





Due to time constraints at the Joint Audit Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020, it was agreed that there would be a reduced agenda and some reports would be circulated following the meeting for comment. These comments have been collated and a response provided. Please find a list of these questions and their responses below:



**\*Please note:** once completed this document will be published on the OPCC website alongside the minutes of the meeting to evidence scrutiny.

<u>Report Title</u>	<u>Question/Comment</u>	<u>Response</u>
<b>Outstanding Audit Inspection Recommendations</b>	Appendix 1 - O/S Audit Recommendations Report 06.11.2020, Line 8, discrepancy between columns F & G in terms of format and content.	Noted & addressed.
	It is good to see the number of completed actions.	Noted.
	Due to the reasons stated in the report, the recommended extensions are agreed by JAC members.	Noted.
	Collaborative Change Control - There appears to be a pattern developing whereby audit recommendations are delayed on collaborative areas due to different priorities of the different forces. It would be good to have these differences aired within the management response in order for auditors and management to set a realistic date for completion and then be held accountable for completing in time.	These matters will now be escalated to the Joint DCC quarterly meeting to oversee the progress and resolution.
<b><u>Commissioning Services Update</u></b>	We commend the positive interventions that are targeted via the sums invested. A really informative paper and fascinating and inspiring to see how many areas there are where intervention, support and interaction	Noted.


	<p>with the police can make a difference to people's lives in order to help prevent crime, support people after crime and to coordinate working with the police with other organisations and the public.</p>	
	<p>We are pleased that a generous approach is being taken with extension of grant projects' durations.</p>	<p>Noted and review complete to inform investments 2021/22.</p>
	<p>How can JAC judge whether Value for Money (VfM) is being achieved from these programmes, individually and as a whole. How can we be assured that funding is not JUST seen as a short pilot funding and that we: a) learn from b) replicate and spread as appropriate and embed as business as usual. What procurement procedures apply to the awarding of such grants?</p>	<p>Pilot interventions (whether commissioned or grant awarded) are increasingly becoming subject to an evaluation stage, either at the natural conclusion of the pilot/programme of work (e.g. following withdrawal of funding or achievement of objectives) or before the pilot becomes recurrently funded and embedded in day to day business.</p> <p>The evaluation work will consider the effectiveness and efficiency of the intervention; lessons learned; and options for a safe exit of the pilot/programme or to place it on a sustainable footing.</p> <p>In addition, during the life of the pilot/programme, robust contract/grant management arrangements are adopted, with regular performance meetings undertaken between the provider, OPCC and Gwent Police. Furthermore, as these pilots/programmes of work are regularly grant funded by the Home Office/Welsh Government/Ministry of Justice, these in turn require robust returns to be made by the OPCC, to ensure that their funding is demonstrating VFM.</p>
	<p>3.46, Perpetrator services (Domestic Abuse Service) - How can we be assured that the money invested is not just consumed but that it forms part of a beneficial sustainable way forward?</p>	<p>See above.</p>

	<p>3.47, Crime Prevention Panels - We don't need to be precious about a particular delivery mechanism but would expect that we'd subscribe to the tenet that "Prevention is better than cure". If Well Being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) was applied directly to the Police in Wales, how would Gwent Police have fared if it had been a participant in the Future Generations Commissioner's and Auditor General's reports of May 2020?</p>	<p>Crime Prevention is the first priority of the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan and significant work has been undertaken from both the Force's side (e.g. "We Don't Buy Crime") and the Commissioner's commissioning strategy (e.g. Police Community Fund) to deliver this priority.</p> <p>The Commissioner and OPCC are active members (as statutory invitees) on each of the Gwent PSBs, increasingly pushing police and crime considerations 'up the agenda'. I suspect however, that although policing absolutely recognises prevention as the strategy do 'tighten up' the 'demand tap', the same constraints identified in the May 2020 reports would apply in some part to policing.</p> <p>Referencing the points made in the section directly above regarding pilots, increasingly the OPCC and Gwent Police are the first to the table with the plan, money and resources to pilot early intervention initiatives. Sadly however at the positive conclusion of the pilot, public sector partners are not always able/willing to embed the initiative on a sustainable footing.</p>
<p><b><u>Financial Performance Report</u></b></p>	<p>3.4 It would be good for JAC members to understand the policy with regards to agency usage - how much additional cost is there associated - the rationale for usage - VfM implications if any.</p>	<p>Most agency posts are covering vacancies or are supporting short-term work (ie a project or addressing backlogs). It is reviewed each month at the Workforce Resources Meeting.</p>
	<p>3.6 It would be good to learn more about the overspend position on overtime once the analysis is done.</p>	<p>Detailed in Q3 Finance Report.</p>
	<p>3.7 Fewer external training courses - What are the implications of reduced training undertaken on the effectiveness of the service. Are there implications for future years replacing external courses with online equivalents with no loss of quality/effectiveness.</p>	<p>A paper detailing the impact, along with a summary of all the courses which were cancelled (excel) is below:</p>

	 Covid-19 - Cancellation of Trair  Cancelled courses - 20-21.xlsx
3.9 Transport costs - as above, in new operating models not all meetings have to be in person, they can be online.	Noted.
3.10 It would be interesting to see the split between collaboration and consultancy costs making up £1.3m, this would also aid transparency.	<p>The £1.3m is made up of £444k partnership fees and £795k is collaboration costs – a total of £1,239m. The balance of £149k is spread across multiple headings:</p>  JAC Q3 2020-21 supplies services.xls:
3.11 What Home Office grants are awaited?	<p>From a purely Home Office grants perspective they've given us more than anticipated at 31/12/2020. It is the other elements of income that haven't been provided yet – partnership fees, etc – that means we're behind where we thought we would be on a YTD basis. A copy of the subjective analysis that underpins the quarterly finance report is below:</p>  JAC Q3 2020-21 income split.xlsx
5.1 Is it now a general principle that the Police will receive finance from the UK Government Surge Enforcement Fund to cover costs for ALL lockdowns, past, present, future - national (UK wide) and local?	This is reported in the Q3 Finance Report.
6.3 What's the plan to improve on overdue sales invoices, are any Small Medium Enterprises adversely affected?	This is reported in the Q3 Finance Report.

<p>6.5 It would be good for JAC members to learn more of the process improvement measures with regards to creditors that are being undertaken.</p>	<p>This is reported in the Q3 Finance Report.</p>
<p>6.6 Pleased to see good progression on average time for invoices to be paid and also increased usage of Purchase Orders. When do we expect coverage to be 100% and what are the planned intermediate steps to get there?</p>	<p>This is reported in the Q3 Finance Report.</p>
<p>Capital Expenditure – Paragraph 6.8 of the Report reviews expenditure against budget on estates projects. It notes that progress on the new Headquarters is on target but doesn't comment on what appears to be significant underspends on other estate projects. Perhaps the expenditure was not anticipated until the second half of the year?</p>	<p>The significant elements relate to the Abergavenny Police Hub and the Torfaen Police Hub. These projects are underway but the programme plan is yet to be published.</p>
<p>6.9 It would be good to hear further details of progress of the telematics system roll-out.</p>	<p>A copy of the February 2021 Telematics project highlight report and high level plan are below:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>3.2.2 Telematics Highlight report Feb</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Telematics High Level Plan - V5.xlsx</p> </div> </div>
<p>6.10 9 It would be good to hear further details of progress of the custody digitalization.</p>	<p>The Digital Interview Recording (DIR) system was implemented in 2019/20 and 21 and provides digital (video and audio) interview recording in all Custody Unit Interview Rooms, 3 Achieving Best Evidence suites and 10 Voluntary Attendance interview facilities. There are also 5 portable interview kits for use away from police premises. The £19,000 spend relates to the retention of the contract.</p>

	6.11 It is good that reserves start to be replenished, but it might not sit well with the electorate if precept rises again even though reserves are being proposed for good use	Noted.
	8.1 It would be good to have increased clarity once the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and funding formula review are known.	Noted.
	If I read the paper correctly a transfer to reserves of £5.5m will be made out of the projected underspends in 20/21. The main cause of underspend is in staff costs which seems at odds with the pressures the police force are facing and I would like to understand this more. In addition, it would be good to know whether the transfer of funds to reserves is going to be "earmarked" for future expenditure on the workforce when needed?	The front loading of Operation Uplift monies, plus the timing of recruitment and training, has created a surplus reserve that has been set aside to fund the whole recruitment process.
<b><u>SICA Report</u></b> <b><u>November 2020</u></b>	Compliance Review of Expenses and Additional Payments – you may like to note that I queried with TIAA in the pre-meeting before the last JAC meeting whether the “Reasonable Assurance” opinion on this audit could actually have been “Substantial Assurance” as there was only 1 recommendation albeit in the priority 1 category. It also appeared that the matter was already being addressed by the Force. TIAA was of the opinion however that sufficient progress had been not made in addressing this recommendation at the time of the audit and therefore the opinion should remain as “Reasonable”.	Noted.

	<p>Appendix D, Page 12, Briefings on Developments in Governance, Risk and Control. Could an update on progress in respect of all these to be provided?</p>	<p>Details are contained in the below document:</p>  <p>Summary - Tiaa Client Briefing Note</p>
	<p>Page 9 Strategic Resource Planning: Planned Quarter 3: It is stated that there has been no feedback to date after the last meeting in October : is this merely a statement of fact ?</p>	<p>The Strategic Resource Planning APM was revised and issued on 19 January 2021. The audit for Gwent is arranged for 15-19 March 2021 and the scope will review the arrangements in place at each force for strategic resource planning, considering the national initiative for recruitment of additional Police Officers. The scope of the review will not include the overall strategic planning and the links to the Police and Crime Plan.</p>
	<p>We welcome the development and inclusion of the root cause indicators and look forward to seeing how this pans out and being able to have discussion on them as we find that we have often found potential root cause crossovers between the audits, having a formal approach from the auditors will assist JAC greatly.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p><b><u>Annual Code of Ethics Compliance Report</u></b></p>	<p>No comments other than interesting to understand the number of dilemmas discussed and how they are communicated more widely.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>