

Joint Audit Advisory Committee

for

Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable

Annual Report 2021

Chairman's Foreword

This is the 2021 annual report of the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable's Joint Audit Advisory Committee ['the Committee'].

The Committee provides an independent assurance function to the Police and Crime Commissioner ['the Commissioner'] and the Chief Constable on the effectiveness of governance, risk and audit arrangements and controls in place, within the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Constabulary.

The committee would like to extend a warm welcome to the new Chief Constable, Mark Roberts and to the new Police and Crime Commissioner, John Dwyer. We would also like to thank the previous Chief Constable, Darren Martland and Police and Crime Commissioner, David Keane, for their support during their tenures.

This has been another extra-ordinary year for us all. The continued presence of Covid-19 has required committee members, staff at the Constabulary, the PCC and our Auditors to continue to use remote working for most of the year. Meanwhile, frontline staff at the Constabulary have continued to go about their duties protecting the public despite the pandemic. The Committee would like to offer our thanks to all staff for the way they have supported the people of Cheshire during this prolonged period of disruption caused by COVID 19.

Membership of the Committee is as follows:

Chairman

Phil Bearpark is a Chartered Mechanical Engineer and has held a number of senior roles within the UK Rail Industry over the last 30 years. He still works part time in Rail and is now a Director of his own business and a Non-Executive Director of Heathrow Express. Phil is very experienced in audit, governance and risk management.

Vice-Chairman

David Gilbert is a qualified accountant who has held senior finance positions including Director of Finance and Chief Finance Officer roles in a variety of NHS Organisations. He is currently a Non-Executive Director of the RJA Orthopaedic NHS Hospital in Oswestry where he is Chair of the Audit Committee. He also Chairs the Audit & Risk Committee at the Dudley Integrated Healthcare NHS Trust and a Member of the Health Financial Association's Governance and Audit Committee.

Members

Tony Snape is a Chartered Surveyor (Quantity Surveyor) who, following many years

running the family building and civil engineering company, has held a variety of positions including: a consultant to Gleeds (Construction Consultants); a Non-Executive Director of the Manchester Building Society; Board Member of Great Places Housing Association. His voluntary roles have included: a Trustee of MOSI (Manchester Museum of Science and Industry) and Chair of the Seashell Trust (a charity for very disabled children) where he is still involved.

Jean Gleave is a fully qualified member of the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors. She has over 35 years of internal audit, governance, control and risk experience in both the public and private sector with roles as Head of Internal Audit at Warrington Borough Council and Salford City Council and as Chief Internal Auditor in the NHS; she has also held audit positions in private sector (insurance), and with the civil service. She is also a member of Merseytravel Audit Risk & Governance Board.

John Pearsall retired from the Committee in March 2021 following completion of his four year term. The committee would like to thank John for his input.

Members of the Committee bring with them a range of experience and skills which cover the various aspects of the Committee's work. Training has been available for members over the last 12 months which has ensured all members are able to contribute fully to the work of the Committee and fulfil their roles professionally.

2020/2021

Meetings during the year have covered a wide range of topics with particular focus on monitoring the strategic risk management framework to ensure that risks were adequately assessed, recorded and mitigated where possible. The Committee has also reviewed the Commissioner's budget proposals and sought assurances that the budget provides sufficient flexibility to maintain sustainable services.

We have received copies of the final Internal Audit Reports prepared by the Mersey Internal Audit Agency and have monitored the implementation of the agreed management actions arising from these reports. We were very pleased to receive a substantial assurance from MIAA our Internal Auditor that there is a good system of internal control designed to meet system objectives and that the controls are generally being applied consistently.

The Committee also considered the Commissioner's and the Chief Constable's Statements of Accounts and Annual Governance Statements to provide assurance that they complied with the relevant requirements. We agreed the plans of both internal and external auditors and received their reports which we have examined to ensure that Cheshire Constabulary maintains the high standards of governance, finance and audit that the people of Cheshire would expect. The Committee also monitored the implementation of recommendations agreed by management following audit reviews.

The Chair and Vice Chair have had meetings with Senior Staff of the PCC and

Constabulary. The Chair has also met with the Commissioner and Chief Constable. The Committee is grateful to all who have given their valuable time to assist its work which has been well supported by senior staff from both the Constabulary and the Office of the PCC.

As the Committee developed, members have been asked to focus on areas where they have a particular interest. These are areas where either the Chief Constable or the Commissioner would like some additional input or where the Committee considers that there is an issue pertinent to the Committee's work which may require further detailed attention. The members undertaking these roles are termed the 'single point of contact' for that area. New single point of contact roles have been agreed with the incoming Commissioner and Chief Constable and are as follows:

- David Gilbert – Collaborations
- Phil Bearpark – Business Services Future
- Tony Snape - Crime Recording and Estates
- Jean Gleave – Risk Management, Governance and Annual Governance Statement.;

The future

The Committee will continue our consideration of a number of areas including developing the risk management arrangements, updates on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, reviewing recommendations from Auditors including monitoring the implementation of recommendations.

Further information

For further information on the work of the Joint Audit Advisory Committee, its' Terms of Reference, Minutes and Agendas, please refer to the website of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire. <https://www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/search?q=audit>

Phil Bearpark – CEng MIMechE

Chairman of the Joint Audit Advisory Committee of the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable