

Warwickshire Joint Audit and Standards Committee Report Summary

Meeting Date: Tuesday 26th September 2023

Subject: PCC/Group and Chief Constable Statement of Accounts 2022/23

Contact details: Sara Ansell, Jeff Carruthers and Mike Kaine

Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to provide to the Joint Audit and Standards Committee the audited Statements of Accounts, for the PCC and Chief Constable, in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (The Act)

The PCC for Warwickshire is required to produce a separate Statement of Accounts including group accounts, to those of the Chief Constable. These documents are both attached to this report, following the audit work to date, which is largely complete. Any audit changes are highlighted in yellow.

Recommendation

For the JASC to consider and comment on the draft statements prior to them being finalised and then formally signed off by the Chief Constable, PCC and their respective staff, as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Background

Work is nearing completion on the audit of the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts, and a draft audit findings report has been shared with this committee. A further verbal update on the Statements and the audit work will be provided at the Committee.

Executive Summary

The audit work on the financial statements is largely complete, with no significant issues identified. However, this work cannot be finalised and audit opinions issued, without two pieces of external assurance being made available, relating to the external treasury advisors, and also from the Local Government Pension Scheme auditors. The receipt of these outstanding documents, is largely outside the control of the audit team, and also finance staff at the OPCC and in the force. Whilst the plan has always remained for the audit opinion to be issued by the end of September, the absence of these documents, would prevent this and does therefore provide a risk to this being achieved, despite all other work being complete.

Grant Thornton had also hoped to conclude the value for money work in September, and since the last JASC had put in place plans to hopefully achieve this. Unfortunately this has not progressed in accordance with this plan, and it is now proposed that the VFM work will be reported at a later Committee.

The Joint Annual Governance Statement (AGS) has previously been shared with the Committee in draft format. Following feedback from members following the last meeting, the AGS has been reviewed and updated, and is presented later on this agenda as a 'for information only' item.

Members of the Committee have received a pre-meeting brief on the Statement of Accounts and the audit process, which has touched on the role of external audit, current regulations and their reporting processes. This session has given members a slightly more in depth opportunity to ask questions and challenge officers and the external auditors on issues arising from the accounts, and this should help members to fulfil the requirements under the latest Audit Committee guidance by CIPFA for monitoring the external audit process, and also the requirements of the terms of reference for the Committee.