**OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE**

14th September 2023

Present: Mrs D Turner (Chair),

Mr A Blackmore, Mr G Watts, Dr J Wademan (Vice Chair) and Mr A Johns

Together with: Ms E Thomas– Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC)

Mrs S Curley – Chief Executive (CEx)

Mrs J Regan – Head of Assurance and Compliance (HoAC)

Ms P Kelly – Chief Constable (CC)

Ms R Williams - Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)

Mr M Hobrough – Assistant Chief Constable (ACC)

Mr N Stephens – Assistant Chief Officer – Resources (ACOR)

Mr M Thomas – Superintendent - Head of Criminal Justice (HoCJ)

Mr M Coe – Head of Finance (HoF)

Ms L Bartley – Chief Inspector, Chair of the Ethics Committee (CoEC)

Mr S Gourlay– TIAA (TIAA)

Mr D Williams– Audit Wales (AW)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The meeting was held in Yew Room 1 and on Teams and commenced at 10:00am. The Chair welcomed Mr D Williams from Audit Wales to the meeting. | **Action** |
| 1. **APOLOGIES**
 |  |
| Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Cuthbert, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent, Ms V Townsend, Chief Superintendent, Head of Continuous Improvement, Mr D Garwood-Pask, Chief Finance Officer, Mr R Harries, Audit Wales, Ms H Williams, Audit Wales, Mr G Gray, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Force Liaison Lead and Mr M Corcoran, Internal Audit, Torfaen County Borough Council. |  |
| 1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
 |  |
| There were no advance declarations made in relation to the business to be transacted. |  |
| 1. **MINUTES**
 |  |
| The minutes of the meeting held on 27th July 2023 were received and confirmed. 1. **ACTIONS**
 | **Action** |
| We received and noted the actions from the meeting held on 27th July 2023 and actions outstanding from earlier meetings. **Action 6, 27th July 2023, Presentation on children in custody.** The JAC ICT Lead asked if there was clear criteria in force when seeking accommodation for children in custody, as it appeared that custody staff were not contacting the Local Authority (LA) due to the unlikely hood of accommodation being provided and sought assurance that this risk appeared on the relevant multi-agency board as the level of demand was unclear. The DCC assured us demand was captured as part of statistical information obtained in relation to all children detained in custody. One of the main concerns for the force related to potential erosion of the process of obtaining accommodation from supporting partner organisations due to having very little success in the past. The force has implemented stronger governance in this area and adopted an escalation policy to Senior Officer level to ensure accommodation was sought when appropriate. The ACOR confirmed there was also a monthly meeting with LAs, at which the statistics of securing accommodation and the risk it presented were discussed. **Action 8, 27th July 2023, Any other business.** It was agreed the Crime Data Integrity (CDI) risk deep dive would be deferred to the JAC meeting in December 2023. **Action 1, 15th June 2023, Actions.** Agreed this action could be closed as it was an agenda item for this meeting. **Action 7, 15th June 2023, To identify any risks arising from the meeting.** JAC requested an update on succession planning. The CC explained that if it was in relation to ongoing workforce planning, an element of the risk was linked to a shortage of detectives and the force were not an outlier in this, as it was a national issue. There had been a shortage of detectives in the Public Protective Unit (PPU) however, a long, short and medium term plan had been put in place to manage those shortages. The DCC informed us two pieces of work had been undertaken in relation to demand management to forecast current and predictive demand, overlayed with vacancies and skills. The JAC ICT lead raised concerns regarding a shortage of detectives in response to incidents of violence against women and girls, given global issues. The CC explained the detective shortage in PPU was being managed as iterated previously and every avenue possible had been explored to increase levels such as direct entry for police constables and police staff investigators. The DCC suggested an update on the final Strategic Workforce Plan was presented to JAC upon completion to provide assurance on the work being conducted to increase the number of detectives. **Action 9, 8th March 2023, Update on Actions in the Audit Wales Management letter.** The chair sought assurance regarding the 50 vacancies within South Wales Police (SWP) ICT establishment and the impact this could have on service provision to Gwent. The ACOR informed us that he had met with the JAC ICT Lead yesterday where this issue was discussed. The JAC ICT Lead had questioned whether SWP could maintain their core provision as well as that of Gwent’s provision, given the level of vacancies and suggested a review of the networks and services requiring support from other partner organisations should take place. The ACOR confirmed he was able to provide assurance to the JAC ICT Lead that SWP ran a monthly ICT Strategy Board of which he was an attendee. The Board ensured ICT work was prioritised to ensure core systems were maintained, however, some projects were delayed as a result. **Action 10, 8th March 2023, Outstanding audit inspection recommendations.** The JAC Internal Audit Lead referred to the Reactive Maintenance Policy and asked if there were any issues with Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) within the Force Estate.The ACOR advised us that many of the buildings were built in the pre RAAC stage, so there were only two extensions built in the 1970’s requiring a survey and when surveyed in spring, they were deemed to be safe but this would continue to be monitored. An update was requested on theShared Resource Service (SRS) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The ACOR confirmed the MOU was presented to the SRS Finance and Governance Board (FGB) last week. The MOU was under review by all partners with the expectation of it being presenting to the SRS Strategic Board in October 2023. It was agreed this action could be closed as the ACOR was to present the agreed MOU to the JAC ICT Lead at their following ICT meeting and to confirm this with JAC once completed.  | **GO****GO****Action****DCC****ACOR** |
| 1. The information contained in the report(s) below has been subjected to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 2018 and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent’s public interest test and was deemed to be exempt from publication under section 7.
 |  |
| 1. **TO DISCUSS NEW RISKS AND CHANGES TO RISK RATINGS**
 |  |
| We received the Risk Register.The DCC provided an update on risks including changes to risk ratings. The shortage of detectives had remained high, however the presentation at the December 2023 JAC meeting would provide assurance that plans were in place to mitigate the risk. The evidential property storage had also remained a high risk, however, the following presentation would provide assurance that progress was being made. The children in custody risk had been lowered from high to medium, primarily due to the risk sitting with partner agencies as well as the force.There had been no change to the McCloud pension ruling so the risk had remained low. The HoF informed us guidelines were expected in October 2023 for the next phase of the pension remedy which would be focussing on retired officers whose pensions had been affected by the changes in the first instance. The Chair advised us that Sharia Law was being considered by the Local Government Authority in relation to pension schemes. Many Muslims were opting out of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) as they did not deem the scheme to be compliant with Sharia Law. As approximately 1 in 3 children were born into Muslim families, this could have a big impact on the LGPS going forward. The Chair agreed to share a report on the issue with the force if possible. There had been no change to the disaster service recovery risk which had remained low. A manual intervention was in place if needed. However, the JAC ICT Lead suggested at the recent ICT meeting that it was tested if it had not yet been used. The ACOR assured us this would be incorporated into the disaster recovery plan in the coming months. There had been no change to the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) accreditation for forensics in relation to Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC), which had maintained a medium risk rating. We noted that ACC Lead in SWP had changed to ACC Gunney and it was expected that the accreditation would be achieved in October 2023 and the risk would be amended to reflect that. There had been no change to the Police National Database risk, which had maintained a medium rating. The ACOR assured us there was a technical fix which was due to be completed imminently in the Police Headquarters (HQ).The risk had remained unchanged in relation to the Global Data Store with a medium rating. The ACOR assured us that existing database was operating effectively and all major areas were updated in terms of performance and monitoring. Although the risk was being mitigated, the long term plan was to replace the data store with new improved technology.The DCC advised us the planned risk deep dive in relation to (CDI) had been deferred to the December 2023 JAC meeting due to changes in HOCI commitments. However, we were advised peer reviews had been conducted with other forces in relation to crime data recording and the force were found to have good compliance.Compliance with Welsh Language Standards was deemed a high risk. A previous advertisement for a joint Welsh Language Policy Officer with SWP had been unsuccessful. However, a recent recruitment campaign had resulted in 7 applicants and it was anticipated that the role would be filled shortly. JAC asked what the level of compliance was and how much work was needed to be done to be fully compliant with the standards. The CEx informed us the Welsh Language Annual Report was presented to the Strategy and Performance Board on the 6th September 2023 evidencing that the majority of the standards had been complied with and although there were a number of changes that still needed to be made, particularly in terms of recruitment, she was reassured that an considerable amount of effort had been put into recruitment. All avenues were being explored, including the Welsh Language Commissioner’s recommendations for advertising Welsh roles. However, there was very high demand for Welsh speakers and many organisations were able to pay more for the role. The DPCC confirmed there were no outstanding recommendations in the force or the Commissioner’s office in relation to the Welsh Language Standards Commissioner’s report. The DPCC emphasised the importance of supporting the existing workforce to improve their Welsh skills. The CC confirmed that Welsh language Level 1 course had been mandated within the force and she was fully committed to increasing compliance. The CC informed us she was lobbying the College of Policing (CoP) to allow applicants to undertake their interviews in Welsh when applying to join the force.The ACOR confirmed the Welsh Language Standards Compliance report would be circulated to JAC members for information upon completion. JAC members emphasised the importance of complying with the Welsh language standards to ensure public confidence. The JAC Finance/External Audit Lead also suggested the force would benefit from ensuring the right environment was created by celebrating the successes of officers and staff who had participated in learning Welsh to encourage others to participate. A long term strategy should be also considered given the growth in Welsh medium education, so it was important to engage with local schools and colleges to ensure the force could communicate with communities in the language of their choice in the future. The CC assured us specific time was allocated to officers and staff to attend Welsh courses and opportunities were taken to promote the language and to celebrate success where possible. A prime example being the previous DCC A Blakeman, who was a non Welsh speaker, and having attended a Welsh learning course in Gwent was now a CC in North Wales and was promoting the Welsh Language at the Welsh Language Heritage Centre in Nant Gwrtheryrn this week. The culture risk had been added to the register as recommended by JAC, it had been rated as high risk. The force governance structure had been revised and although culture and ethics was addressed in other areas of the force, the intention was to incorporate them into the new structure, correlating with the imminent release of the new Code of Ethics (CoE). The officer safety training curriculum risk had remained a medium risk, a plan was in place to maximise new officer training equipment in force to support officers. The CC confirmed the national officer training curriculum was constantly evolving and although it was important to maximise training, it was imperative not to over extract as this meant officers would not be working in their communities. The ISO accreditation collision and investigation risk had remained as medium risk. There was a series of plans in place with other Welsh partner forces to mitigate this risk.The JAC Risk Lead suggested further work could be done to the format of the register to highlight whether the actions were on track by those responsible to ensure they could be delivered in accordance with the timescale. However, he acknowledged that it was work in progress. The ACOR assured us the detail of each risk was much more robust than before as officers and staff were able to access a link within Office 365 to view full detail of the risk including dates. The ACOR agreed it would be beneficial for action dates to be fed through to the risk summary sheet for JAC members to review.The JAC Finance/External Audit Lead referred to recent high profile events such as the data breaches in Northern Ireland and asked what checks were undertaken by the force to ensure these issues could be avoided. The ACOR assured us policing had a well structed national oversight in place, the Home Office (HO) and the National Police Chief’s Council (NPCC) that triggered requests for this type of information. For example, forces were prompted in January 2023 to review their estate to determine if there were any RAAC issues. Also, following the data breaches the NPCC provided guidance on good practice in relation to the data breaches; a checklist was provided and outcomes reported back to the NPCC. Many of the recommendations were already established into working practice in Gwent. There is also governance in place in force to assure the CC such matters are being dealt with. TIAA assured us it had been agreed for the planned information disclosure audit to be brought forward to early October 2023 as a result of the recent disclosure issues. Part of the audit would include reviewing the freedom of information request process. The JAC ICT Lead asked when the presented risk register was derived given that there was a real time system whereby the risks could be updated. The ACOR confirmed it was approximately a month ago. However, the register was reviewed following the Chief Officer Team meeting yesterday and a copy forwarded the Governance Officer. It was agreed the revised risk register would be circulated to JAC members for review outside of the meeting.  | **Action****CHAIR****ACOR****DCC****Action****ACOR****Action****ACC****Action****GO** |
| 1. **LOCAL POLICING ACTION PLAN – EVIDENTIAL STORAGE**
 |  |
| We received the Local Policing Action Plan – Evidential Storage.The ACC assured us there was clear strategic direction, workforce understanding and governance in relation to this key area and this was 1 of his 5 key priorities monitored via his bi-weekly Senior Management Team meetings. The importance of managing evidential property efficiently had been conveyed to all frontline staff. Best practice from other forces and private industry was also being considered.The ACC assured us progress had been made and more would be done to improve the process further.The HoCJ advised us TIAA had conducted an audit into Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) and the force were in receipt of the report 48 hours ago. The report indicated there was a small sum of money missing. As this presented a potential significant risk, the team undertook a reconciliation and established that there was an error on the calculation on the spreadsheet, rather than a physical loss of money. This has been resolved. There was also a lack of communication between frontline officers in the case, the financial investigation unit and the evidential property unit identified during the POCA audit. Therefore, a meeting has been arranged with the 3 teams to ensure a better communication process and to make sure the financial investigation unit were fully sighted on the seizures.The report also referenced that good progress had made regarding the historic spreadsheet of siezed monies. In a previous audit it had been identified that monies were being held in the safes at the property store. Anything that wasn’t needed for forensic examination had been banked but there were other small items that should have been banked. A new process has subsequently been implemented to provide guidance to frontline staff and any monetary items were now being banked within 45 days that didn’t require forensic examination. The weekly sweeps of the interim store in Newport and Blackwood were continuing to ensure there were no backlogs building up in the stores.There were 77 items that could not be located during TIAA’s initial audit in Newport and Blackwood, 61 of which had since been located and further work was being undertaken to identify the remaining items. A full audit of Bettws stores had commenced on the 4th September 2023 and it was likely that the remaining items would be located there. The previous audit also identified issues with officers not having reviewed evidence to update expiry dates. Following a review of the dates a backlog of 1429 items was identified that could be returned to owners. Although the evidence reviewing process had improved, the force acknowledged this required continuous focus to ensure officers were undertaking the process consistently and not retaining evidence in stores unnecessarily. The Niche evidence management system was progressing and all property was to be input onto the system when the appropriate ICT systems were in place, which was expected to be in December 2023. The Learning and Development Team planned to deliver training on the system by November 2023.There were plans to conduct weekly sweeps of all evidential property stores to ensure backlogs were not accumulating, however, only the two biggest stores in Newport and Blackwood had been swept to date due to staffing issues. Work was being undertaken to recruit staff in these areas to ensure the other stores could be swept. The volume of property within the stores stood at 73,000 in 2021 which had decreased to 63,000 and was reducing month on month.Temporary estate had been secured at Vantage Point to store property moved from the old HQ prior to its demolition.Work to upgrade the property store in Bettws was to commence in November 2023.The JAC ICT Lead sought assurance that the culture had changed in force and appropriate processes were embedded to ensure there was no reoccurrence. The JAC ICT Lead also requested the number of key people that were directly or indirectly affected by this issue. The ACC informed us that storage of evidential property was a national issue in forces, so Gwent were not an outlier in this. As such, the force were looking outside of the policing realm to ascertain best practice to ideally be an exemplar force in this area. The ACC acknowledged that historically the force had been reactive to the issue due to competing priorities and it was their intention to ensure good practice and processes were embedded from the outset for new recruits through to the more experienced officers and staff, through monitoring and supervision via a strong governance structure. This issue also formed part of leadership training and potential reputational damage was emphasised, should the issue not be supervised appropriately. Wider issues of vulnerability and risk were also addressed by leaders at the earliest opportunity, areas of risk were flagged on the risk register and consideration was given to potential areas of risk that could emerge.The ACC explained the impact spanned across the organisation. However, we were assured that he received a report highlighting those affected by the evidential storage issue from the HoCJ clarifying which areas needed further supervision to improve progress. This enabled him to ensure further focus was applied where needed.The CC explained that the force position in terms of its evidence storage was unacceptable and force leaders had been made aware of this. This was a direct link to the public and could undermine their confidence in policing. The CC offered her recognition for the work conducted by the HoCJ and the ACC to date on improving this area, through sourcing the appropriate estate, resources, implementation of new and improved processes and undertaking audits. The CC explained with a police officer establishment of 1506, 400 of which were recruited over the last 3 years, 50 more joining in September and a further 50 in March 2024, this was a young workforce and the direction given to new officers was to sieze exhibits as soon as possible at the crime scene, as this opportunity could be lost. However, some of the newer inexperienced officers were dealing with response calls and responding to calls often superseded dealing with evidential storage issues. The key element of changing this culture was to ensure front line supervision was in place to make sure that evidential property management was dealt with in the same manner as crime management, as a matter of course. Encouraging the use of new technology formed part of this culture change as there was different ways to capture evidence.The JAC ICT Lead suggested it would be beneficial to have sight of the numbers of people handling evidence or administrating it. The HoCJ assured us that moving onto the Niche Property Management system would be a step change for the force as evidential property was currently input onto a separate system to the Niche Investigation system and when it was included in the new Property Management element of Niche, investigating officers and supervisors would receive a continuous 90 day task reminder to ensure that evidence was reviewed.JAC sought assurance that the weekly storage sweeps were not preventing the force undertaking performance checks to ensure the new processes were working to ensure further backlogs were not emerging whilst clearing the old backlog. The HoCJ assured they were able to check the process during the sweeps. JAC members welcomed the update and were assured by the progress being made given this has been a long term issue.  | **Action****Action** |
| 1. The information contained in the report(s) below has been subjected to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 2018 and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent’s public interest test and was deemed not to be exempt from publication under section 7.
 |  |
| 1. **INTERNAL AUDIT (TIAA)**
 |  |
| We received and noted the TIAA Update Report, the Annual Report 2022/23 and the Annual Plan 2023/24.All work had been planned except some of the collaborative audits which were awaiting confirmation from other forces. The overall opinion contained within the Annual Report 2022/23 confirmed that TIAA were satisfied there were positive effective controls in risk management and governance processes in the force. Audit review outcomes had resulted mainly in reasonable or substantial assurance and there were no concerns regarding the recommendations which were primarily in relation to governance or compliance. There had been no changes in the Annual Audit Plan 2023/24 since the draft in June 2023.JAC referred the fake invoice scam noted in the update paper and asked if tackling fake invoices was a rising issue for the force. The ACOR explained that financial fraud was a nationwide issue, and this was placing additional demand on the force investigation team locally, seizures of fraudulent monies had increased considerably as a result. This was evidenced by the increase in money the force was able to retain once shared between partner agencies; £400k this year compared to £150k 10 years ago. With regards to fake invoices being received by the force itself, controls such as the No Purchase Order, No Pay had been implemented and a supplier’s register was maintained to monitor supplier compliance with the process. The HoF confirmed they had not received fraudulent invoices, however, there were some questionable emails received which were checked by SRS. If invoices were received without a purchase order or not a registered supplier, they were fiercely challenged by several members of the finance team and others to ensure legitimacy prior to processing. We were assured there were sufficient controls in place to prevent fraud and the finance team were kept informed of TIAA fraud alerts.TIAA confirmed the No PO, No Pay policy provided a level of control as the invoice would not be paid if it did not match with a Purchase Order. There was a very basic model used by the organisation where 29 fraudulent invoices had been processed with a person signing off the invoices, whereas automated systems when set up properly, had appropriate delegated authority. The JAC ICT Lead asked if the force had a fraud risk register and a fraud register. The ACOR explained that a schedule was completed as part of the accounts process for Audit Wales (AW). The HoF confirmed Audit Wales requested detailed responses to fraud and governance risk questions which were contained in the Audit Enquiries Letter and it could be circulated following the meeting. The Audit Enquiries Letter was to be included as part of the statement of accounts agenda item at the following JAC Accounts meeting.. The JAC ICT Lead drew our attention to key emerging themes in the Annual Audit Plan 2023/24 and asked where the force were in terms of acting on these threats, such as cyber security and vetting. The ACOR informed us there had been a vetting backlog previously and this was recorded as a risk on the risk register, this was mainly due to it not being prioritised and the force were not an outlier in this. Following an His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection 4 years ago the vetting department had subsequently seen heavy investment in order to respond to HMICFRS recommendations. Following the tragic death of Sarah Everard, the HMICFRS undertook a detailed vetting review 12 months ago within all forces of all employees.It was agreed that vetting practices should be included in the Workforce Planning Strategy deep dive at the following meeting. The CEx assured the HMICFRS recommendations received by the force were completed within a day. The force was in the process of conversing with the CoP regarding vetting practices, as existing checks could only assess an employee’s past and not their moral compass or future behaviours.The JAC Internal Audit/Governance Lead asked if the force needed to evaluate their response to unexpected issues such as the Metropolitan Police force declaring they were not attending mental health calls any more or the Home Secretary making policing decisions out of the blue. The ACOR explained a pronouncement by the CC regarding what they would or wouldn’t do was an issue for each individual force. The issue was linked very closely to a piece of work being undertaken across England and Wales to ensure the right service was provided by the right agency; the right care, right person programme. A pronouncement by the Home Secretary fell under a legislative framework within which CC’s and PCC’s operated. There was a certain amount of authority within which the HO could encroach and elements where they were not able to. The most recent comments from the HO have been challenged to ascertain if they were appropriate.The DPCC explained as we moved towards the pre-election period these issues would become more prevalent and the role of the policing would become a sharp focus as the political landscape was expected to become more volatile. While the CC and PCC were acutely aware of the dynamic around police demand having to focus on the delivery of support for members of the communities who may be suffering mental distress, consideration also needed to be given to the roles of other public services such as the demand being placed on policing as ambulance service provision. The national right care, right person programme was aimed at strategically working with partners to agree ways of working to enable the core functions of services. | **Action****HoF****Action****ACOR****Action** |
| 1. **INTERNAL AUDIT (TORFAEN COUNTY BOROUGH COUNTY COUNCIL)**
 |  |
| We received the Torfaen County Borough County Council Quarterly Update Progress Report. Quarter 1 and 2 had been completed as expected with no issues or risks to flag. JAC were satisfied with the progress made and for the support of the JAC ICT Lead in this area.  |  |
| 1. **EXTERNAL AUDIT**
 |  |
| AW advised us they were working towards a revised date of 30th November 2023 for certification of the accounts as they were ahead of plan.Planning of work was continuing in relation to the new International Standard on Auditing 315 (ISA315). Regular assessments were being undertaken to ensure the audit was on track and no new risks had been identified since the last AW audit plan had been presented.Audit work was progressing well, a limited number of issues had been identified to date. AW were having regular catch ups with the finance department. Use of the new Inflo collaborate software had proven to be positive in managing the flow of information between the finance department and AW.Indictive timelines were contained within the AW update and it was noted that the revised financial statements and the ISA260 audit report would need to be presented to JAC prior to the 30th November 2023 in order to meet the statutory sign off. It was agreed for an additional JAC meeting date in November to be circulated to JAC members. The JAC Finance/External Audit Lead assured us he would be in regular contact with AW and the finance department and keep JAC members apprised of any changes to the planned audit. | **GO** |
| 1. **BUDGET SETTING TIMETABLE**
 |  |
| We received the Budget Setting Timetable.The HoF advised us that the budget setting timetable followed the standard approach used previously. The draft budget would be presented to the CC to consider by early November 2023 and presented to JAC in December 2023. Following that, the precept proposal would be submitted to the Commissioner for consideration and to the PCP in January 2024 and finalised by mid February 2024.JAC were assured the process of budget setting was well planned.  | **Action** |
| 1. **OUTSTANDING AUDIT INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS**
 |  |
| We received and noted the Outstanding Audit Inspection Recommendations report.JAC acknowledged that the number of recommendations requiring an extension had decreased significantly over the last few years. There was 1 outstanding audit recommendation requiring an extension to the 31st December 2023, some vehicles had not been fitted with iR3 telematics boxes as planned. The plan was for the change to be made when the vehicles were due for a service by June 2023. However, 8 of the vehicles were still outstanding and therefore, the vehicle users had been asked to bring the vehicles in prior to the next service for the fitting if it was due after December 2023. JAC asked if there was any risk to the force if the vehicles were brought in for the next service as opposed to it being earlier. The ACOR explained that the iR3 telematics system had been implemented within the last 12 months and not having it installed in the vehicles may lead to poor performance, as the system provided comprehensive data on usage of vehicles including exceeding speed limits. JAC asked what officers on restricted duties referred to. The ACOR confirmed there were approximately 100 officers who were not able to work on the frontline for various reasons such as physical injury or pregnancy who were deployed to areas to which they could add value. This also related to a small number of officers who may be subject of a complaint, who were not suspended and were deemed to be safe to continue to work in the force but couldn’t remain in the area where the complaint had made whilst they were under investigation. TIAA confirmed the interim follow up audit was scheduled to take place following presentation of the audit plan. Therefore, TIAA would be seeking evidence that the recommendations had been implemented in the coming weeks, the report would be presented to JAC by the following meeting. The ACOR confirmed all SRS audit recommendations had been completed apart from 2 but there were no issues to raise. JAC were satisfied with the progress made and for the support of the JAC ICT Lead in this area. |  |
| 1. **ETHICS COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE AND ETHICAL DILEMMAS – VERBAL UPDATE**
 |  |
| We received a verbal update on the Ethics Committee Governance and Ethical Dilemmas. The CoEC informed us that a significant amount of work had been undertaken to improve the culture within the force and there were opportunities to make further improvements. The Code of Ethics (CoE) was introduced in 2014 by the CoP and following that the force adopted an external Independent Ethics Committee (IEC) in 2015. It had since seen a number of iterations. Originally it consisted of external members and Chief Officers attended the committee to observe, although ethical dilemmas were discussed. The Terms of Reference (ToR) was subsequently revised and the IEC was not only to discuss ethical dilemmas but also to embed the CoE within the force. However, it was recognised early on that the IEC could not fully fulfil the role.In 2021 an Internal Ethics Group (IEG) was established and incorporated into the force governance structure to empower people to do the right thing, to encourage challenge and reporting, to put ethics at the heart of decision making and to support those who demonstrated ethical behaviours. The IEC reported to the IEG through the force governance structure to the People and Culture Board.Although there was membership from the Commissioner’s office and the force, there had been challenges supporting the agenda as membership had been difficult to maintain. There had also been a lack of ethical dilemmas submitted to the IEC. The force has been trying to encourage further reporting of ethical dilemmas by employees by providing options to report anonymously if they wished. The IEC continue to work on raising awareness such as implementing changes to all force agendas to focus on ethical considerations at the start of every agenda, they delivered a half day training course including ethical dilemmas to 600 officers between February and June 2023, ethical issues and expected standards were also being addressed during the induction process. The Group have also developed a suite of further dilemmas for supervisors to discuss at team meetings.JAC asked if there were any measures in place in relation to the numbers of discipline procedures undertaken in force and action to be taken to reduce those numbers. The CEx explained that a review of the IEC had taken place and it was the force’s intention for the committee to be governed similarly to the role of JAC with an independent committee chair and to recruit committee members with experience and knowledge of ethics. The CEx advised us the changes had been delayed and it would be timely with the introduction of the revised CoE to revisit this approach.The JAC ICT Lead asked if there was scope for JAC members to submit potential ethical dilemmas drawing on their own experiences with respect to horizon scanning and results of audit findings. The CoEC welcomed this request and it was agreed that the final item on every agenda would read as ‘To identify any risks, training requirements or ethical matters arising from this meeting’. It was also agreed that the CEx and CoCE could ensure dilemmas from the Ethics Committee could be shared with the JAC. Although it was confirmed the inspection report identified that employees knew what was expected of them in terms of ethical standards when asked by HMICFRS, it was agreed that presenting ethical dilemmas and advice would further support employees to ensure smaller issues did not escalate into more serious issues of misconduct. The CoCE suggested the levels of reporting of ethical issues would be a good indicator of how well communication channels were working, when raising awareness in specific areas.  | **Action****Action****GO****CEx** |
| 1. **INFORMATION GOVERNANCE ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23**
 |  |
| We received the Information Governance Annual Report 2022/23.The ACOR provided a summary of the report and advised there was nothing of concern to raise.JAC noted Freedom of Information (FOI) requests were increasing and asked if there was a central unit who assisted with blanket requests across forces. The ACOR confirmed there was a force Central Referral Unit to assist with blanket requests and explained that FOIs were also published on the force website which was helping to reduce duplicating responses, as service users could be referred to the website. However, due to issues being raised in the media there was a backlog in the Professional Standards Department as there were no additional resources to deal with the influx of requests, particularly as some of the information requested was sensitive. |  |
| We took a short lunch break and resumed the meeting at 13.00 |  |
| 1. **JAC ANNUAL REPORT**
 |  |
| We received JAC Annual and Report 2022/23.The JAC chair was pleased with progress made since last year in terms of risk management, SRS audit and evidencing risk. The main concern was the delay in the forthcoming accounts closure process which was being monitored. We noted the following amendments:* First paragraph on page 3, ‘Influence change whene’ should read ‘Influence change when’
* Last paragraph on page 3, the date read 2022/23 and should read 2023/24.
* Line 4, on page 5, ToRs should read ToR.
* It was suggested that the JAC Leads roles should be noted at the beginning of the report under membership and meetings and titles consistent throughout the report.
 | **HoAC****Action** |
| **17. JAC SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN** |  |
| We received the JAC Self- Assessment Action Plan. The Chair confirmed that some of the actions would remain open as standing items. Others were being progressed and many of the actions could be closed having been reviewed. It was agreed that all of the completed items would be put at the end of the report in future and the remainder presented in Red, Amber or Green (RAG) status order.  | **HoAC** |
| 1. **BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK**
 |  |
| We received the Board Assurance Framework (BAF).The Business Assurance Framework and the Risk Lead had met with the HoAC and the CFO to review the BAF. Although there were a few minor enhancements to be made, it was agreed the BAF gave a good pictorial summary of a complex assurance framework and could potentially be used as a tool to provide assurance to JAC in areas of risk in the future. Due to unforeseen circumstances those amendments have not yet been made and therefore it was agreed the BAF would be presented as it was. The HoAC provided an overview of the document advising that the headings used could be changed as the BAF was developed. This was a template for JAC to review the structure at this stage. The version presented was based on the Commissioner’s office meeting their statutory duties through their key roles and responsibilities. There were 3 levels of assurance, based on the 3 lines of defence and the intention was to RAG rate each area to identify any gaps, the main focus being on those with a red rating, with limited or no assurance. JAC asked if there was further resource in the HoAC team as this had been raised as a concern in previous meetings and it was confirmed that a Standards and Governance Officer had been recruited in August 2023. The JAC ICT Lead asked how the two corporation’s sole element would be dealt with in the BAF. The HoAC confirmed the BAF would be focussed on the Commissioner’s office in the first instance and then consideration would be given to the force once it had been reviewed, as it could be very large due to the complexity of the force.The JAC Internal Audit Lead referred to item 2a in the BAF and suggested, common themes should be put in order across the page. It was acknowledged that there was more work to do as it was a work in progress. JAC members thanked all involved for their hard work and agreed the BAF could be a beneficial tool for providing them with assurance in the future.  | **Action** |
| 1. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
 |  |
| A discussion ensued and the following deep dives were agreed:* Workforce Planning Strategy/Vetting practices – December 2023
* Force Control Room – Mental Health Practitioners in the Force Control Room/Social Media Desk – March 2024

The Chair asked the JAC members to notify the GO if they were not able to attend any of the suggested JAC meeting dates.  | **JAC Members** |
| 1. **TO IDENTIFY ANY RISKS OR TRAINING REQUIREMENT ARISING FROM THIS MEETING**
 |  |
| The JAC ICT Lead requested a list of national, regional and local partners who supported the delivery of systems to the force to demonstrate the reliance on those partners and any risks posed. The ACOR agreed to provide the list to the JAC ICT prior to their following ICT meeting and to advise JAC when this was completed.  | **ACOR** |
| **The meeting concluded at 13.33pm.** |  |