

## **Warwickshire Joint Audit and Standards Committee Report Summary**

**Meeting Date: 19 January 2022**

**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:

- 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.
- 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 September to December 2021 have been completed or started as planned.

One additional audit has been added to the schedule at the request of the ACC:

- An audit of the handling and storage of covert product once it leaves the Covert Authorities Bureau and the Cybercrime and Digital Investigations Unit.

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.

#### Audit of Child at Risk, Adult Protection and Hate non-crime investigations

This audit reviewed 250 investigations with a non-crime primary classification and evidence of safeguarding was good on both incident logs and investigation records. Vulnerability was also addressed on most of the investigations where relevant.

There was evidence of supervisory oversight on all of the investigations classified as a Hate Incident. Overall, however, there was no evidence of supervisory oversight on about half (122) of all of the investigations reviewed.

The audit found that 225 of the investigations had been correctly classified. Crimes were disclosed, but not recorded in compliance with HOCR, in respect of 15 investigations (16 crimes in total). On the remaining 9 investigations further information was required to establish whether a crime was disclosed.

#### Audit of Reported Incident of Violence

This audit reviewed 299 reported incidents of violence and determined that there were 274 notifiable crimes disclosed that should be recorded. The audit found that 258 of the offences had been recorded giving a compliance rate of 94.2%. This is a good level of assurance.

The audit identified that there were still areas related to the recoding of reported offences that should still be improved:

- Timeliness of crime recording,
- Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) awareness around the recording of course of conduct offences relating to stalking and harassment.
- The correct recording of crime outcomes,
- Compliance with the Victims' Code.

#### Cancelled Crime Audit

This audit found that the management of the crime cancellation process by Resolution Centre Designated Decision Makers (DDMs) and Investigation Management Unit (IMU) was generally good, and showed signs of further improvement since the previous audit.

The Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime (HOCR) requires that victims must be updated in respect of key aspects of the crime cancellation process. This audit identified some scope for further improvement in respect of the application of these requirements.

#### Bail and Released Under Investigation (RUI Audit)

The aim of the audit was to review a sample of investigations where the suspect's status remains released on bail or RUI for periods in excess of 3 months in order to understand the reasons why suspects remain on bail or RUI status for extended periods.

It sought to establish whether the investigations had been progressed efficiently and diligently and whether the appropriate authority had been sought for any extension of bail.

The primary finding was that officers were not routinely updating the custody records when an investigation had been concluded meaning the performance information being presented around Bail and RUI did not accurately reflect the current position.

There was evidence of regular sergeant reviews. The extent of how pro-active the reviews were varied. Some OICs regularly provided updates detailing how the investigation was progressing, others had periods of unexplained inactivity and no documented responses to sergeant requests.

There were lengthy delays in completing cases, many relating to offences requiring forensic results. Reasons for delays are listed below;

- Awaiting CPS advice
- Files returned by CPS requiring completion of action plans
- Workload, operational need, responding to incidents
- Awaiting blood results, phone examination or drugs expert witness

#### **Planned Future Audits**

The following audits have commenced or are planned for the next quarter.

- An audit of reported sexual offences
- A small sample audit of crimes reported through alternative routes to telephone contact including online reporting via Single Online Home and email to the force via Contact Us.
- A revisit of reported incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour directed towards individuals.

## 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	Complete	Paused	Paused				
	Assurance	CDI	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												
Assurance Bail and RUI audit												
Assurance Handling Covert Product												

## 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.