

Warwickshire Joint Audit and Standards Committee Report Summary

Meeting Date: 28 September 2021

Subject: Analysis and Service Improvement – Assurance and Audit Plan update

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Purpose of the report:

This report provides an overview of progress with the Force Crime Data Integrity and Assurance Audit Schedule.

Findings and recommendation from recent audits that have been presented to the Warwickshire Assurance Board are also outlined.

Recommendation:

That the current progress of the scheduled audits is noted along with the findings of recent audits.

Background:

At the beginning of the financial year the Force Crime and Incident Registrar (FCIR) presents a draft audit schedule to the Warwickshire Assurance Board for approval. The schedule comprises two types of audits:

1. Crime Data Integrity (CDI). These audits follow the methodology detailed in the Home Office Data Quality Assurance Manual (DQAM) and are used to test compliance with Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR). The audit themes are selected by the FCIR based on a risk assessment of CDI vulnerabilities.
2. Assurance audits commissioned by Warwickshire Assurance Board. These are audits of operational records to assess compliance with force policy, procedure and guidance.

The findings from these audits are presented to the Assurance Board with a number of recommendations. If agreed, a senior manager is appointed to provide a management response detailing the proposed activity to be undertaken in response to the recommendation.

The FCIR maintains a tracker of recommendations and agreed management actions to record progress. The FCIR has a standing agenda item at the Assurance Board that enables progress against the recommendations to be reported and issues to be raised.

Executive summary:

Audit Schedule

All audits scheduled for the period April – September 2021 have been completed or started as planned. Some additional capacity was created following the early completion of the Anti-Social Behaviour Incident audit.

Two additional audits have been added to the schedule at the request of business leads:

- A monthly audit of 10 child protection investigations undertaken by Patrol and CID officers. The purpose is to audit the investigative and safeguarding response against criteria provided by the Chief Inspector Vulnerability and Safeguarding.
- A quarterly audit of Victim Code compliance. The force is expected to undertake regular audits to establish compliance against the 12 entitlements contained in the Code.

A copy of the audit schedule is attached at Appendix A.

Findings from Recently Completed Audits

The findings from the following audits have been presented to Warwickshire Assurance Board.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) incidents

The findings from this audit indicated that there were risks that officers and staff were not recognising reported behaviours of ASB as constituting Public Order or Harassment offences.

A comprehensive action plan has been developed to address the risks identified by the audit.

Outcomes 11 – 18

This audit examined notifiable crimes that had an outcome where there was no further action resulting from the investigation. These outcomes are normally applied by sergeants/supervisors and not routinely subject to further review.

This audit reviewed 173 Athena crime investigations closed by supervisors. A correct outcome had been applied to the majority indicating a generally good understanding among investigators and supervisors.

Intelligence Reports

This audit examined intelligence reports that had a crime related heading to determine whether there were notifiable offences disclosed that had not been correctly recorded as a crime.

One hundred intelligence reports were audited and 98 of those complied with Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) providing a high level of assurance.

Planned Future Audits

The following audits have either been completed and are awaiting presentation to the Warwickshire Assurance Board or have recently started.

- Non-crime investigations audit. An audit of child protection, adult at risk and hate investigations where the force has determined that a notifiable crime has not been committed.
- Audit of reported incidents of violence. The audit reviews a large sample of incidents recorded on the command and control system to confirm whether all reported crimes have been correctly recorded in the force investigations application, Athena.
- Cancelled crimes. This audit reviews notifiable crimes that have been cancelled by Designated Decision Makers (DDMs) in the force Resolution Centre to ensure they have been done correctly in accordance with HOCR.
- The FCIR has also commenced a monthly audit of child protection investigations to support the Vulnerability and Safeguarding Department. Ten investigations a month covering a range of victim ages are being undertaken to assess the investigative and safeguarding response by Patrol and CID officers.

Appendix A

Warwickshire Audit & Assurance schedule for 2021-2022												
Scheduled audits	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
	Planned	In Progress	In Progress	Complete	Complete	Paused						
	Assurance	CDI										
Dedicated Decision Maker (DDM) Out of Court Disposals Referrals												
Requests to review												
Incident to Crime - Violence. (CDI)												
Incident to Crime - Rape and Other Sexual Offences (CDI)												
Incident to Crime - Other Offences (CDI)												
Other Reporting Routes - HAU, Single Online Home (CDI)												
Cancelled Crime (CDI)												
Incidents ASB - Personal (CDI)												
Non - Crime Investigations - Hate, Child at Risk, Adult at Risk												
Outcomes - 11 - 18												
Intelligence Reports												
Assurance - Investigations												
Assurance - Identity Access Management System												
Assurance - National ANPR access management												
Assurance - Other commissioned audit												
Assurance - VCoP compliance												
Assurance - Child Protection Investigations												

Crime Data Integrity Audits

The Home Office Data Quality Assurance Manual (DQAM) has been produced to provide guidance and assistance to Force Crime Registrars who have a responsibility to ensure consistency and accuracy of crime and incident data in support of the policing vision for crime recording - "That all police forces in England and Wales have the best crime recording system in the world: one that is consistently applied; delivers accurate statistics that are trusted by the public and puts the needs of victims at its core".

The purpose of DQAM is to assist Force Crime Registrars to test and assess the quality of their crime and incident data as well as following up areas of weakness identified in previous national or local audits.

The DQAM sets out a series of tests that if used locally will promote the consistent and accurate recording of crime impacting on the quality of both investigation and outcomes in a way that is likely to improve service delivery for Victims of Crime.

Effective Quality Assurance (QA) supports the management of risk, enables effective practice to be identified and promoted and provides transparency in relation to service delivery outcomes e.g. where the recording of notifiable crime is missed then victims are excluded from the support that they are legally entitled to under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and potentially offenders escape justice - all of which have the potential to adversely impact on levels of public trust and confidence in Policing.

The Warwickshire's risk based audit plan enables known areas of risk to be considered and for decisions to be made (and authorised) with regards to how appropriate audit resources might best be used to ensure compliance and drive improvement activity. Each incident to crime audit will be based on a methodology similar to that used by HMICFRS providing a significant sample size equating to approximately 300 records. For other audits, for example outcomes and cancelled crime a dip sample of usually between 60 – 100 records are conducted to provide an indication of compliance and risk. Again, this is similar to the approach taken by HMICFRS.

Assurance Audits

Assurance audits are designed to ensure that Warwickshire Police complies with the General Data Protection Regulations, Management of Police Information (MoPI), Authorised Professional Practice (APP) and its own local Policy & Procedures.

The audits are commissioned by Warwickshire Assurance Board.

Audit progress

The month of the planned audits are shown in blue and were the dates initially proposed when the schedule was presented to the Warwickshire Assurance Board.

Currently the planned audits are slightly ahead of schedule. The Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Audit was finalised earlier after a smaller than planned sample size due to some consistent issues emerging. The decision was made to present the findings to the force early to enable some action to be taken.

This enabled the audit of Outcomes 11 – 18 to be started and completed ahead of schedule.

An additional audit of intelligence reports to assess whether they contain reported notifiable crimes that have not been recorded as a crime on the force investigation system Athena.

The audit of non-crime investigations to include Hate, Child at Risk and Adult at Risk has commenced ahead of schedule. The purpose of this audit is to assess whether reported notifiable crimes have been missed.