**OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE**

10th July 2025

Present:

G Watts (Chair) – Finance, External Audit and Culture Lead (GW)

A Johns (Vice Chair) – Internal Audit, Governance and Estate Lead (AJ)

D Turner – Business Assurance Framework

and Sustainability Lead (DT)

J Wademan – ICT and Change/Project Management Lead (JW)

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

D Garwood-Pask – Chief Finance Officer (OPCC) – (CFO (OPCC))

S Curley – Chief Executive (CEx)

N McLain – Temporary Assistant Chief Constable - Organisation – (T/ACC - ORG)

V Townsend - Temporary Assistant Chief Constable – Operational (T/ACC - OP)

J A Davies - Superintendent, Head of Criminal Justice (HoCJ)

M Coe – Chief Finance Officer (CC) – (CFO (CC))

M Corcoran - Internal Audit, Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBCIA)

F Roe – TIAA (TIAA1)

J Maddock – TIAA (TIAA2)

K Thomas - Change Management Manager (CMM)

J Davies – Chief Inspector of Governance and Assurance (CHIGA)

D Williams – Audit Wales (AW)

N Warren - Governance Officer (GO)

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| The meeting was held in the Oak Room and on Teams and commenced at 10:00am. | **Action** |
| 1. **APOLOGIES** |  |
| Apologies for absence were received from J Mudd, Police and Crime Commissioner, M Hobrough, Chief Constable, N Brain, Temporary Deputy Chief Constable, A Blackmore, JAC member, T Delaney, Inspector Governance and Insurance, M Yasir, Head of Finance, N Brennan, Head of Joint Legal Services, C Bates, Audit Wales, J Regan, Head of Assurance and Compliance, R Harries, Audit Wales and S Gourlay, TIAA. |  |
| 1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** | **Action** |
| There were no advance declarations made in relation to the business to be transacted. |  |
| 1. **MINUTES** |  |
| The Committee received and noted the minutes from the meeting held on 13th March 2025. No comments were received and the minutes were approved. |  |
| 1. **ACTIONS** |  |
| The Committee received and noted the actions from the meeting held on 13th March 2025 and actions outstanding from earlier meetings.    **Action 2, 13th March 2025, To Discuss New Risks and Changes to Risk Ratings**  GW requested an update in relation Go Safe service provision**.** The CFO (CC) explained that the service would continue as is this year. A number of proposals had been put forward regarding the continuation of the service and an official briefing from the collaborative Force lead was expected in due course. The DPCC assured thecommittee that the Go Safe Partnership was on the agenda of the Policing Partnership Board for Wales, the following week.  **Action 2,** **13th March 2025, To Discuss New Risks and Changes to Risk Ratings**.  Following a discussion, it was agreed that the T/ACC - ORG would give a presentation during this JAC meeting (rather than in September) to provide assurance to JAC members in relation to potential changes to the future partnership between the Force/OPCC and Shared Resource Service (SRS).  **Action 5, 13th March 2025, External Audit.**  The CFO (OPCC) explained that representations had been made to the Force regarding temporary roles and Chief Officers had acknowledged the impact this could have and are working towards a conclusion, likely to be in the Autumn.  **Action 6, 13th March 2025, External Audit.**  GW requested an update on the recommendations within the final audit addendum report.  There were seven recommendations, with two not accepted by management. The CFO (CC) confirmed that recommendation 3 pertained to the disclosure of related parties. The CFO (CC) mentioned that AW and the HoF would collaborate on this issue, and it would be revisited during the next ISA260 report if it arose again.  Recommendation 5 involved the approval of reserve movements, suggesting that formal approval of transfers in and out of Earmarked Reserves be documented. The CFO (OPCC) confirmed this had been completed and noted in the accounts and would form part of the following Reserves Strategy.  **Action 12, 13th March 2025, Any Other Business**  GW has held 1-1s with DT and AJ and arrangements were being made to complete 1-1s with AB and JW.  **Action 1, 12th June 2024, Actions**  GW requested an update on Disaster Recovery testing of the Finance system. The CFO (CC) assured the Committee that the recovery backup system was in place and testing was anticipated to take place before the end of the financial year. The delay was primarily a result of resourcing as other issues had to be prioritised.  **Action 3, 21st March 2024, Welsh Language Standards Risk Deep Dive- presentation**  The JAC members commended the work of the Strategic Welsh Language Policy Manager for the positive comprehensive Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2023/24 and requested the following years report in due course. | **Action**  **DCC** |
| 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** |  |
| The Committee reviewed the Joint Strategic Risk and Issue Register, noting 4 high risks, 11 medium risks, and 3 low risks, with no changes to the high risks since the previous meeting in March. There was a discrepancy in the July presentation showing 5 high risks/issues instead of 4, which the CMM agreed to review and update.  Two new medium risks were identified: the ICT Convergence Programme and the Classic Active Server Pages (ASP) risk, the latter expected to reduce to a low rating after addressing unsupported software issues. Four risks/issues were removed from the register since March, including Disclosure - Freedom of Information/Subject Access Requests, Police Driver Licences, Control Room Systems, and Personal Protective Safety Training.  GW requested clarification on governance in relation to approving the removal of risks from the register. The CMM explained there was a plan put in place as each risk/issue arises, including a point when the level or risk reduces. This is tracked through various Force governance meetings and boards. Once the mitigation has been put in place it is reviewed by the DCC at the Scrutiny Executive Board (SEB) for confirmation of grading or removal. They are also reviewed at the Formal Chief Officer Team meetings.  GW asked if the risks can be de-escalated to a lower level in the organisation and the CMM explained that JAC are presented with the main organisational risk register, but there was also a change management risk register for when change was undertaken and risks were assessed as a result of those changes. The CFO (CC) confirmed risk was assessed at every level. The T/ACC -OP explained that they chaired 3 boards where highlight reports were provided for each meeting, each containing a risk element, indicating if risks should be escalated to the organisational risk register or retained at that Board.  Risk was also a standard item on every Force agenda,  The CFO (OPCC) explained that the same Risk Management Framework was adopted by OPCC but on a smaller scale.  AJ referred to the current medium and low risks/issues and asked if Disaster Recovery in the broader aspect, not specifically finance and the ICT Convergence Programme was to remain at a lower level given the issues with the recent hacking issues in the media and the uncertainties in the Cyber Security arena. The CFO (CC) assured the Committee this would be considered at the Business and Continuity Group.  The CMM assured the Committee that Gwent were one of the highest ranking Forces in the UK in terms of their cyber security level when assessed against the Security Assurance for Policing (SyAP) scoring system.  AJ sought assurance that the Force had conducted a sufficient amount of testing to ensure these cyber risks could be mitigated. The CFO (OPCC) assured the Committee the Disaster Recovery on the global policing system was considerable.  The T/ACC - OP explained that in terms of operational risk, custody would be a high risk due to the human rights aspect, and therefore the unit could switch to a paper system in less than an hour to comply with all of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) requirements. The Force Control room could also work on an agile basis if required, as this was the case during the Covid pandemic.  A discussion took place about the changeable political climate and the potential for extremist views, suggesting that future commitment to valuable initiatives might be challenging and could be considered a risk. The CMM agreed to discuss this with the T/ACC - Org to see if it had been included in the Culture Board within the Strategic Equality Plan.  DT raised concerns regarding the budget constraints and the challenges in recruiting enough police officers. They highlighted that economic pressures are making it difficult to maintain adequate staffing levels, which in turn affects the ability to prevent and address crimes like shoplifting. DT also mentioned that past initiatives like the graduate program and government funding had been successful, but the current situation poses a risk to community safety.  DT suggested these concerns were included in the risk management strategies, while considering value for money and budget constraints. By doing so, the Forces could better prioritise their resources and ensure that they are effectively addressing the issues that impact the wider community. It was agreed these suggestions would be considered going forward.  Our attention was drawn to the old evidential property system being made read only due to security issues, which added to the additional risk in delaying the decommissioning of the property system and transferring exhibits to Niche. JW asked what effect this would have on the Force operationally and what mitigations were in place; which was further complicated by the changes to ICT provision. The HoCJ explained the old system was read only access for the time being and the risk has been mitigated by any new property only being recorded on the new system. The old system was to decommissioned before the end of the following year. | **CMM**  **Action**  **T/ACC-ORG**  **Action** |
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| 1. **STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK** |  |
| The Committee received the Strategic Risk Management Framework report.  The CHIGA had reviewed the document 12 months ago and the document reflected the changes within the governance team and the new roles and responsibilities. It was based on a new police only strategic framework as opposed to a joint framework with the OPCC. The CMM welcomed any questions.  GW inquired about how the framework was communicated to ensure it was properly embedded within the organisation. The CMM explained that the Governance and Assurance team was responsible for this task. They manage the risk plans and feed information into the appropriate governance boards. The team guides members or staff through their responsibilities, overseen by an Inspector within the Assurance team. |  |
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| 1. **UPDATE ON EVIDENTIAL STORAGE ACTION PLAN** | **Action** |
| The Committee received the Evidential Storage Action Plan Update.  The HoCJ advised the Committee there was a risk related to managing property across multiple locations. There was a 30% decrease in held property since the risk was identified. However, further reduction has proven challenging.  The Force have concentrated on the volume of property being seized each month. The challenge was managing items once they were booked in, as well as the influx of new items. A training program has been implemented for both new and current police officers, focusing on the necessity and proportionality of seizing items. This has led to a noticeable, though not massive, reduction in the number of items seized each month. The goal is to ensure that only items necessary for prosecutions are seized, rather than adopting a blanket approach.  Property disposals have been a concern due to the reduced number of items being disposed of recently, attributed to multiple locations and high levels of agency staff during the transition to the new property system. The department is considering moving to a single property location, which has been agreed upon by several boards, including the Estate Strategy Board. This move aims to address inefficiencies and improve the management of evidential property, with potential savings of £30k.  Having focussed on the evidential storage risk for a long time, the JAC members were keen to support the force and the finance department in the completion of this move as soon as possible.  JW asked was there a timeline with regards to addressing concerns about the environmental impact of the current property storage situation, particularly regarding the storage of drugs. The HoCJ explained the Force were looking for alternatives within the current evidential property estate, but these alternatives did not currently exist. The resolution of this issue was dependent on moving to a single location, which would mitigate the environmental impact.  It was acknowledged that the 5 buildings utilised by the Force could also be used for other uses or released, potentially resulting in further savings.  JW also asked about a timeline for the move, and the HoCJ advised that once the final board approved it, the timeline for the move would be presented at the next JAC meeting. The move is expected to be completed within a few months. Although two options were proposed, the single location was always the preferred option and has been taken forward. | **HoCJ** |
| 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. | **Action** |
| 1. **INTERNAL AUDIT – (TIAA)** |  |
| The Committee received the reports:   * Assurance Review of Contract Management.   The report has been given an overall limited assurance rating due to several issues being identified during the audit. There was one urgent recommendation, six important recommendations, and one routine recommendation. The main issue highlighted was the lack of controls in the laundry service, particularly regarding items sent to the contractor, for cleaning and their return.  The key priority recommendation was about the collection process, where no paperwork was completed to document the number of items leaving and returning to the force. This led to stock issues, and on one occasion, the force had to obtain blankets from South Wales Police (SWP) due to a shortage. There were also issues with deliveries on the finance system and the lack of reconciliation between collection and delivery notes.  The report recommended developing procedure notes for the laundry process within custody to ensure a clear understanding of how it works. Changes in the Chief Inspector responsible for custody had occurred, and a handover process was needed to ensure continuity. The contract's Key Performance Indicators had not been met since its start, and this needed to be addressed with the contractor. Lastly, an evaluation was needed to determine the benefits of Gwent Police jointly funding the approach with SWP to assist in contract management.  The Committee expressed disappointment with the result but acknowledged the importance of the report. They noted that the issues identified could have broader implications for the force and highlighted the need for careful planning and handovers. The Committee also raised concerns about the potential for fraudulent activities due to insufficient checking and emphasised the importance of spending public money wisely. They queried whether the issues identified were indicative of a broader cultural problem within the Force and questioned the rationale behind choosing this particular audit. The Committee sought to understand what the organisation had learned from the audit and how it would address the issues identified.  The CFO (CC) acknowledged that internal audit were doing exactly what the Force had intended them to do, as this audit had been effective in highlighting issues within contract management. The audit revealed a significant disconnect during the changeover of staff, which could lead to problems. This finding has been helpful in raising awareness within the custody suite, which is responsible for all custody contracts, except cleaning.  The audit has also helped identify how contracts are managed within the Force. There are various levels of contract management, including departmental management, estates management, and procurement management, depending on the size of the contract. The largest contracts are managed by the Joint Procurement Service. For example, medical provision for nurses within custody is managed collaboratively with South Wales Police (SWP). Cleaning contracts are managed by the estate team, covering all cleaning aspects across the entire estate. Custody is responsible for its own elements, such as ensuring the availability of blankets and food etc.  The CFO (CC) informed the Committee they were taking proactive steps to ensure that contract management within the Force is robust and well-coordinated. By meeting with Procurement, they are emphasising the importance of regular training for those responsible for contracts, ensuring that everyone is aware of their responsibilities. Additionally, the focus on clear handovers of contracts and procedures is crucial, especially given the regular rotation of staff. This approach should help maintain continuity and prevent any potential issues that could arise from staff changes  It acknowledged that contract management was a wider issue, not specific to Gwent and it was agreed that given the cross-sectoral nature of knowledge management, it's crucial to have clear procedures and regular training to ensure that information is passed on effectively, especially in roles where staff rotate regularly.   DT suggested that the Force finance systems should be able to access a list all contracts and their values, as well as identify the owners and managers of these contracts by role. It would be beneficial to prioritise contracts based on their value, from high to low. This prioritisation should be integrated into job descriptions, ensuring that roles responsible for managing contracts are clearly defined. Additionally, job descriptions should be updated annually with an addendum listing the contracts and their values, so that staff are aware of what they are managing. Following that, consideration could be given to other follow-up audits for areas that should be reviewed.  The Chair suggested Contract Management and handover procedures should be a standing item on the agenda going forward.   * Update Report   TIAA have regained accreditation on the Green Dragon Environmental Standard. In terms of climate sustainability, TIAA have also developed a maturity assessment tool to help clients develop their sustainability arrangements.  There have been no changes since last month, with one priority recommendation to be followed up in the next meeting. The progress for 2024-2025 shows that all work completed is marked in green, with cancelled audits in grey.  The plan for 2025-2026 is progressing well, with all work planned until the end of the year.   * Annual Internal Audit Report   TIAA’s head of audit annual opinion was satisfied that Gwent Police have reasonable and effective risk management, control, and governance processes in place. The report summarises the overall number of audits carried out, with 7 substantial, 7 reasonable, and 2 limited assurances during the year, compared to last year's numbers.  The annex summarised the plan approved last year, including the number of days planned and delivered. The difference in days was explained by the cancellation of two collaborative reviews and the addition of one extra day for the uniform stores audit.   * Indicative Audit Strategy and Annual Plans 2025-28   In relation to the new Global Internal Audit Standards, TIAA have assessed areas of risk within the force and collaborated with the CFO (CC) to develop the plan. The plan, which has expanded from 2 to 4 pages, covers necessary areas as part of the Standards. This includes cyclical reviews of key areas like payroll due to high costs and requirements from Audit Wales. The plan also encourages discussions about any areas of concern to incorporate them into the plan.  The CFO (OPCC) asked that TIAA engaged more closely with the OPCC during the development of the plan as in previous years.  There were two audits planned for the OPCC. The first is on complaints handling which was last undertaken in 2023-2024, which had one reasonable recommendation. The goal is to ensure top value from these audits and consider other areas within the organisation. Discussions with TIAA were ongoing to determine if the audits would provide real value or if other areas should be focused on. The second being a collaborative grants framework and management audit, which may cover the commissioning strategy and framework audit undertaken two years ago, again with a reasonable result. The CFO (OPCC) was seeking assurance from TIAA that an audit would add value when taking into consideration what the outcome was two years ago, if areas such as Contract Management could be considered instead. The discussion highlighted the importance of ensuring no overlap or gaps in the audits and maximising value.  JW raised concerns about the commissioning audit, noting the significant amount of money involved and the need for thorough scrutiny. DT mentioned the need to give the new PCC more time for their review to ensure value for money, prior to the audit not to duplicate work.  AJ referred to the 6 days allocated to the Welsh Language Standards and asked if that amount of time was necessary when the authority who sets the Welsh Language Standards have given the Force a clean bill of health regarding the standards, when these days could be utilised for Contract Management audits. The CFO (OPCC) advised there was flexibility to change the plan and this would be given consideration.  GW referred to the cyclical finance reviews, some of which consistently receive substantial reviews. Audits on the use of Artificial Intelligence and new technology could be considered instead. It may be beneficial to use internal audit more strategically, using internal audit in a more advisory capacity, during the business case development stage as opposed to receiving retrospective assurance.  GW asked that JAC members provided comments on the TIAA audit plan outside of the meeting by the end of the following week and for an update on any changes to be presented to JAC at the following meeting  The CFO (CC) welcomed the comments and asked TIAA(2) what impact the changes would have on planned work for quarter two. TIAA(2) suggested the recommendations for change could be discussed outside of the meeting.  The JAC members approved the Internal Audit Charter. | **Action**  **CFO(CC)/**  **GO**  **Action**  **Action**  **JAC members**  **TIAA2/**  **CFO(CC)/**  **CFO(OPCC)** |
| 1. **INTERNAL AUDIT (TORFAEN COUNTY BOROUGH COUNTY COUNCIL)** |  |
| The Committee received the Torfaen County Borough County Council (TCBC) Shared Resource Service Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25.  The report covers all work up to the end of March 25 supported by a risk-based plan. It has been presented to the Finance and Governance Board (FGB) of the SRS and Monmouth's Governance Audit Committee. The head of audit's opinion was generally satisfactory, with some improvement required.  The report covered 11 reviews, 10 of which were SRS and one Gwent Police specific. This resulted in eight full opinions, two substantial opinions, and one moderate opinion, meeting the expectation of everything being moderate or better.  There were 20 findings in total, with 11 related to SRS and 9 to the Force.  In terms of risk, 1 finding was high, 8 were medium, and 2 were low. The audits looked at 230 controls in the SRS and 83 controls in the Force.  Looking ahead to 2025/26, there would be 11 reviews again, with 10 for SRS and a follow-up of a Force audit. The resource requirement would be 705 hours or 95 days, and the plan was progressing as expected. The quarter 1 audits have been completed.  JW acknowledged that audits have generally been good over the years. However, they were concerned about actions that haven't been followed up, as this appeared to be a potential change in culture. JW suggested that a detailed report should be provided at the following meeting to ensure everything was handed over in order. TCBCIA advised the Committee that the audit for quarter two was scheduled to start around the end of August or September, based on current timelines. So, the full audit report could potentially be provided at the September meeting, or if not, at the following meeting.  The CFO (CC) confirmed the issue in responding to the actions was due to a lack of resources. A number of the actions related to the data centre, regarding additional building and system policy changes that were required. It had been delayed due to vacancies in management posts, relating to the people responsible for implementing the policies. The CFO (CC) assured JW the two vacant posts had subsequently been filled and it was a priority for them to complete the actions within the next 3 months.  The TCBCIA asked the CFO (CC) if the quarter two audit should be delayed to allow time for the actions to be completed and the CFO (CC) suggested this was discussed outside of the meeting. | **Action**  **CFO(CC)/TCBCIA**  **CFO(CC)/**  **TCBCIA** |
| 1. **OUTSTANDING AUDIT INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS** |  |
| The Committee received the Outstanding Audit Inspection Recommendations reports.  The CFO (CC) informed the Committee that the reports have been aligned with the TIAA portal, reflecting all outstanding recommendations rather than just recent movements. The table showed that 84 recommendations were brought forward, with 62 coming out of the 2024/25 programme, including 9 internal audit reports highlighted in item 3.4. The CFO (CC) assured the Committee the Force was actively chasing and closing these items, with 50-60 still outstanding. The process included chasing up actions from the SRS.  The second element was the appendix containing the outstanding recommendations  GW acknowledged there was likely to be some audit recommendations outstanding due to the nature of the process, but was concerned more about the right recommendations being implemented in a timely manner.  The CFO (CC) assured the Committee that if recommendations were not implemented, there would be a clear rationale for it and the CHIGA was undertaking the role of ensuring this process was followed and closing items on the portal.  JW raised a point about the portal's ability to alert when an action was overdue. Activity was noted on June 24th, but it was after the dates had expired, leading to missed updates at meetings. It was suggested that timing issues may need to be addressed to improve the situation. The CFO (CC) acknowledged their concern and confirmed that the outstanding recommendations appendix report wasn't provided at the last meeting as the document was being updated to ensure accuracy, and the CHIGA would be responsible for future reports so this would ensure there was always background information available.  DT noted that throughout the meeting, there had been discussions about reasons, issues, and risks related to resources in various departments. There was a noticeable trend where outstanding audit actions were previously very low and completed timely, but there had been an increase recently. A limited assurance audit highlighted a general lack of controls, indicating that resources were stretched and when resources are stretched, processes and procedures may not be followed properly, leading to risks and issues.  It was suggested to reflect on the overall situation after the meeting and consider a holistic review of resources to prevent serious issues from arising. The CFO (CC) assured JAC it was primarily in relation to the prioritisation of the recommendations which was now in hand as alluded to previously. This would continue to be monitored. | **Action** |
| 1. **EXTERNAL AUDIT** |  |
| The Committee received the Detailed Audit Plan 2025 and a Verbal  Audit Update.  AW informed the Committee their team had been conducting risk assessments, continuous planning, and interim testing, which had informed the detailed audit plan. Materiality levels were set for the remuneration report and related parties, both of high interest to account users.  The audit plan identified two significant risks: the risk of management override of controls and the valuation of pension scheme assets and liabilities, both requiring careful attention due to their monetary value.  Additionally, there were six areas of focus, including IFRS 16 leases, senior officer remuneration, collaboration arrangements, evaluation of land and buildings, and related party disclosures.  The audit timeline was detailed on page 15, with the draft accounts received last week. The final phase of the audit would commence in late July or early August, running through September, with reporting to the JAC in October 2025. The audit team had been resourced and was in a good position, with continuity in the audit lead and senior auditor roles. Interim audit work had been undertaken this year, marking progress from the previous year.  It was acknowledged that the timing had improved compared to the previous year, and it was encouraging to see the draft accounts submitted on time. GW thanked all involved and acknowledged the ongoing resource challenges faced by finance colleagues.  GW inquired if there were any issues to report back to the Committee regarding the interim audit work completed this year and AW explained there were no significant findings at this time. The interim audit work had been productive, allowing a head start on sample tests for the audit process. This would save time in August and September. The team were satisfied with the evidence provided and appreciated the support and collaboration of the finance team, despite their busy schedules.  GW asked for an update on the IFRS 16 leases. The CFO (CC) explained that the standard had evolved over three years. The Force started working on the leases they had early on and have included it in the accounts. Additional resources were brought in to help with the accounts, including, a senior accountant with experience in implementing IFRS 16 in other organisations. The implementation has been challenging but necessary.  The CFO (OPCC) explained that it had been reflected in the Treasury Management strategy for a few years.  The Committee thanked Audit Wales for their engagement and dialogue, which has been positive. The collaborative effort has been beneficial. | **Action** |
| 1. **DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2024/25** |  |
| The Committee received the Draft Statement of Accounts 2024/25 for the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable.  The presentation on the financial statements included progress updates, providing an overview and detailed page-by-page analysis. It included lessons learned from last year, major events affecting this year's plans, and the draft accounts position. The lessons learned meetings with Audit Wales highlighted five key areas: interim testing, capitalisation of assets, fair share adjustment timings, disclosure notes, and resiliency. Interim testing and capitalisation of assets have been completed positively.  The presentation also highlighted the major adjustments from last year, including the timing of payments for the Joint Firearms Unit Training Range and the fair share of collaborative activities. Early engagement with the audit team had been beneficial. Resilience was identified as an area for improvement from last year, and efforts have been made to ensure knowledge sharing within the finance team for this year.  The completion of actions for preparation of the accounts this year has improved, compared to last year. The draft accounts were published online by the 30th of June, which didn't happen last year. There are lessons to be learned from this process, particularly in the final weeks of quality assurance process, which will be fed back to the team.  Major events this year include significant investments in fixed assets, with Abergavenny station opening in the year and vehicle replacement. Three buildings have been evaluated at depreciated replacement cost.  As highlighted above, the IFRS16 leases accounting standard has been applied to the 2024/25 accounts, bringing the largest leases onto the balance sheet as long-term assets and liabilities.  The same accounting treatment as last year was made to reduce the surplus on the balance sheet in relation to the LGPS (Local Government Pension Scheme).  The net budget requirement was £173 million and after transfers to reserves, the position is breaking even. The net cost of services is £2.6m lower than last year due to accounting adjustments and pension movements.  The reserves have reduced by £3.1m to £18.1m due to capital expenditure, and there has been no borrowing this year.  Long-term assets increased by £8.6 million, mainly through asset additions offset by disposals.  Long-term liabilities have moved due to actuarial improvement on pension liabilities.  Net Current assets decreased by £4.7m due to lower cash investments and provisions at year end, partially offset by a corresponding increase in debtors of £4.5m.  The CFO (CC) welcomed feedback from the JAC members on the accounts.  The Call of Audit day has been confirmed as 1st September 2025 and the 2024/25 audited accounts are planned to be published by the 31st of October.  GW requested the presentation was shared with JAC members.  The CFO (OPCC) thanked the Finance Team for their hard work, particularly their approach in introducing the resilience required to ensure that deadlines could be met. | **Action**  **CFC (CC)** |
| 1. **DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT** |  |
| The Committee received the Draft Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25.  The CFO (OPCC) explained that the draft was very similar to the previous iteration, with notable improvements based on feedback, particularly from GW regarding the effectiveness of governance arrangements and joint legal services.  The document was now being reviewed by AW for consistency and the process would also involve various bodies, including JAC, OPCC, COT, SMB, and joint legal services.  The meeting structure has been updated, and the document would remain open for feedback until October 2025.  Additional narrative has been included around governance effectiveness and audit findings, with updates from TCBC, TIAA audit reports and the Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspection. The PCP have also been updated.  The highlighted sections indicating areas which would be updated upon receipt of the narrative. GW thanked the CFO (OPCC) and the agreed that the JAC members would forward any comments to them on the AGS.  The CFO (OPCC) agreed to meet outside of the meeting to present the Estate Strategy Deep Dive to DT as they had other commitments and had to leave the meeting at 12.45.  It was agreed the GO would reschedule the half day tour of the Estate for CFO (OPCC), CFO (CC), AJ and the Head of Estate and Facilities. | **Action**  **JAC Members**  **CFO (OPCC)/**  **DT**  **GO** |
| The Committee took a short lunch break | |
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| 1. **UPDATE ON FORCE MANAGEMENT STATEMENT** |  |
| The Committee received a presentation on the Force Management Statement (FMS).  Each year, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) conducts an assessment of current Force demand. This involves a predictive assessment of assets and ongoing and new risks are addressed. If any demand is unmet, it is highlighted.  Background:   * 70 colleagues contributed to the creation of this document, with 50 serving as authors or subject matter experts. * The document took eight months to create, resulting in 12 sections and 473 pages. * Despite efforts, further reduction of the document was not possible without omitting crucial points. * Data analysis date ranges are primarily for calendar year, except where financial year is essential. * Quality assurance reviews are scheduled for July, October, and January to address any identified issues. * The FMS will document any unforeseen issues that were not predicted at the time of its production.   The following key elements were summarised:   * Section 1 – Finance * Section 2 – Wellbeing (1) * Sections 3A, 3B, Responding to the public and 4 Prevention and deterrence * Section 5 – Investigations & S6 PVP * Section 7 – Managing offenders and S8 Managing Serious Organised Crime * Section 9 – Major Events & S10 Knowledge Management & ICT * Section 11 – Force wide function & S12 Collaborations   JAC members acknowledged the amount of work undertaken to collate and summarise the FMS.  GW asked for further information on the quarterly assurance reviews.  The Committee was informed that the focus of the Force Improvement Board (FIB) was to identify and scrutinise departments with higher levels of compliance errors or significant importance. These departments would be closely monitored to address and improve their performance.  GW inquired how well the Force were engaging with the HMICFRS in relation to the FMS. The CHIGA advised they met with the Force HMICFRS lead on a fortnightly basis and the lead also met with the Deputy Chief Constable monthly. The HMICFRS Lead had recently started to attend the FIB.  JW asked what the production costs of the FMS were, given the number of people involved, as the process has evolved over the year. JW also asked what the usage cost of it was as a tool for the Force on an annual basis. The CMM advised they had not analysed the cost of the process of collating the FMS document.  JW asked if there was potential use of AI to streamline the process of producing the FMS with data in a format that AI could easily interrogate, allowing AI to handle much of the work. This would enable people to review and validate the AI's assessments, ensuring accuracy and fairness in the final document.  The CMM advised the Committee there had been more people involved in the process over time, but it was easier to get people's buy in, as it had become embedded in the organisation. Whilst AI, specifically Copilot, was instrumental in reducing the document from 600+ to 400+ pages, it can't yet automate the entire process. Although it significantly helped by producing shorter paragraphs, reducing wording, and professionalising the text. Additionally, Copilot created summaries for each chapter for the Chief Constable, making the process more efficient.  The Committee were assured by the presentation and thanked all involved. | **Action**  **Action** |
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| 1. **DRAFT OPCC BUSINESS INTEREST POLICY AND PROCEDURE** |  |
| The Committee received the Draft OPCC Business Interest Policy and Procedure report.  The newest iteration of the policy includes changes highlighted on Page 3. The main change was that updated business interests would be shared with the Counter Corruption Unit (CCU). The risks for OPCC staff were lower compared to officers in their role. However, the CCU's input has been invaluable in the past for providing advice on restrictions or caveats for approved business interests. The OPCC lead has completed their annual checks, and the business interest policy was discussed during the recent OPCC team away day, so everyone is up to date with the policy changes. |  |
| 1. **FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER FOUR 2024/2025** |  |
| The Committee received the Financial Performance Report for Quarter Four 2024/25.  The document provided an overview of the financial performance for the last quarter and full-year. It highlighted the adjustments made in period 13, which represented the final management account position.  Key points included:  The year end position showed an underspend of £5.7m which was largely attributable to a £1m increase in investment income due to higher interest rates, coupled with avoiding £969k of capital charges due to not borrowing to fund the capital programme this year. Further contributors to the underspend where due to changes from accounting estimates for PCSO grants and one off non-recurring receipts relating to the cessation of a capital scheme.    The budgeted position anticipated the release of £5.3 million worth of reserves to balance the budget, but this was not necessary due to the underspend.  The CFO (CC) referred to the Pay and Non-pay variances and explained that they were presented on a gross basis so it may appear as higher expenditure, however, this was not the case. For example, the Force received batch 1 funding to maintain an additional 21 Police Officers through Operation Uplift, on top of the usual establishment. The corresponding funding figure is shown as specific grant gross income.  As indicated in the report there were various overspends including one – off payments for overtime, and employee costs etc.  There were also various underspends, some of which included premises and transport costs.  There was an overspend on Supplies and Services mainly due to unexpected expenses for kennelling dangerous dogs.  As of 31st March 2025, there were £432k of creditors, of this total £48k was overdue for payment and average days taken to pay is 16.49 days, well within the 30 day target.  The capital programme spend was lower by £5.8 million than the original budget.  When seized monies is received, the cashiering team actively chase the officers in charge of the case for information to ensure the money is not retained by the Force for too long.  The general reserves at £5.5m has been maintained in line with the Reserves Strategy.  JAC members appreciated the quality and content of the report. | **Action** |
| 1. **MEDUIM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN** |  |
| The Committee received the latest Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).    The MTFP provided the forecast budget position for 2025/26 to 2029/30.  There is a projected deficit increase from £1.7 million to £2.7 million for the current financial year. Several actions are being taken to manage this, including borrowing, which has not yet commenced. Therefore, savings have been made on interest and borrowing payments over the past three months. Cash flow management is currently a challenge, but efforts are being made to secure future external borrowing funding.  The team is focusing on updating the current medium-term financial plan , with the first step being to understand the impact of the 2025 Spending Review (SR2025), providing some certainty about future funding. The SR2025 assumes a 1.7% growth in the Home Office budget over five years. The Force are working with the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) to understand the impact on deficits across policing. This data will help to provide a perspective on future funding rather than just focusing on savings.  Following the finalisation of the Estate Strategy and the agreement of the Capital Programme, there is expected to be further changes to the budget.  The CFO (OPCC) explained that the biggest risk appeared to be the 2-2025/26 Final Settlement, which included a £200 million kickstart for the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, in delivering 13,000 extra neighbourhood resources over the life of this Parliament. This strategy was considered high risk due to the uncertainty of continued funding over the life of the Parliament. The cost for extra staff and officers to deliver the first stage of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee is £2m to Gwent. If the funding was not sustained, the Commissioner/Force would bear all the risk, similar to previous situations where initial investments were made, but subsequent funding did not cover increasing costs as officers advanced in their ranks. | **Action** |
| 1. **VERBAL UPDATE ON FUNDING OF 13,000 ADDITIONAL STAFF AND OFFICERS** |  |
| The Committee received a verbal update on the funding of 13,000 additional police staff and police officers.  The government's manifesto includes an uplift of 13,000 police staff and police officers in neighbourhoods over the years until 2029, with funding for neighbourhood policing increasing from £100 million to £200 million for 2025/26, split across the 43 Forces. The Force has bid for a proportion of that funding. With assistance from the CFO (OPCC) and CFO (CC), a four-year plan was developed with the aim to add 130 police staff and police officers, including initially in year one 58 new posts to the neighbourhood pillar, through a combination of new recruits and realignment. However, there is uncertainty about funding beyond the second year, and some forces have expressed concerns about the sustainability of this uplift.  Regular monitoring and reporting to the Home Office are in place to ensure the year one plan stays on track. At Quarter One, there was PC neighbourhood headcount of 79, increasing to 102, 1 over establishment and the PCSO headcount has increased from 118 to 130, again 1 over establishment but there are challenges in maintaining this due to the movement of PCSOs to other roles, including to police officer roles in Gwent. The plan includes intakes in September and March to backfill vacancies and meet neighbourhood policing commitments. There is also a commitment to 7 Special Constables (SCs). There is a focus on cost-effectiveness by replacing officers with staff in certain roles and deploying the officers to the neighbourhood pillar. The overall strategy aims to enhance visibility and effectiveness in neighbourhood policing, despite the financial uncertainties.  GW thanked the ACC-OP for their update and requested a further update in September. | **Action**  **ACC-OP** |
| 1. **TERMS OF COMPLAINCE, SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS AND PROPOSED SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN FOR THE COMING YEAR** |  |
| The Committee received the Terms of Compliance, Self-Assessment results and proposed Self-Assessment Action Plan for the coming year.  The report demonstrated the JAC members were complying with their ToR.  It was agreed that GW would meet with DT to discuss the revised self-assessment action plan.  As there were only 7 responses to the JAC Self-Assessment action plan. JW asked if this was sufficient information available to update the action plan. GW agreed to discuss this with GO and DT outside of the meeting. | **GW/DT**  **GW/DT/**  **GO** |
| 1. **ANY FEEDBACK OF RELEVANCE TO JAC FOR INCLUSION UNDER ‘RELEVANT REPORTS FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS’.** |  |
| The CFO (OPCC) referred to the PCC’s All-Wales Collaboration Oversight Board which was established to address the issue of receiving bespoke feedback from each collaboration in a unified way. The board has started to produce good oversight assurance work, particularly in Wales. Police Collaboration Wales are producing valuable documents that highlight the benefits and financial performance, which could be shared with JAC. GW welcomed the suggestion. | **CFO (OPCC)** |
| 1. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** |  |
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| The ACC gave a comprehensive briefing on the proposed changes to ICT Services Delivery Gwent from July 2026.  GW thanked the ACC-Org for their presentation and was assured plans were in place going forward.  JW welcomed the presentation and sought assurance that her regular meetings with SRS ICT and the ACC-ORG would continue and the ACC-Org assured JW these meetings would continue.  JW understood the benefits the proposed changes would bring about, but was concerned about the impact on the level of service Gwent would receive. The ACC-Org assured the Committee there would be no negative impact on the level of service provision received as a result of the changes.  JW asked if there would be any change to the audit provision and the ACC-Org explained that no changes were expected until July 2026. This would be reviewed in due course.  GW asked if the proposed model had worked elsewhere and it was confirmed that it had in a similar sized organisation.  We discussed deep dive topics and the following were suggested:   * Technology to reduce demand – such as AI and Digi Dogs * Anything to reduce demand * Vulnerable People (Themes in relation to – VAWG, Older people, Victims of Crime, Younger people. Financial fraud Scams, Domestic Abuse)   AJ suggested that where possible, the JAC received deep dives that had been prepared for other Force meetings, to be more efficient. GW suggested the CMM advised the GO of any future force presentations that the JAC members have shown an interest in to align the timelines.  GW agreed to discuss the suggested deep dives during JW and AJ 1-1 meetings and to confirm what the deep dive should be in December. | **Action** |
| 1. **TO IDENTIFY ANY RISKS, TRAINING REQUIREMENTS OR ETHICAL MATTERS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING** |  |
| The following risks were identified during the meeting:   * Given the Changeable political climate there may be difficulty in future commitments to current valuable initiatives. |  |
| **The meeting concluded at 14.48pm** |  |