Bedfordshire have utilised Hertfordshire's contract for disposals, moving forward the contract will be used for the tri-force as Cambridgeshire were previously contracted separately. IM WB confirmed this gives him assurance.</p> <p>ACTION: CFO PW to confirm the level of cover Bedfordshire Police received from the Hertfordshire Constabulary ICT disposals contract.</p> <p>CFO PW confirmed a revised asset auditing policy and procedure is in place now, the missing asset has since been recovered, this issue arose due to legacy data from concept portal which was not accessible at the time.</p> <p>b) Draft internal Plan RSM SG address page 53, the external quality assessment, the auditors had an EQ assessment and received the highest rating.</p> <p>RSM SG advised a draft internal audit plan has been written following discussions with BCH management. RSM SG took the paper as read and asked for JAC approval at the next JAC meeting.</p> <p>c) Progress on recommendations This item was discussed above.</p>	CFO PW
22/JAC/10	<p>Force Overview</p> <p>DCC stated he will take the paper as read. DCC advised the Force's focus is Culture as this is a priority given the high number of student officers entering the force, Bedfordshire will have the highest proportion of student officers in the workforce in the Country, it is important the students have a positive experience as their experience impacts the way they respond to the public.</p> <p>DCC stated the Annual Delivery Plan and Control Strategy will be launched in April 2022.</p> <p>DCC provided an update on Force performance. DCC advised there is an increase in crimes being reported, especially in areas such as child centred crimes, rape, serious sexual offences, stalking and harassment, previously areas of low reporting. DCC advised this is positive as it shows the public have an increasing confidence in the Force as they are reporting crimes more, however there are still improvements to be made.</p> <p>DCC advised the solved rate for rape for the last 12 month rolling period has been positive, placing the Force 6th in Country,</p>	DCC

	<p>Bedfordshire Police are consistently in the top quartile for impactful crimes.</p> <p>DCC advised the Force has seen a reduction in serious violence, this evidence successful work completed by VERU, VERU have now secured 3 years of GRIP funding. DCC confirmed this shows successes of evidence-based policing.</p> <p>DCC stated the Force has seen 315 fewer residential burglaries this year however the Force sits above the national average for prevention and investigation. DCC advised the solved rate is not as good for burglaries which is indicative of the experience in investigative units.</p> <p>IM WB suggested the data shows a risk that demand continues to outstrip supply, is there an impact of inexperienced, young in-service officers, and is this risk likely to increase? IM JSM advised she would like triangulation of the demand assessment to provide assurance on the reliability of the forecasting. IM JSM asked whether there is an impact likely to occur from the arrival of nationals from Afghanistan and Ukraine as they flee their home countries.</p> <p>The Chair asked for CFO and DCC to present a full performance pack at each development day to allow full scrutiny and to provide assurance to the Independent Members.</p> <p>The Chair suggested the large number of student officers does pose a corporate risk. The Chair asked for assurance on the level of disproportionality in student officers as it is known that a higher attrition rate of black and minority ethnic students.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACTION: CFO PW and DCC to provide assurance on the level of disproportionality experienced by black and minority ethnic students at the next JAC meeting.</p> <p>DCC agreed there is a corporate risk and although the Force has suitable numbers of officers, the officers do not all hold the required skills set which impacts the Forces ability to respond to demand, there is also an impact on timeliness of responses as tutors are required to support students which means resources are combined instead of silo.</p> <p>DCC advised November will see the peak of the student uplift, this does however impact the demand assessment in some areas such as domestic abuse where there is a need for experienced investigative officers. Students will be rotated for experience, but they will not have competent skills set early in their career.</p> <p>DCC advised the PBB process is run annually to understand the Forces ability to meet demand verses the resources available, DCC suggested there is a need to increase establishment and based on the demand assessment the Force understands where their resources are required.</p>	
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DCC advised Bedfordshire Police have responded to VAWG as MVAWG as most crimes committed have male perpetrators, to support this work temporary resources have been approved.

DCC advised the Force has a Community Cohesion team to respond to community tensions, they are emersed in the community. DCC advised Luton received more than a quarter of all Afghan refugees, Luton has welcomed the refugees with support from the third sector community and local authorities.

The Chair asked for a report to be presented on workforce intersectionality to ensure they are reflective of the communities they serve.

ACTION: CFO PW and DCC to present a paper of workforce intersectionality in comparison to the community demographics to the next meeting.

The Chair asked whether positive action and community investment is improving recruitment and retention rates?

IM JSM questioned the Forces change programmes. DCC confirmed the Force are due to work with Amazon, developing a relationship to introduce intuitive information management and technology.

IM JSM asked why most change programmes have turned amber with only 1 aspect requiring improvement. DCC advised there has been reprioritisation of resources, with some projects are concluding soon such as the Custody build which will release resources for further projects.

CFO advised the Force only presented a green rating once the project is confirmed and meeting the deadlines set, there is an understanding that deadlines cannot always be guaranteed due to external pressures, so the rating remains amber until assurance is given.

Force Culture:

DCC advised section 5 of the report detailed the Force culture programme, focusing on leadership as an operational priority. The Force is reviewing surveys completed initially a year ago to understand feedback from officers and staff and to establish how well the "Be You" cultural work has imbedded. DCC advised the Force Executive has conducted leadership days with all supervisors, these were honest conversations with case studies shared for organisational learning.

DCC advised the Force Executive ensure they meet with all new students at the start of their journey and the Force Executive have introduced Above Difference Cultural Intelligence sessions to improve cultural awareness in the Force. DCC confirmed BetterforBeds sessions will also take place in person allowing the Force Executive to present a tailored agenda to all staff and officers.

	<p>IM JSM how the improvements in culture will be measured? DCC advised the Force will use binary data, comparing historical indicators and disparity at every stage of the student pathway. DCC advised Professional Standards Department referrals have reduced which shows greater confidence in managers to undertake local management and leadership discussions instead of referring inappropriately to Professional Standards Department.</p> <p>The Chair asked for a dashboard to be prepared to show the culture programme in Force.</p> <p>ACTION: CFO and DCC to present a dashboard on the Forces Culture Programme to the next JAC meeting.</p>	
Part Two – Restricted		
22/JAC/11	<p>HMICFRS Update</p> <p>DCC confirmed the full HMICFRS inspection has been completed, the HMICFRS reviewed data from the past 6 months, and they spend 3 weeks in force.</p>	CFO PW
22/JAC/12	<p>Strategic Risk Register of Bedfordshire Police</p> <p>Discussions were had surrounding the Force SRR.</p>	CFO PW
22/JAC/13	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment processes <p>CFO PW advised an IM replacement has been chosen, there were 4 candidates interviewed, the chosen candidate has a financial background and is due to join the Committee in June 2022. CFO PW advised TM will arrange 2 4-hour sessions to induct the new candidate. The Chair volunteered to support the new candidates training.</p> <p>IM JSM suggested the use of a Buddy Scheme to support the new candidate and offered to assist with this. CFO PW advised this will be considered.</p>	