

Warwickshire Joint Audit and Standards Committee Meeting (Special Meeting – Statement of Accounts 2020/21)

Open Minutes

Date:	Monday 20 th December 2021
Time:	10:00
Location:	Executive Meeting Room at Leek Wootton (controlled numbers)
Chair:	John Anderson
Vice Chair:	Gavin McArthur
Minute Taker:	Sara Ansell

Attendees

Audit Committee Members

Name:	Capacity:	Person	Teams
John Anderson	Chair		X
Gavin McArthur	Vice-chair		X
David Carter	Member		X
Helen Knee	Member		X
Andy Heath	Member (1 st meeting)		X

Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Name:	Capacity:	Person	Teams
Philip Seccombe (PS)	Police & Crime Commissioner	X	
Sara Ansell (SA)	Treasurer, OPCC	X	

Force

Name:	Capacity:	Person	Teams
Alex Franklin-Smith (AFS)	T/Deputy Chief Constable	X	
Jeff Carruthers (JC)	Director of Finance	X	

Wendy Knox (WK)	Head of Accounting & Financial Control	X	
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Internal Audit

Name:	Capacity:	Person	Teams
Paul Clarke (PC)	Head of Internal Audit for Warwickshire CC		X

External Audit

Name:	Capacity:	Person	Teams
Jackson Murray	Grant Thornton		X
Andy Reid	Grant Thornton		X

Apologies

Name:	Capacity:
Debbie Tedds (DT)	Chief Constable
Polly Reed (PR)	Chief Executive, OPCC

Items for Discussion

No	Item	Actions
01/20/12/2021	Welcome and introductions were made.	
	There were no declaration of personal prejudicial interests.	
03/20/12/2021	<p>Minutes of the open meeting of 28th September 2021</p> <p>The Minutes of the open meeting dated 28th September 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record with all actions discharged.</p>	
05/20/12/2021	<p>2020/21 External Audit Draft Findings Report. (Paper)</p> <p>Briefing given by JM on the external audit draft findings report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report presented as a draft as work is ongoing, particularly on journal entries, MIRS statement and the pensions accounting changes following the receipt of updated actuarial data. The draft report outlines that the accounts represented a true and fair view of the PCC and Chief Constable 	SA/JC/JM to keep JASC chair updated.

	<p>Accounts, based on the work completed to date, with no qualification or significant findings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant Thornton are also working with the finance team on finalising the work on valuations and accounting treatment for the Justice Centres, which needs to be resolved. • JM indicated that the audit work should be completed in the next few days or early in the New Year. • JASC members had been given a private pre-meeting brief on the Accounts and matters arising from the audit work to date. • JM outlined some of the main points including materiality and triviality levels, challenges with valuations given that the valuers are no longer available following the wind up of PPL, mrp changes, and amendments to the collection fund values, that had been estimated. • The AFR includes the completion of the value for money work, which outlines adequate arrangements are in place. This is dealt with in a later agenda item. • An issue will remain regarding the Whole of Government accounts (WGA) data collection tool not yet being available from Government, which will prevent the auditor from issuing the auditor certificate, although they can still issue their opinion on the accounts, but this will cause further delay and complications to the 2020/21 process. • Management responses to the actions have now been received and will be included in the final report. • JM and SA agreed to share a final copy of the AFR with the chair of JASC, once all the audit work is complete and prior to sign off of the accounts. • GM sought assurance regarding the asset registers, particularly in the light of the device roll-out, and also for policing equipment. JC confirmed that proper protocols and recording were in place. • PS sought clarity on the process for asset valuations. JM confirmed that Warwickshire comply with the CIPFA code which requires sufficient regularity, suggesting at least once every 5 years, but in Warwickshire this is undertaken every 3 years. • JA expressed concern with the implications arising from the delay of the WGA data collection tool being available. • JM confirmed that he could issue his opinion on the financial statements, after which there would be no further changes to them, but he cannot issue an auditor certificate for 2020/21 until WGA is complete. • It was agreed by all that the 2020/21 audit work needs to be completed and the Statements of Accounts signed off, as a priority. • JA sought assurances regarding timelines, fees and closure of the 2021/22 accounts, but these will remain 	
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	a challenge although 30 September 2022 would be the target.	
06/20/12/2021	<p>Draft letters of representation – PCC and Chief Constable</p> <p>An update was given by JM to outline that the draft letters contain standard representations that are requested. When the signed copies are received from each organisation, following the completion of the audit work, then the auditor can issue the signed opinion on the financial statements for 2020/21. This will be finalised over the coming days/weeks, any significant changes will be shared with the chair of JASC.</p>	
07/20/12/2021	<p>2020/21 External Audit draft Annual report statement</p> <p>The value for money report is a new report for 2020/21. It does not include an audit opinion on value for money but can raise recommendations regarding the arrangements that are in place for achieving value for money.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vfm work has now been completed, and no significant weaknesses have been identified, although some improvement recommendations on economy, efficiency and effectiveness and financial sustainability have been included. These are the lowest level of auditor recommendations and are to assist with continuous improvement. • The report is presented in draft, management responses have now been received and will be included in the final version, which will be shared with the chair of JASC. • The improvement recommendations will be addressed in a measured way. Reserve levels will continue to be a source of debate but will be considered again during the budget setting process, along with an annual review of the reserves strategy. • The work has been an additional burden on finance and other staff, which was appreciated. • GM sought clarity on information in relation to Warwickshire reserves and how they were used to manage the 2020/21 overspend. He encouraged officers to feel free to challenge the clarity of audit recommendations. • HK raised the issue of greater automation of process. JC confirmed that workflows do exist in some processes e.g., purchase to pay, and that the new devices and upgraded systems would put us at the forefront of the national enabling programme, but further work needs to be undertaken to drive out more efficient working form our new devices, using power applications and to improve labour intensive processes. • DC felt that the management response in respect of automation and optimising the benefit form ICT investment needs to be wider than finance and cove 	

	<p>the entire force.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AH sought clarity on how the force could use benchmarking information. JM confirmed that this might be more around what is done well and what can be improved, and that this may be wider than cost issues alone, but greater use of benchmarking analytics to challenge the force should be considered. 	
8/20/12/2021	<p>2020/21 Audited draft Statement of Accounts</p> <p>JASC Members had been provided with a more detailed update on the audited accounts in the pre-meet briefing. The main issues to note are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant changes re accounting changes. • The comparator information is simpler this year, following the transition from the former alliance. • There were some issues regarding the availability of information from partners on the collection fund. This has led to estimates being used, which are now updated for actuals. • Changes in valuation data for pensions due to updated information becoming available in October/November, which has been restated in the accounts. • New final draft with noted changes has been submitted to Grant Thornton and is being considered. • Thanks were extended to all involved for the comprehensive work that has been undertaken under difficult circumstances on the 2020/21 accounts. • GM noted he had some minor comments, which he will share separately, for consideration in the final document where appropriate. 	SA/JC/JM to keep JASC chair updated.
09/20/12/2021	<p>2020/21 Draft audited Annual Governance Statement</p> <p>Members noted the draft document which they had previously considered prior to submission. No further comments were received.</p>	
10/20/12/2021	<p>Joint Audit and Standards Committee work plan (paper)</p> <p>The updated work plan was agreed by members. HK requested that the contact details of the OPCC officer dealing with standards issues be shared.</p>	SA to arrange for new contact details to be sent to HK
11/20/12/2021	<p>Members Points</p> <p>Actions arising following DC's attendance at the last Police and Crime Panel meeting were discussed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PCP had outlined the need for specific performance indicators in the Police and Crime Plan, JASC agreed this was primarily PCP business but that they would have a vested interest in ensuring that performance is good against the Police and Crime Plan objectives. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Police and Crime Panel received an annual address from the Chief Constable. This was an excellent presentation and it was felt that members of JASC would benefit from a similar presentation each year. • Attendance at confidential session of each other's meetings. It was agreed that the circumstances regarding DC attending the confidential session of the recent PCP were one-off and it was agreed that there would be no on-going access to the Panel or JASC confidential sessions (by non-Panel or non-Committee members) as a matter of course; although this may occur on an ad hoc basis. PS commented that the powers of the PCP may change under the PCC review, and the Committee agreed that they would keep this decision under review. 	<p>CC to provide annual presentation to JASC</p> <p>JA to clear with PCP Chair</p>
12/20/12/2021	<p style="text-align: center;">AOB</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meeting dates for 2021/22:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday 19th January 2022 – 2pm – 4pm Wednesday 16th March 2022 – 2pm – 4pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Police and Crime Panel meeting dates:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">27th January 2022 – 10.30am</p>	
<p>Next Meeting: Wednesday 19th January 2022 at 2pm at Leek Wootton or virtual meeting (tbc – dependent on current restrictions)</p>		