



west midlands
police and crime
commissioner



AGENDA ITEM 11

**JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE
05 December 2024**

**PUBLICATION OF STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2023/24
ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENTS**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the requirement to produce and publish an Annual Governance Statement on Corporate Governance, along with the assurance processes and protocols that are associated with this production.
- 1.2 To ask members to consider the revised statements for the 2023/24 accounts, as at 30 November 2024.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended) require that all principal authorities produce a statement on governance, having carried out a review of internal controls, at least annually. This requirement now takes the form of an Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which accompanies the Statutory Accounts.
- 2.2 The Commissioner and Chief Constable are respectively the responsible corporate bodies for the production of the AGS.
- 2.3 Draft AGS' were produced and reviewed by this Committee prior to the publication of the draft statement of accounts. The AGS' have been prepared in line with the framework produced by CIPFA and Solace in 2016 'Delivering Good Governance.' This includes CIPFA's Guidance Notes for Policing Bodies in England and Wales and the Better Governance Forum's document referred to above.
- 2.4 The guidance advises that the AGS be reviewed and revised to ensure that it remains current, prior to the final signature of the accounts. The AGS' have now been revised by both parties up to the current date, in order that they align with the revised statements of accounts which will be signed in the next quarter.

2.5 The updated draft AGS' for both parties for 2023/24 are attached at Appendix A.

3. PROCESS

3.1 An assessment has been completed based on CIPFA's 'Delivering Good Governance' guidance notes. This including assessing both corporation's governance arrangements against the core principles of the 'Delivering Good Governance' framework. The core principles are as follows: -

- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
- Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

3.2 To aid with the above assessment an exercise was undertaken of the governance arrangements of the PCC by using CIPFA's seven principles of good governance in policing. This assessment is including in the Appendix of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Governance Statement.

3.3 In addition to the above assessment, senior managers from the Commissioner's office and the Force, reviewed the draft Annual Governance Statements attached to this report to ensure they reflect the governance arrangements of the organisations. This includes the effectiveness of the arrangements and identifying any significant issues that need to be addressed. These are reported upon in the attached statements and actions will be put in place to address any issues during the year.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Committee is asked to consider and note the contents of this report.

4.2 The Committee is asked to consider the Annual Governance Statements for 2023/24, as attached at **Appendix A**.

Jane Heppel
Chief Finance Officer
Police and Crime Commissioner

Police and Crime Commissioner West Midlands Annual Governance Statement

Position as of 30 November 2024 including plans
for the financial years 2024-25 and 2025-26



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1 Introduction

This Annual Governance Statement demonstrates how the Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands complies with a governance framework. This includes how the effectiveness of the framework is evaluated and monitored. This document also highlights any significant governance issues and any planned changes in the governance framework.

2 Scope of Responsibilities

The Commissioner is responsible for ensuring his business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Commissioner also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which his functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Commissioner is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of his affairs and facilitating the exercise of his functions, which includes ensuring a sound system of internal control is maintained through the year and arrangements are in place for the management of risk.

The Commissioner has adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE 2016 updated framework: *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*, which can be obtained by contacting the Commissioner's office, details at www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/contact.

This statement explains how the Commissioner has complied with the Code and meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (amended 2020), regulation 6(1), which requires all relevant bodies to prepare an annual governance statement.

3 The Purpose of the Governance Framework

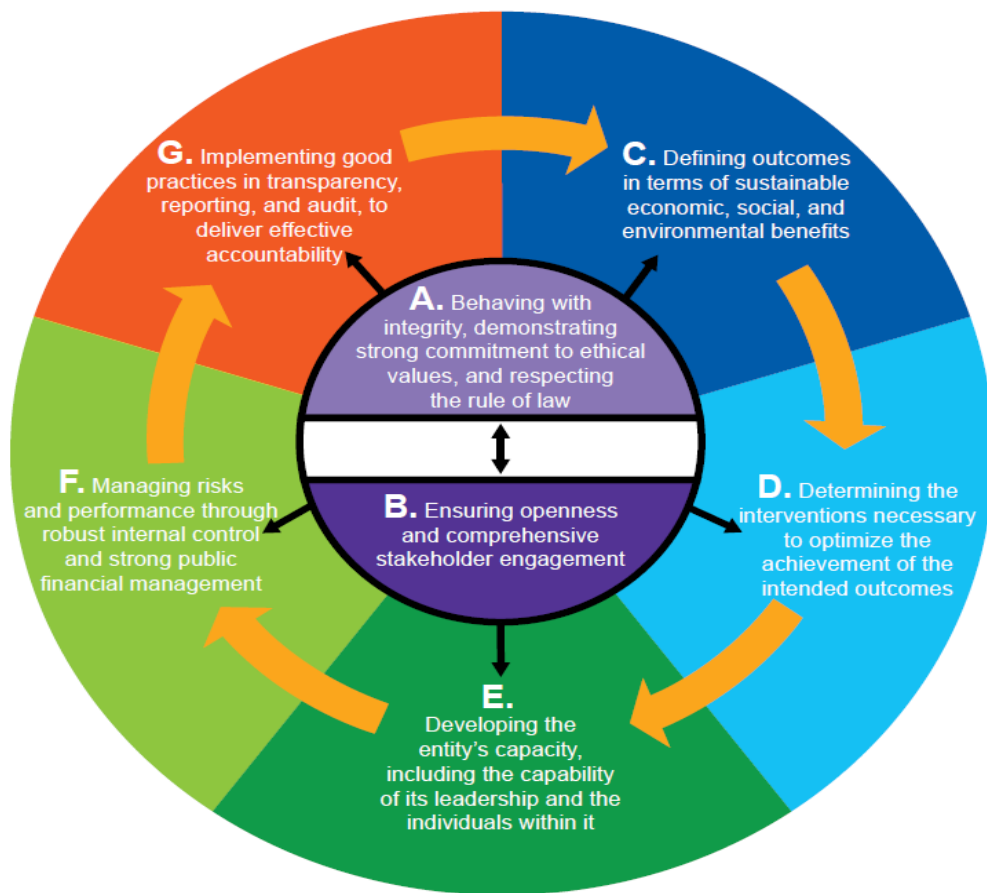
The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and the culture and values by which the Commissioner directs and controls his activities and through which he is accountable to the community. It enables the Commissioner to monitor the achievement of his strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services, including achieving value for money.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable and foreseeable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Commissioner's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the

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likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them effectively, efficiently and economically.

The diagram below sets out the core principles of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Governance Framework.



4 The Governance Framework

Although, the Chief Constable is responsible for operational policing matters, the direction and control of police personnel, and for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of the Force, the Commissioner is required to hold him to account for the exercise of those functions and those of the persons under his direction and control. The relationship between the Commissioner, the Chief Constable, the Police and Crime Panel and the Home Secretary is guided by the Policing Protocol Order 2023.

It therefore follows that the Commissioner must satisfy himself that the Chief Constable has appropriate mechanisms in place for the maintenance of good governance. For these to operate in

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practice, the Commissioner and the Chief Constable, as separate corporations sole, have separate but complimentary governance structures. These facilitate the achievement of effective governance arrangements, including the monitoring and assessment of performance in line with statutory responsibilities.

The Commissioner adopted a number of systems and processes to operate the governance arrangements, the key elements of which are detailed below:

- The West Midlands Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2025 sets out the Commissioner’s objectives for policing and community safety, the policing to be provided, the financial and other resources that will be available, how performance will be measured, what grants will be made and how the Chief Constable will be held to account.
- The operation of the Strategic Policing and Crime Board (SPCB) that assists in holding to account West Midlands Police. The SPCB meets monthly in public. The meetings are webcast.
- Worked with the Chief Constable to ensure there are processes and systems in place to deliver the Police and Crime Plan. This allows the Commissioner to be satisfied the Chief Constable has regard to the Police and Crime Plan through the strategic and operational plans of the Force.
- Measuring the quality of services, to ensure they are delivered in accordance with the Commissioner’s objectives and represent the best use of resources and value for money.
- Defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of the executive, non-executive, scrutiny and officer functions, with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication, in respect of the Commissioner and partnership arrangements.
- Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the head of paid service and monitoring officer functions.
- Ensuring the Commissioner’s financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Finance Officer of the Chief Constable.
- Ensuring compliance with the Commissioner’s statutory responsibilities, including:
 - Setting the budget and precept
 - Issuing a Police and Crime Plan
 - Publication of an Annual Report
 - Publication of specified information
 - Duties to consult with victims of crime, the population as a whole and ratepayers
 - Safeguarding of children and promotion of child welfare
 - Having regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement. This is demonstrated through an annual report to the SPCB
 - Duties relating to equality and diversity
- Procedure rules, policies and internal management processes are established for Financial Management, Procurement, Health and Safety, Confidential Reporting (“Whistleblowing”), Complaints Handling, Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption and Records Management, including security of information and information sharing.

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- Codes of conduct, defining the standards of behaviour for the Commissioner, Members of the Strategic Policing and Crime Board, Statutory Officers and Staff.
- The Joint Scheme of Corporate Governance sets out in detail the respective roles and functions of the Commissioner and Chief Constable, outlining all significant decisions which are consented or delegated and which are of a statutory, financial or management nature.
- A Joint Audit Committee (with the Chief Constable) is responsible for independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, the independent scrutiny of the Chief Constable's and PCC's financial performance to the extent that it affects the Chief Constable and PCC's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment. The Joint Audit Committee has an independent Chair, as identified by the Home Office's Code of Practice for Financial Management and CIPFA's Audit Committee – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police. A second independent member holds the position of Vice Chair of the Committee.
- An Ethics Committee which advises the Commissioner and Chief Constable on data science projects being proposed by the Force's Data Analytics Lab. The Lab is led by specially recruited data scientists and will develop programmes of work that use data more intelligently to help the Force prevent crime, allocate resources more efficiently and help it to do its job of keeping the public safe. The Ethics Committee has been set up to help ensure that ethics and people's rights are put at the heart of the Lab's work. Using the Committee's expertise, the Force will be in a better position to help people avoid crime and support the communities of the West Midlands.
- The PCC has a Corporate Risk Register, prepared and reviewed by senior management. The Joint Audit Committee is responsible for independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework.
- Procedural rules, policies and internal management procedures are established for financial management.
- Oversight of the management of change and transformation within the Force.
- Ensuring the Commissioner's assurance arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2019) and, where they do not, explain why they deliver the same impact.
- An External Audit function reports to "those charged with governance" in respect of the Annual Accounts and Value for Money. The Commissioner provides information to External Audit to enable them to provide assurance and also ensures External Audit's recommendations are implemented.
- Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful.
- Identifying the development needs of members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by appropriate training.
- Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation.
- Developing good governance arrangements in respect of partnership and other joint working arrangements.

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The diagram below details how the Commissioner's 2023-24 governance structure was aligned to the governance structure of West Midlands Police. This has changed in 2024-25 but the changes will be shown in the 2024-25 AGS.



5 Review of Effectiveness

The Commissioner has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the governance framework.

The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the managers within the Commissioner's Office, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Head of Internal Audit's Annual report, and also by comments made by the External auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

In maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements, the following roles are undertaken:

- **The Commissioner**

The Commissioner is responsible for the maintenance and review of the governance arrangements overall and has asked his Statutory Officers, together with the Head of Internal Audit to continue with the review of the corporate governance arrangements, designed to assess and monitor:

- Code of Corporate Governance
- Review of the System of Internal Control
- Performance / Assurance Protocols and associated information
- Production of the Annual Governance Statement

- **The Joint Audit Committee**

The Commissioner's and Chief Constable's Joint Audit Committee is responsible, on behalf of both Corporations Sole, to:

- Advise the Commissioner and the Chief Constable according to good governance principles.
- Provide independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Commissioner's and Chief Constable's internal control environment and risk management framework.
- Oversee the effectiveness of the framework in place for ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.
- Independently scrutinise financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Commissioner's and Chief Constable's exposure to risks and weakens the internal control environment.
- Oversee the financial reporting process and consider the arrangements to secure value for money

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- Ensure the Force is implementing agreed actions resulting from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspections.

The Terms of Reference of the Committee, encompasses and reflects these duties by defining that they:

- Be the conduit through which the Governance work is channelled.
- Provide assurance on risk management arrangements on behalf of the Commissioner.
- Recommend approval of the Statutory Accounts of the Commissioner and Chief Constable.

To ensure that it is ably qualified, assessments of its abilities in line with best practice are undertaken confirming that the Committee is well suited and equipped for such responsibilities. Members of the Committee undergo regular training to ensure the Committee is effective in its role in advising the Commissioner and the Chief Constable.

- **Internal Audit**

The system of Internal Audit is a primary tenet of corporate governance and is the joint responsibility of the Commissioner and Chief Constable. The provision and maintenance of an effective Joint Internal Audit Service, has been delegated to the Chief Finance Officer (CFO). The Audit Committee oversees the provision of this service, reviewing associated plans and work outputs.

Every 5 years the standards of Internal Audit are assessed against the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and an external assessment of Internal Audit against the PSIAS standards was undertaken during 2022-23. The results of the assessment were positive with the service assessed as being fully compliant against the Standards. The service continues to undertake a self-assessment against the standards on an annual basis with the results reported to the Joint Audit Committee.

During 2023-24 Internal Audit continued the approach of concentrating on the major risks faced by the PCC and the Force. The approach has allowed the Commissioner to have increased confidence in the governance, risk management and control processes. A mid-year review of the Internal Audit Plan was undertaken to ensure the audits remained focussed on the key risk areas. Regular updates on progress against the audit plan and key findings arising are provided to the Commissioner.

In the construction of the Internal Audit Plan for the year ahead, consultation has taken place with senior managers to ensure the areas of greatest risk are prioritised, however, the plan will inevitably need to remain flexible and responsive to any change in the risk environment.

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- **Police and Crime Panel**

The West Midlands Police and Crime Panel (WMPCP) scrutinises the work of the Commissioner. The Panel acts as a critical friend to the Commissioner - assisting him through independent challenge.

The Panel has a number of powers and responsibilities, including:

- Reviewing the draft Police and Crime Plan to ensure local priorities have been considered
- Scrutinising the Commissioner's Annual Report
- Scrutinising the decisions and actions of the Commissioner
- Reviewing, and potentially vetoing, the Commissioner's proposed policing precept (the part of Council Tax collected for policing)
- Holding confirmation hearings for the proposed appointment of a Chief Constable, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and senior support staff

- **Mapping of Governance Framework**

To review the effectiveness of the Commissioner's governance arrangements an assessment was undertaken using a governance dashboard and applying CIPFA's seven principles of good governance in policing. With the exception of managing data, all areas have a green RAG status. Managing Data remains amber due to the continued embedding of WMP's IT systems across the organisation.

6 Collaborative Working

The Commissioner has in place a number of collaborative arrangements to deliver services in conjunction with both national and neighbouring Police and Crime Commissioners. These include:

- A regional forces collaboration agreement for the counter-terrorism policing network that also includes responsibility for Special Branch services.
- The National Ballistics Intelligence Service (NABIS) where the West Midlands Police is the co-host force. The arrangement is also subject to a collaboration agreement and the Commissioner is represented on the NABIS governing board.
- The West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) which is a four-force collaboration agreement between Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia and West Midlands.
- The West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership which involves WMP, health and education professionals working together to understand the causes of serious violence in the West Midlands and agreeing a co-ordinated response.
- A West Midlands wide Community Safety Partnership enabling crime reduction activities to be commissioned more effectively and efficiently.
- A Safer Travel Partnership with West Midlands Combined Authority, and WMP that continues to significantly reduce crime on all modes of transport across the region.

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- A West Midlands Combatting Drugs & Alcohol Partnership has been established to coordinate activity to reduce drug harm in the local area.
- An agreement with Birmingham Airport for WMP to provide policing services to the airport.
- The Regional Criminal Justice Forum, which is a collaborative partnership between PCCs, forces and criminal justice colleagues across the West Midlands, designed to address cross cutting themes and issues that are affecting all four areas.
- A collaboration with Warwickshire PCC where WMP delivers Forensic Services to Warwickshire Police.
- The Staffordshire and WMP Joint Legal Services agreement which provides Legal Services to WMP, Staffordshire Police, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire and the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Midlands.
- The Central Motorway Police Group collaboration between Staffordshire Police and WMP, which strives to ensure the safe travel of road users on the motorway network through the region.
- The Staffordshire Police and WMP firearms and explosives licensing collaboration.
- A new arrangement introduced in 2023-24 whereby WMP provide shared ANPR capabilities to Warwickshire.

For the arrangements detailed above, governance is conducted in compliance with the relevant collaboration agreements. Also, collaborative working is supported by the appointment of two Regional Policy Officers working with the four West Midlands regional forces.

Through working with the West Midlands Combined Authority, the Commissioner is collaborating on a wide range of issues this includes mental health and youth offending services.

The Commissioner is also in collaboration with other bodies this includes West Midlands Fire Service and local councils through the estates programme where policing is being delivered in shared buildings.

7 Review of CIPFA's FM Code

The CIPFA Financial Management Code (CIPFA FM Code) is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist police organisations in demonstrating their financial sustainability. The CIPFA FM Code therefore sets the standards of financial management for PCCs and Forces. A key goal of the FM Code is to improve the financial resilience of organisations by embedding enhanced standards of financial management. There are also clear links between the FM Code and the Governance Framework, particularly with its focus on achieving sustainable outcomes.

A self-assessment compliance review of the CIPFA FM Code was completed during 2023-24 across the Force, with the majority of the assessment being RAG rated as green with no areas of concern. The largest single change to the assessment will be around the need to embed the new Procurement Act 2023 which begins to rollout from autumn 2024 as per the secondary legislation. In

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addition, areas for improvement identified through the work of internal audit have been referenced and identified as targets for focus and process redesign during 2024-25.

Notable improvements were made in 2023-24 in the timeliness of financial reporting, with stretching timescales from month end to reported forecast being achieved from late autumn onwards. Work will continue in 2024-25 to improve the quality of financial reporting in the OPCC and the flow of information between WMP and the OPCC.

8 Significant Governance Issues

Significant governance issues are defined as:

- An issue which has prevented or seriously prejudiced achievement of a principal objective
- An issue where additional funding has had to be sought in order to resolve it
- An issue which has resulted in a material impact on the accounts
- An issue which the Head of Internal Audit has specifically highlighted in the annual audit opinion
- An issue which has attracted significant public interest and has damaged the reputation of the Commissioner
- An issue which has resulted in formal action being taken by the Chief Finance Officer and/or the Monitoring Officer.

PCC and Chief Constable meetings during 2023-24 included a review of the Force's Corporate Risk Register and chapters of the Force Management Statement.

The Commissioner is sighted on any significant issues arising from the work of Internal Audit and will, where necessary, question the Chief Constable on any actions being taken to address the issues raised.

The Commissioner has continued to hold the Chief Constable to account where reductions in funding have had potential impact on business as usual activities of the Force. This will continue during 2024-25 as the Force faces significant budget pressures alongside implementing a new operating model.

During 2023-24 no audits were issued with minimal assurance by the Joint Internal Audit team.

During 2023-24 neither the Chief Finance Officer nor Monitoring Officer took formal action.

The PCC applied for and was successful in receiving additional funding through Special Grant to support the implementation of new workforce management ICT solutions in the Force Control Room.

The PCC continues to receive financial support from Home Office in relation to legal claims arising from the Hillsborough disaster. This is through the Special Grant scheme operated by the Home Office. This will continue into 2024-25, although the proposal is that less of the cost will be met by the Home Office, going forward.

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In December 2023 HMICFRS announced that they were putting WMP into “Engage” status, following a PEEL inspection. There were four key areas of concern: online child sexual exploitation, management of sex offenders, multiagency risk assessment conferences and the investigations. The PCC reported to the Police and Crime Panel (18 December 2023, 15 January 2024 and 5 February 2024) to provide updates on PEEL findings and address any requests for further information or questions from panel members. In addition, the PCC and CC attended the Police Performance Oversight Group (PPOG) meeting held on 16 January 2024, which oversees the performance monitoring of WMP, whilst it is in Engage. The Force were informed on 18 September 2024 that they were no longer in Engage status. The Office not only oversaw the plans to address the causes of concern, but also worked with the Force to address the MARAC backlog and to maintain and further improve the capacity, capability and quality of investigations.

An employment tribunal involving a former West Midlands Police firearms officer, and ongoing associated activity, poses significant reputational risks to WMP. Ongoing action to address the issues raised by the case will need to demonstrate that the cultural and operational failings are dealt with effectively, thoroughly and sustainably.

During 2023-24 the West Midlands Mayor, enabled by the passing of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, worked with government to seek the transfer of police and crime powers. The PCC challenged the Mayor’s and Home Secretary’s decisions via judicial review at the High Court. The judicial review was successful, finding the Home Secretary’s decision to approve the transfer to be unlawful. The Appeal Court declined to hear an appeal by the Home Secretary and costs were awarded against the Home Office for both the judicial review and appeal. The process was very public and widely reported. While these events did not damage the reputation of the Commissioner, they created widespread public interest and delayed the publication of the notice of election in March 2024.

9 Delivering the Police and Crime Plan

During 2021-22 a new police and crime plan was developed covering the period up to 2025. A delivery plan was produced to ensure delivery of the plan. This assists the Commissioner to secure and maintain efficient and effective policing services across the West Midlands. The Commissioner will continue to work with West Midlands Police in the delivery of the Force’s strategies and plans.

10 Issues Raised in Previous Year’s Annual Governance Statements

Progress has been made on addressing the issues raised in the AGS for 2022-23. Internal Audit completed a follow up of Child Abuse recommendations during 2023-24 to establish progress on implementing the recommendations made within the 2022-23 audit. The original review identified significant risks within Force Contact in respect of the quality of THRIVE+ assessments and lack of compliance with escalation processes that should be used when target response times for calls look like they may not be achieved. The lack of trained and experienced officers coupled with high workloads per officer was also raised as a concern. The follow up concluded that all recommendations

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had progressed and are considered implemented. Supporting evidence was obtained to confirm implementation.

11 Future Developments

Looking forward there are several initiatives that will potentially impact on the role and remit of the Commissioner that may require governance arrangements to be amended. These include:

- Victims and Prisoners Bill 2023 which, if it becomes law, will introduce a duty to collaborate and make compliance with the Victims Code a statutory requirement.
- The implementation of new complaints processes against serving officers which will see WMP chair the hearings and legally qualified advisers in attendance but not in the chair.
- Further collaborative working with police forces in areas such as serious and organised crime, counter terrorism, roads policing and uniformed operations, with a concurrent requirement to develop effective collaborative governance arrangements based on formal collaboration agreements.
- The potential future implementation of a revised funding formula for policing, which will have implications on the level of resources available for policing services across the West Midlands.
- Monitoring and oversight of the new neighbourhood policing operating model to ensure effectiveness.
- Implementing changes arising from the Procurement Act 2023.
- The risks associated with maintaining the police officers recruited as part of the Uplift programme and ensuring the extra officers are deployed in priority areas across the Force.
- Impacts arising from continued reforms of the police recruitment framework.
- The continued implementation of the Estates Strategy approved by the Commissioner in October 2023, including the investment in new facilities and releasing vacant properties.
- The green agenda including, delivering and embedding WMP's environmental strategy launched during 2022.
- Continuing to embed the Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnership chaired by the Commissioner.
- Continuing to embed partnership working in key areas such as Ending Male Violence against Women and Girls, and supporting scrutiny panels such as the Custody Scrutiny Panel and Young people Scrutiny Panel for Stop and Search.
- Having regard to recent changes to the Strategic Policing Requirement which introduced an additional priority area around Violence Against Women and Girls.
- Ensuring compliance with the recently implemented Serious Violence Duty which aims to ensure relevant services work together to share information and collaborate on interventions to prevent and reduce serious crimes.
- Expectations arising from the wider use of novel technologies such as Live Facial Recognition (LFR) and Drone First Responders.
- A General Election in 2024.

12 Monitoring the Implementation of Actions

The systems that have been put in place to monitor the implementation of plans through delivery plan and the risk register will ensure activities detailed in this statement are implemented. Progress of the implementation of actions will be reported in next year's Annual Governance Statement.

13 Conclusion and Commitment Statement

The scale of the change facing the OPCC, VRP and West Midlands Police remains extremely challenging, at a time when the demand and need for sustained and improved service to the public continues to increase. This will require firm leadership, careful management, innovation and robust governance.

The systems and processes which the PCC and Chief Constable jointly have in place to monitor the implementation of the Police and Crime Plan will ensure activities detailed in the statement are implemented. The governance arrangements of the PCC and the Chief Constable will remain under constant review in the forthcoming financial years.

Signed

Simon Foster
Police and Crime Commissioner West Midlands

Jonathan Jardine
Head of Paid Service, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Jane Heppel
Chief Finance Officer, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Appendix

Mapping of Governance Framework Key Elements / Governance Dashboard – 2023/24 – Applying CIPFA’s Seven Principles of Good Governance in Policing

PRINCIPLE A - BEHAVING WITH INTEGRITY, DEMONSTRATING STRONG COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL VALUES, AND RESPECTING THE RULE OF LAW

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Behaving with Integrity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the PCC, chief officers and staff behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby promoting and upholding the reputation of the organisation among its stakeholders. • Ensuring the PCC and chief officers lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for their organisations and staff and that they are communicated and understood. The values should build on the Nolan Principles and the Code of Ethics. • Leading by example and using above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions. • Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCC code of conduct • Standards of professional behaviour, Force policy • Performance appraisal process in place for all staff across the PCC and Force (WMP Conversations and WMP Ratings) • Evidence of communicating shared values with staff, the community and partners. This is through the Police and Crime Plan, Force strategies (This Work Matters and Force Values) etc. • Decision making policies in place. Scheme of governance details the requirements around decisions • Police and Crime Plan (2021-25) developed in consultation with partners, including local authorities, Police and Crime Panel, community engagement. Police and Crime Plan the driver for decisions. • Implementation of the new arrangements for Police Complaints and independent panel members • Implementation of the new Policing helpline for officers to be reported by the public 	<p>Maintaining</p>	<p>Green</p>

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Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Standards Dept, reports to Strategic Policing and Crime Board (SPCB) and Joint Audit Committee on fraud and corruption • Anti-fraud and corruption policy reviewed regularly and communicated with SPCB and Force Executive Team. Last reviewed September 2023. • Co-operation with the National Fraud Initiative. Latest data set submitted October 2022 and matches released January 2023 which were investigated during 2023/4. Results were reported regularly into Joint Audit Committee. The next data submission is October 2024. • Up-to-date register of interests for PCC, chief officers and their respective staff. In addition, the Force maintains a Business Interest Register • There is up to date lists register of gifts and hospitality across the Force and PCC • There are Whistleblowing and Confidential reporting policies in place and protect individuals raising concerns. These are well understood and communicated across the organisation. Professional Standards Corruption line in place to allow confidential reporting. • Adoption of the RACE (Reporting Action Composition Education) Code developed by Karl George • The Force's People Strategy • Fairness and Belonging plan • Force and PCC have a complaints policy in place. Force complaints are monitored and reported against through performance reports to Force Executive Team and PCC's Board. Also, complaints reported and monitored to West Midlands Police and Crime Panel • There is evidence of changes/improvements as a result of complaints received and acted upon 		

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Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are policies and procedures in place across the organisations setting out the expectations for staff to meet the required standards • The expectations the organisations place on suppliers is set out in tender and contract documentation 		
<p>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking to understand, monitor and maintain the organisation’s ethical performance. • Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation’s culture and operation. • Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values. • Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with ethical standards expected by the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics Committee in place, showing a clear commitment to balancing advances in the use of technology in Policing with ethical concerns • Policy in place for declaring interests for board members, police officers and staff • Code of conduct in operation • Professional standards monitoring • The standards of professional behaviour also reflect relevant principles enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Council of Europe Code of Police Ethics • For major PCC decisions consultation takes place with Board members • The policies and procedures of the organisation set out the expectations to meet the required standards • Procurement strategy includes requirements relating to Social Value • Social Value Portal in place to monitor and report on achievement of social value – the benefits here are increasing year on year • Appraisal approach includes expected behaviours of suppliers and providers • Modern Slavery statement in place and procedures for monitoring suppliers and providers 	Maintaining	Green
<p>Respecting the rule of law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the PCC, chief officers and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police and Crime Plan in place following extensive consultation 	Maintaining	Green

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Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating the conditions to ensure that statutory chief officers, other key post holders and (where appropriate) statutory committees are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with best practice. • Striving to use full powers for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders. • Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively. • Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies reviewed on an ongoing basis and kept up to date • Scheme of governance up to date • Compliance with CIPFA statements of the role of statutory finance officers • Effective anti-fraud and corruption policies. This includes oversight by the Joint Audit Committee • Internal Audit function, delivery of a risk-based plan • Legal implications considered as part of decision-making process • Joint Audit Committee complies with and follows CIPFA's best practice guidance 		

PRINCIPLE B - ENSURING OPENNESS AND COMPREHENSIVE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Openness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the PCC, chief officers and staff behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby promoting and upholding the reputation of the organisation among its stakeholders. • Ensuring the PCC and chief officers lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for their organisations and staff and that they are communicated and understood. The values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCC annual report produced • Up to date publication scheme • Precept leaflet produced • PCC website and Force website revised and improved • Record of PCC decisions published on website • Established PCC processes and procedures for decisions in relation to grant funding activity (including victims fund etc). This includes publication of the Commissioning Dashboard on the website • Strategic Policing and Crime Board and Joint Audit Committee meetings published with live webcasting. • PCC decision making policy published on website 	Maintaining	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>should build on the Nolan Principles and the Code of Ethics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading by example and using above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions. • Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports include legal and financial comments • Decision making reports produced for PCC decisions • Police and Crime Plan consultation • Workplan for Strategic Policing and Crime Board and Joint Audit Committee • Precept survey undertaken • FOI publication scheme • Independent Advisory Groups • Independent Scrutiny Panels for key policy areas 		
<p>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively engaging with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably. • Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively. • Ensuring that partnerships, including collaborations, are based on trust, a shared commitment to change, and a culture which promotes and accepts challenge among partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication strategy for the PCC and Force developed and implemented • Collaborations agreements in place with neighbouring PCCs • Working with organisations as part of the Serious Violence Duty • During the proposals for transfer of powers, there was strong collaborative work at officer level with the West Midlands Combined Authority which would have delivered a secure transfer of function in May 2024 • Partnerships developed for particular priorities for example violence reduction partnership, criminal justice board and victims commission • Community Safety partnerships both with the 7 local authorities and the creation of a West Midlands wide Community Safety partnership • Leading on national procurement initiatives and engaged with Blue Light Commercial • Working with the Police and Crime Panel 	Maintaining	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Engaging with individual citizens and service users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a clear policy about the type of issues on which the organisation will meaningfully consult with, or involve, individual communities, citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that a service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes. • Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that the PCC and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement. • Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs. • Implementing effective feedback mechanisms for those consultees in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account. • Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity. • Taking account of the interests of future generations of taxpayers and service users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record of public consultations • Community safety plans developed in line with the police and crime plan • WMP's contact strategy and engagement with communities, including surveys • Policing strategic assessment • Police and Crime Plan • Medium Term Financial Plan • Recognition of the strategic policing requirement • Active Citizen Programme and the operation of the Helping Communities Fund • Development and operation of the Citizen Charter • Casework processes ensure that every contact to the OPCC is traced, and answered appropriately • FOIs completed on time and in a clear and open manner 	<p>Maintaining</p>	<p>Green</p>

Appendix A

PRINCIPLE C: DEFINING OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Defining outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a clear vision – an agreed formal statement of the organisation’s purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators which provides the basis for the organisation’s overall strategy, planning and other decisions. • Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including individual citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer. • Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available, while recognising that changing and unforeseen demands will place additional pressure on financial resources. • Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes as part of delivering goods and services. • Managing expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police and Crime Plan used as a basis for planning • Community engagement and involvement in the development of the Police and Crime Plan • Police and Crime Plan delivery plan, linked to workplan • Chief Constables ambition and delivery plan (This Work Matters) • Force Management Statements • Needs assessments across the Violence Reduction Unit, Community Safety Partnerships and Victims Services • Strategic tasking and coordination • Progress reports against police and crime plan • Performance reports considered by the SPCB • PCC and CC meetings consider performance of Force • Needs assessments completed by the Violence Reduction Partnership • WMP’s performance panel challenges the performance of the Force • Established performance measures and reported on regularly • Medium term financial plan • Strategic policing requirement • Acting on HMICFRS assessments and recommendations. Recommendation tracker in place and reporting to Joint Audit Committee • Established risk management strategy and monitor of risks, also reported to Joint Audit Committee. 	<p>Maintaining</p>	<p>Green</p>

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about services. • Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the PCC and the chief officer's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints • Ensuring fair access to services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital programme aligned to Police and Crime Plan and This Work Matters • Record of decisions made • Programme governance structures in place including appropriate gateways, outline business case, detailed business cases and other gateways where necessary • Social value considered in the procurement and commissioning of goods and services • The generation of social value assessed in the disposal of land and buildings • Commitments in the police and crime plan in relation to social value, environment and access to police services • Joint environmental strategy launched during 2022 • Developing a three year plan to work with stakeholders to move towards contracting and the use of frameworks and away from one year grant funding to ensure sustainable funding plans for partners • Working with WMP to develop a workforce plan allied to the MTFP to ensure that future L&D and recruitment needs are identified and acted upon 	<p>Maintaining</p>	<p>Green</p>

Appendix A

PRINCIPLE D: DETERMINING THE INTERVENTIONS NECESSARY TO OPTIMISE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE INTENDED OUTCOMES

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Determining interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore, ensuring that best value is achieved however services are provided. Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements, or where services are no longer required, in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets, and bearing in mind future impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision making framework in place Framework of corporate governance in place WMP's programme structures in place. This includes agreed information requirements in place for project sign off and commencement Scheme of delegation sets out the requirements around appropriate authorisation Formal recording of decisions takes place WMP's Citizens Charter and engagement strategy PCC Commissioning Strategy Needs assessments across the Violence Reduction Partnership, Community Safety Partnerships and Victims Services 	Maintaining	Green
<p>Planning interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets. Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered. Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively, including shared risks. Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium term financial plan approved as part of budget 2023/24 Annual process to update MTFP – Latest update to SPCB October 2023 Plans in the place across the Force and PCC. This is for specific priorities within the police and crime plan Performance reports highlight areas where corrective action is necessary. These areas are followed up and reported on Performance targets are detailed in the police and crime plan Strategy, Delivery and Assurance function providing assurance Budgets are aligned to specific priorities 	Improving	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing appropriate performance measures as part of the planning process in order to assess and inform how the performance of the services and projects is to be measured. Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly. Preparing budgets in accordance with government funding announcements, organisational objectives, strategies and the medium-term financial plan. Informing medium- and long-term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure, together with estimates of grant, precept, and other income streams, aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk strategies in place and the management of risk is aligned to the strategy Estates strategy approved in 2023 Fees and Charges strategy aligned with National charging guidelines 		
<p>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the medium-term financial strategy integrates and trades off service priorities, affordability, and other resource constraints. Ensuring that the budgeting process is all inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term. Ensuring the medium-term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium term financial plan and annual budget aligned to police and crime plan and other strategies Delivery plan details actions against the police and crime plan. Includes assessment of budget requirements Evidence available of results; for example, investment in police officers, decision around Police Community Support Officers Scheme of delegations in place Medium Term Financial Plan is discussed at Police and Crime Panel Surveys completed by Force on residents through Citizens charter 	Maintaining	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>budgetary period in order for the outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic policing requirement and strategic assessment completed and presented to Strategic Policing and Crime Board Updated procurement strategy includes social value. Also work ongoing to embed social value further Each district has a CSP plan. Attendance by Force and PCC representatives 		

PRINCIPLE E: DEVELOPING THE ENTITY'S CAPACITY, INCLUDING THE CAPABILITY OF ITS LEADERSHIP AND THE INDIVIDUALS WITHIN IT

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Developing the entity's capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing operations, performance and asset management on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness. Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how policing resources are allocated so that defined outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently. Recognising and promoting the benefits of collaborative working where added value can be achieved through partnerships. Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Force workforce plan in place which is continuously updated National uplift programme completed. Performance monitoring of operations and activities ongoing Collaboration arrangements in place with neighbouring forces for significant services areas Learning and Development implementation Partnership approach to sharing assets Collaboration playbook developed to provide a gateway mechanism when entering into collaboration arrangements WMP's talent management initiatives WMP's Conversations - performance framework in operation Use of AI being developed in the Force Control Room to more accurately respond to high risk incidents and 	Maintaining	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
	provide a more measured response to low risk enquiries		
<p>Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained. Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body. Ensuring the PCC and chief officers have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief officers lead by implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by the PCC and/or chief constable, and each provides a check and balance for each other's responsibility. Developing the capabilities of the PCC and chief officers to achieve effective shared leadership where appropriate, and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks. Ensuring the PCC, chief officers and staff receive appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job descriptions in place PCC, Chief Executive and Chief Constable have established communication processes in place Scheme of governance in place across both corporations that is reviewed annually Respective roles clearly defined Regular one to one meetings held between staff and their managers across the OPCC Staff appraisals process in place that identifies training requirements and a review of staff performance Investment in the People and Organisational Development department Strategic Policing and Crime Board The website of the PCC and Force are reviewed for effectiveness, including developing new functionality Staff survey regularly completed Induction processes People Strategy The Chief Constable continues to host a number of senior leadership events to develop the capability of its leadership at all levels within the organisation. Health and wellbeing agenda PCC induction WMP's talent management initiatives 	Maintaining	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the PCC, chief officers and staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis. • Ensuring personal, organisation and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance failures both internal and external. • Ensuring the PCC is independent of management and free from relationships that would materially interfere with its role. • The OPCC, in conjunction with the force, should ensure that appropriate information is available for potential PCC candidates. • Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections. • Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs. • Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing. 			

Appendix A

PRINCIPLE F: MANAGING RISKS AND PERFORMANCE THROUGH ROBUST INTERNAL CONTROL AND STRONG PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Managing risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be regarded as a continuous process. • Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively. • Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated. • Ensuring that the organisation is risk aware and that its risk appetite is defined and communicated clearly to those responsible for making decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved risk strategies in place • Risks managed through agreed risk processes • Risk registers reviewed on a regular basis • Risk strategy and registers scrutinised by Audit Committee • Business continuity plans in place • Forces revised approach to risk management progressing 	Improving	Green
<p>Managing performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review. • Making decisions based on relevant, clear, objective analysis and advice, pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook. • Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing the organisation's performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight and ownership by PCC and/or chief officers of the performance of organisations • Regular performance reports to Strategic Policing and Crime Board • Regular reporting to the independent Joint audit committee • Publication of relevant reports from the Force to the PCC, supported by minutes of public forums attended by both the PCC and the chief constable • Performance management systems, targets and reports • Benefits realisation plans and monitoring reports • Grant monitoring returns and assessment meetings • HMICFRS reports 	Maintaining	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>and that of any organisation for which it is responsible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing the PCC and chief officers with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement. • Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External scrutiny of performance by bodies such as the police and crime panel • The budget and medium-term financial planning processes • WMP performance panel 		
<p>Robust internal control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the organisation's objectives. • Evaluating and monitoring the organisation's risk management and internal control on a regular basis. • Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place. • Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor. • Ensuring an independent audit committee or equivalent group or function, which is independent of the executive and accountable to the PCC and chief constable, provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risks and maintaining an effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework of corporate governance, including contract standing orders and financial regulations • Fraud and corruption policy that is reviewed on a regular basis • Regular reporting to Audit Committee by professional standards department on cases of any internal fraud • Commissioner's Strategic Policing and Crime Board receives regular reports on the Professional Standards Department • Financial standards guidance • Risk management strategy • Risk management strategy/policy has been formally approved and adopted and is reviewed and updated on a regular basis • Compliance with the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption (CIPFA, 2014) • Effective internal audit service is resourced and maintained • Independent Joint Audit Committee complies with best practice as outlined in Audit Committees: Practical 	Maintaining	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>control environment and that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon.</p>	<p>Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (CIPFA, 2022) including terms of reference, membership and training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report produced by audit committee and presented to SPCB • External audit reports reported quarterly to Audit Committee • Internal audit charter, external inspection of Internal Audit against International Internal Audit Standards and the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards (last undertaken Summer 2022) • Internal Audit plan that is aligned to the key risks of the organisations 		
<p>Managing data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data. • Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies. • Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) defined • Data protection policies and strategies in place • Data retention policies in place across the organisations • Compliance with policies and strategies including the specified information requirements • Publication strategies • Information sharing protocols • Freedom of Information Act 2000 arrangements • Complaints received records • Partnership protocols and agreements. • Project plans and implementation plans for General Data Protection Regulations • Investment in Force IT systems • Information produced to respond to potential threats, e.g. in relation to the conflict in Ukraine 	Maintaining	Amber
<p>Strong public financial management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMICFRS assessments and recommendations • Internal audit reports 	Maintaining	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short term financial and operational performance. Ensuring well developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual financial strategy Budget monitoring reports Annual statement of accounts Treasury management strategy and monitoring reports Annual audit letter Receipt of unqualified audit opinion and VfM conclusion Plans in place to implement improvements in system effectiveness Reserves Strategy Benefit Realisation plans HMICFRS Value for Money Profile CIPFA Financial Management Capability Review Assessment completed against CIPFA's FM code 		

PRINCIPLE G: IMPLEMENTING GOOD PRACTICES IN TRANSPARENCY, REPORTING, AND AUDIT TO DELIVER EFFECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Implementing good practice in transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring they are easy to access and interrogate. Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report Standard decision report template is used consistently Information published on the website in accordance with the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011 and its revisions Statement of accounts and AGS Reports to the police and crime panel Publication (subject to confidentiality tests) of force board papers 	Maintaining	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication (subject to confidentiality tests) of reports presented to the PCC's board • PCC received an award for transparency 		
<p>Implementing good practices in reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money, and the stewardship of resources to stakeholders in a timely and understandable way. • Ensuring the PCC and chief officers own the results. • Assessing the extent to which the organisation is applying the principles contained in the Framework and publishing the results of this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance in action (the AGS). • Ensuring the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other similar entities. • Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed functions as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal annual reports • Annual financial statements • Appropriate approvals • HMICFRS assessments and responses • The external auditor's annual letter • Action plans to deal with specific matters • Annual governance statement • The PCC and force websites • Reports to the police and crime panel 	Maintaining	Green
<p>Assurance and effective accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon. • Ensuring an effective internal audit service, with direct access to the PCC, chief constable and audit committee, provides assurance with regard to the organisation's governance arrangements, and produces recommendations which are acted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Audit recommendations implemented • Evidence that recommendations have informed positive improvements • Compliance with the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit • Publication of responses to HMICFRS assessments and recommendations • Community engagement strategy 	Maintaining	Green

Appendix A

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations as appropriate. Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third party suppliers and that this is evidenced in the AGS. • Ensuring that when working in partnerships, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration agreements, including effective governance arrangements • External audit reports including the annual letter • Change governance structures • Internal Audit's charter setting out reporting lines across the PCC and WMP • Annual Head of Internal Audit report giving opinion on risk governance and control 		



West Midlands Police

Annual Governance Statement

Position as at 30 November 2024 including plans for the financial year 2024-25

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Annual Governance Statement

Position as at 30 November 2024 including plans for the financial year 2024-25.

1. Introduction

This Annual Governance Statement (AGS) explains how the Chief Constable governs West Midlands Police Force through a system of internal controls. The Chief Constable has adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE 2016 updated framework: *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*, a copy of which is on our website at www.west-midlands.police.uk or can be obtained by contacting us, details at www.west-midlands.police.uk/contact-us/index.aspx. This statement explains how the Chief Constable has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, regulation 6(1), which requires all relevant bodies to prepare an annual governance statement.

2. Scope

The Chief Constable is responsible for ensuring the force's business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Chief Constable also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Chief Constable is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the exercise of its functions, which includes ensuring a sound system of internal control is maintained through the year and that arrangements are in place for the management of risk.

3. The Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which the Chief Constable directs and controls activities through which it accounts and engages with the community. It enables the Chief Constable to monitor the achievement of strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services, including achieving value for money.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the governance framework and is designed to manage risk. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Chief Constable's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them effectively, efficiently and economically.

The Chief Constable is responsible for operational policing matters, the direction and control of police personnel, and for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of the force. The Chief Constable is held to account for the exercise of those functions and those of the persons under his direction and control, by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

It therefore follows that the Commissioner must satisfy himself that the force has appropriate mechanisms in place for the maintenance of good governance. For these to operate in practice, the Commissioner and the Chief Constable have separate but complimentary governance structures. These facilitate the achievement of effective governance arrangements, including the monitoring and assessment of performance in line with statutory responsibilities.

West Midlands Police Strategic Governance Structure:

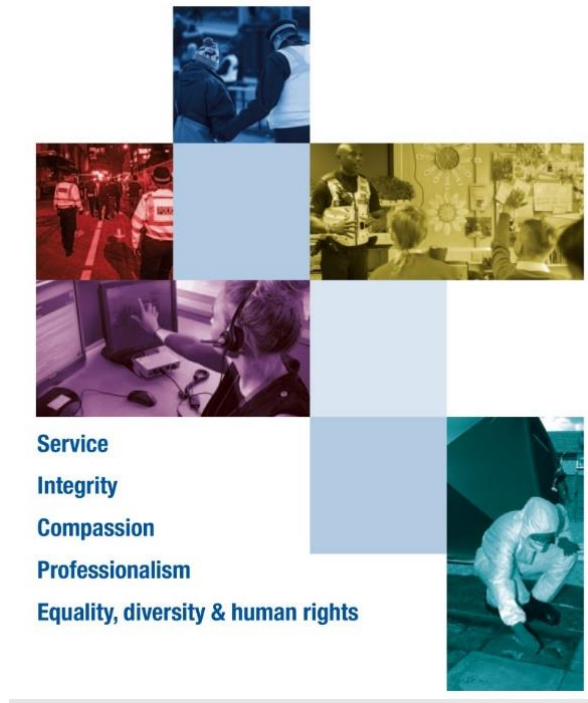


The 'Delivering Good Governance standard for public services 2016' sets out the seven good governance core principles. The key elements of the systems and processes that have been put in place for the force and how the force adheres to these seven principles is evidenced below.

4. Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law

Evidence to demonstrate Principle A includes;

- ✓ The Chief Constable's Vision and Values, in conjunction with the Code of Ethics, define the standards expected of everyone working in policing and is communicated to all officers and staff.



- ✓ The Standards of Professional Behaviour reflect the expectations of the public and are governed by specific policies, procedural rules and internal management processes that cover the activities of the force:
 - Financial Management
 - Procurement
 - Health and safety
 - Gifts and Hospitality
 - Business Interests
 - 'Whistleblowing' – Confidential Reporting
 - Complaints Handling
 - Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption
 - Information Security
 - Information sharing
 - Data Protection
 - General Data Protection Regulations

- ✓ At a national level, the force cooperates in the National Fraud Initiative which attempts to identify fraud by sharing and comparing employee data across the public sector.

- ✓ Within the force there are two formal codes of conduct, one for police officers and one for police staff. Both codes define the standards of personal behaviour expected. The officer code also sets out requirements in terms of use of force, performance, execution of duties and other general conduct expectations. Certain staff, e.g. qualified accountants or solicitors, will have professional codes of conduct to which they are held to account.
- ✓ An Ethics Committee has been established which is responsible for providing the Chief Constable and PCC with independent advice around ethical issues arising from the data analytics projects.

5. Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Evidence to demonstrate Principle B includes;

- ✓ One of the strategic pillars that support the force vision is 'Engaged Communities'. The change to the force operating model in April 2023 was done with the ambition of further building on relationships with the communities served by WMP. Clear ownership, affinity and pride in local teams will help us tackle local criminality, prevent crime and keep people safe.



- ✓ The West Midlands Police website includes the current Freedom of Information (FOI) publication scheme in its 'Your right to information' pages.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner sets the overall strategic direction for the Chief Constable and the force through the objectives contained in the Police and

Crime Plan, setting the force budget and determining the precept, commissioning services, and holding the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the public. The Police and Crime Plan covers the period 2021-2025.

- ✓ The force website aids agile accessibility to the police service by providing advice, enabling a member of the public to report an incident, track their case and undertake live webchat to report all non-emergency crimes online.
- ✓ The force actively involves communities across the force geography. The approach involves public meetings including community forums, independent advisory groups, scrutiny panels and messaging via WMNOW.
- ✓ There is also active involvement with the full range of media such as press, TV, social media and public surveys.
- ✓ The force works closely with Independent Advisory Groups and independent scrutiny panels to increase levels of trust and understanding in our diverse communities, support the most vulnerable and make sure our engagement is targeted and meaningful.
- ✓ Governed by the Citizens in Policing Board, the force has a comprehensive Citizens in Policing programme which seeks to increase citizen participation in policing and community safety by developing the scale and variety of opportunities for volunteers, special constables, cadets and a number of watch schemes.
- ✓ The force engages and collaborates with a significant number of partners within the region. An example being the work of the West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit which is jointly chaired by an Assistant Chief Constable and Public Health Lead. The WMVRU aims to bring together partners to work together with the shared understanding that violence and its associated harms are preventable. The WMVRU is a member of the World Health Organisation Violence Prevention Alliance international network.
- ✓ WMP regularly speaks to its communities and partners to share the experiences and develop ideas and practices. We use the Four Key Principles (Voice, Dignity and Respect, Trustworthy Motives and Neutrality) to ensure we all understand what we're doing. Understanding what people think of the Force's practices helps WMP to change and constantly improve what it does. With greater levels of citizen satisfaction comes an increase in trust and legitimacy.

6. Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

Evidence to demonstrate Principle C includes;

- ✓ The WMP strategy defines a number of economic, social and environmental outcomes to be delivered during the period 2020-2023. A new corporate strategy has been drafted to deliver the new Local Policing model.
- ✓ The Policing Vision 2025 highlighted trends most likely to impact policing by 2025 and the College of Policing's Future Operating Environment 2040 provides an insight into policing's operating environment as far as 2040, we consider the implications of these kind of trends, scenarios and future challenges on WMP as part of our annual strategic assessment within our strategy and business planning cycle.

7. Principle D: Determining the outcomes necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

Evidence to demonstrate Principle D includes;

- ✓ Strategic governance is in place to monitor and track activity against WMP's strategy. This includes regular Chief Officer meetings, the monthly Force Leadership Conference and biannual Strategic Tasking and Co-ordination group meeting which are in place to drive the key deliverables of the strategic assessment.
- ✓ Force performance is scrutinised via both strategic and tactical force level governance structures, with the monthly Performance Day acting as the main oversight body. Portfolio and thematic boards are in place to manage performance within the portfolio areas and provide the necessary oversight and assurance.
- ✓ The introduction of a dedicated Assurance team within Strategy, Delivery and Assurance and dedicated governance for all aspects of HMICFRS activity including preparedness for upcoming inspections as well as scrutiny of open recommendations.
- ✓ The force planning cycle incorporates an annual strategic assessment, annual Force Management Statement (FMS) and financial plans.
- ✓ The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been updated which forms the basis of the annual budgets and provides a framework for the evaluation of future proposals.

- ✓ Decision-making at all levels of the force is undertaken within the framework of the National Decision Model, which has the Code of Ethics at its core.



- ✓ WMP continue to utilise the Threat Harm Risk Investigation Vulnerability Engagement (THRIVE) framework across functions. It underpins all decision making in the force and encourages flexible and adaptable risk management, while empowering staff and officers at all levels to have confidence in the decisions that they make.

8. Principle E: Developing the Force’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Evidence to demonstrate Principle E includes;

- ✓ As part of WMP’s corporate strategy, a people strategy was launched in 2021 outlining what WMP expects from its personnel and what people can expect, in return, from the organisation.
- ✓ The strategy incorporates a future facing leadership framework, with individuals aiming to be champions in the workplace; creating an environment which supports, challenges and enables WMP officers and staff to be the best they can be in order to bring the vision and values, as referenced under Principle A, to life.
- ✓ The Force Executive Team have clearly defined leadership roles and objectives; they are responsible for implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services within their respective portfolios.
- ✓ WMP Conversations continues to be delivered across the force as a way of engaging with the workforce and evidencing individual and team performance and capability. The relaunch was successful and retained a focus on measuring and improving our performance to meet the strategic objectives and drive personal, departmental and force-wide deliverables.
- ✓ During 2023-24 there has been a renewed focus on leadership training, particularly focused on first and second line leaders. A newly launched Op Excellence programme equips leaders with operational skills required as a supervisor, as well as their responsibilities as a leader of people.

- ✓ To build on capacity, collaboration arrangements are in place with neighbouring forces for significant service areas including CMPG, Forensics and Legal Services and future collaboration continues to be considered.
- ✓ Regional and national governance arrangements are in place in relation to national and regional programmes (Single Online Home, Specialist Capabilities, and Blue Light Commercial etc.)
- ✓ The Data Driven Insight Lab continues to utilise the vast amounts of data available to the force to predict future demand, as well as the use of data science to allow to more targeted operational activity.
- ✓ The forces 'digital workforce' was identified as innovative practise by HMICFRS in the latest PEEL assessment, for the improved efficiency and productivity that was evidenced from this work.

9. Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Evidence to demonstrate Principle F includes;

- ✓ The force has an Organisational Risk Management Policy and Corporate Risk Register, prepared and reviewed by the Deputy Chief Constable and managed via the Force Executive Team Meeting and Risk and Learning Board. The Joint Audit Committee (with the PCC) is responsible for independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework.
- ✓ The force ensures all decision-making processes are overseen by correct governance structures. Each member of the Force Executive Team (FET) leads a specific portfolio board and chairs thematic boards, all of which incorporate sub-groups for specific functions and themes. This oversight from the highest level ensures that there is no disconnect at any level of management in the continued delivery of force performance and ambitions. Risk is discussed as a regular agenda item within these portfolio and thematic boards. These meetings ensure risks are being managed and mitigated. Oversight of force risks is through the Risk and Organisational Learning Board that is chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable.
- ✓ Objectives are defined within the WMP Conversations of each executive team member and cascaded throughout the organisation's approach to performance management.

- ✓ Performance management forms part of the force governance arrangements. Performance information is scrutinised by the Force Executive Team via the boards they chair and the Quarterly Performance Reviews (QPRs) they hold. Force performance is monitored through the force performance day chaired by the DCC. All aspects of performance are tracked through an assurance calendar that includes operational areas such as Serious Organised Crime to financial management.
- ✓ The Performance Data Improvement project seeks to refresh the forces approach to performance dashboards, ensuring that they are providing detailed management information as well as supporting officers to manage their work efficiently.
- ✓ His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) independently assesses operational policing processes and reports the performance of the force at a national level. The force tracks and monitors all recommendations and areas for improvement from HMICFRS via the force governance structures.
- ✓ The force continues to work with HMICFRS to evidence improvements made and to move the force from its 'engaged' status of enhanced monitoring.
- ✓ Strong public financial management is evidenced through the following strategies and reports:
 - Medium Term Financial Plan
 - Annual Financial Strategy
 - Budget Monitoring reports
 - Annual Statement of Accounts
 - Treasury Management Strategy
 - Treasury Management Reports
 - Reserves Strategy
 - Benefit Realisation plans
 - HMICFRS Value for Money Profile
 - CIPFA Financial Management Capability Review
- ✓ The CIPFA Financial Management Code (CIPFA FM Code) is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist police organisations in demonstrating their financial sustainability. The CIPFA FM Code therefore sets the standards of financial management for PCCs and Forces. A key goal of the FM Code is to improve the financial

resilience of organisations by embedding enhanced standards of financial management. There are also clear links between the FM Code and the Governance Framework, particularly with its focus on achieving sustainable outcomes.

The PCC and the Force are compliant with the principles of the FM code and work will continue in 2023-24 to improve and enhance financial accountability through reinforcement of roles and responsibilities, formalised training and enhanced financial reporting. The enhanced financial reporting will include data on policing performance and outcomes against financial information to enhance operational decision making.

10. Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

Evidence to demonstrate Principle G includes;

- ✓ A Joint Audit Committee is responsible for independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, the independent scrutiny of the Chief Constable's and the PCC's financial performance to the extent that it affects the Chief Constable and PCC's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment.
- ✓ The Joint Scheme of Corporate Governance, updated in 2021, sets out in detail the respective roles and functions of the Commissioner and Chief Constable, outlining all significant decisions which are consented or delegated and which are of a statutory, financial or management nature.
- ✓ All major change and transformation programmes and projects have their own project boards and adhere to consistent force change control processes which include addressing risk management and mitigation.
- ✓ An External Audit function reports to "those charged with governance" in respect of the Annual Accounts to ensure they are prepared in accordance with legislation, accounting standards and good practice. As well as issuing a statutory opinion on the accounts they also issue a statutory opinion on the Chief Constable's arrangements for securing value for money, measured as economy, efficiency and effectiveness, which sits alongside the HMICFRS assessment work.
- ✓ This Annual Governance Statement is published alongside the Statement of Accounts.

- ✓ Regular publication (subject to confidentiality tests) of reports presented to the Strategic Policing and Crime Board.

11. Review of effectiveness

The Chief Constable has responsibility for an annual review of the effectiveness of the Governance Framework. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the Force Executive Team within West Midlands Police, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Internal Audit Annual report, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates. In maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements, the following roles are undertaken:

The Force

The Chief Constable operates a system of strongly controlled arrangements for the delivery of operational policing in its communities, together with management and monitoring arrangements for:

- Performance management and associated reporting;
- Financial management;
- Standards of data quality that underpin key reporting requirements;
- The professional standards of police officers and staff in the force;
- Programme and project management.

These functions are organised within clear reporting structures in the force, designed to provide the Chief Constable and the Executive Team with assurances as to the effective delivery of operational policing and the Commissioner's Policing and Crime plan.

The Deputy Chief Constable was appointed in April 2022. Upon appointment, a review of the force governance arrangements was commissioned. The work is on-going and includes a refresh to the Governance and Knowledge portal, and review of the terms of reference for boards.

Group Activities

Violence Reduction Partnership

The Violence Reduction Partnership is funded by the Home Office, and shares joint governance arrangements between both the OPCC and West Midlands Police. The

partnership is made up of public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations with the aim of tackling the root causes of violence.

Commissioned Intervention Services

There are a number of commissioned intervention services funded by the OPCC that are used as part of a community resolution or conditional caution for offenders. These are for a range of offences and evaluations have shown reductions in reoffending of between 55% - 70%.

The Joint Audit Committee

The Commissioner and Chief Constable have established a Joint Audit Committee to be responsible, on behalf of both Corporations Sole, to:

- Advise the Commissioner and the Chief Constable according to good governance principles;
- Provide independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Commissioner's and Chief Constable's internal control environment and risk management framework;
- Oversee the effectiveness of the framework in place for ensuring compliance with statutory requirements;
- Independently scrutinise financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Commissioner's and Chief Constable's exposure to risks and weakens the internal control environment;
- Oversee the financial reporting process.
- Ensure the Force is implementing agreed actions resulting from HMICFRS inspections and thematic reviews/reports.

Internal Audit

The system of Internal Audit is a primary tenet of corporate governance and is the responsibility of the Commissioner. The provision and maintenance of an effective shared Internal Audit service for the PCC and CC has been delegated to the PCC's Chief Finance Officer. The Audit Committee oversees the provision of this service, reviewing associated plans and work outputs.

12. Significant governance issues 2023-24

Over the last 12 months, the force has had a change to Deputy Chief Constable, as well as appointment of a number of new Assistant Chief Constables and the implementation of a new force operating model.

In December 2023 HMICFRS announced that they were putting WMP into “Engage” status, following a PEEL inspection. There were four key areas of concern: online child sexual exploitation, management of sex offenders, multiagency risk assessment conferences and the investigations.

Performance monitoring will show continued improvements to key performance measures since the implementation of the new operating model in April 2023.

Full consultation with external partners continued to take place, this has included Independent Advisory Groups, consultation with Children and Adult Services and Key Individual Networks and engagement with the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangement process.

Progress has been made on addressing the issues raised in the AGS for 2022-23. Internal Audit completed a follow up of Child Abuse recommendations during 2023-24 to establish progress on implementing the recommendations made within the 2022-23 audit. The original review identified significant risks within Force Contact in respect of the quality of THRIVE+ assessments and lack of compliance with escalation processes that should be used when target response times for calls look like they may not be achieved. The lack of trained and experienced officers coupled with high workloads per officer was also raised as a concern. The follow up concluded that all recommendations had progressed and are considered implemented. Supporting evidence was obtained to confirm implementation.

On the 18th September 2024, West Midlands Police was removed from special measures. The force has been recognised as the fastest improving force in the country. After less than ten months, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) moved the force out of its enhanced monitoring process called ‘Engage’. HMICFRS recognised the force had made improvements in how it managed the risks posed by sex offenders and online child abuse offenders and how it carried out effective investigations.

An employment tribunal involving a former West Midlands Police firearms officer, and ongoing associated activity, poses a significant risk to WMP. Ongoing action to address the issues raised by the case will need to demonstrate that the cultural and operational failings are dealt with effectively, thoroughly and sustainably. Other significant structures continued including Misconduct Hearings by WMPs Professional Standards Department.

13. Conclusion and Commitment Statement

The scale of change facing the Chief Constable remains extremely challenging, at a time when the demand and need for sustained and improved service to the public continues to increase. This will require firm leadership, careful management, innovation and robust governance.

The systems and processes the Chief Constable has in place to monitor the implementation of the Police and Crime Plan will ensure activities detailed in this statement are implemented. The governance arrangements of the PCC and the Chief Constable will remain under constant review in the forthcoming financial year.

Signed

Craig Guildford
Chief Constable of West Midlands Police

Peter Gillett, CPFA
Director of Commercial Services West Midlands