

Warwickshire Police – Corporate Governance

“Providing assurance on internal controls”

Report status	Final Report
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*Working for
Warwickshire*

The Review

This audit is a review of the work completed by both Warwickshire Police Authority and Warwickshire Police Force to put the principles of good governance into practice and to provide further assurance that all the areas within the Warwickshire Police Authority Code of Corporate Governance are covered.

Taking into account CIPFA's 2007 guidance "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Interim guidance note for Police Authorities and Forces in England and Wales", the audit examined the adequacy of arrangements in place within the following areas of governance:

- Focusing on the organisations purpose and outcomes for citizens and service users.
- Performing effectively in clearly defined functions and roles.
- Promoting values for the whole organisation and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour.
- Taking informed, transparent decisions and managing the risk.
- Developing the capacity and capability of the governing body to be effective.
- Engaging stakeholders and making accountability real.

In addition, the review also considered general governance arrangements and the approaches in place to address issues identified by the Audit Commission as part of the Annual Governance Statement.

Key Findings

Our key concerns are as follows:

At the time of the review, work was still continuing to fully develop and implement a number of changes to the working practices of both the Police Authority and the Police Force to put into place the core principles of good governance. As such, detailed work is continuing on partnerships and community engagement.

Although a number of policies, documents and processes have been put in place throughout 2008/09 and are available to both staff and members of the public, there has not been any internal publicity campaign to increase staff and member awareness of the core principles of governance. Furthermore, there has not been a formal assessment to determine how embedded the principles of governance are throughout the Police Authority and Police Force.

Actions

Key actions to be addressed are as follows:-

- The core principles of corporate governance, as determined by CIPFA, should be publicised to all Police Authority and Police Force staff and an assessment of

staff and member understanding of the key aspects of corporate governance completed.

- Review all Police Authority and Police Force joint policies to ensure they contain a joint foreword or rationale.
- Provide further information on the Police Authority and Police Force websites regarding community engagement.
- The Steering Group produces an annual report, for consideration by the Police Authority on arrangements for performance scrutiny.
- Consider whether items presented to the Police Authority should be subject to professional advice on matters that have legal or financial implications in advance of items being presented for decision-making.

Further actions of a less significant nature have been incorporated into the action plan at Appendix A.

Areas of Best Practice

The establishment of the PURE / Governance group clearly demonstrates the intention to introduce changes that will enhance the operation of both the Police Authority and the Police Force. This is also shown by the publication of the Warwickshire Police Authority Constitution on the public side of the website.

Audit Opinion and Conclusion




Level of Assurance	Definition
Full	There is a sound system of control designed to address relevant risks with controls being consistently applied.
Substantial	There is a sound system of control but there is evidence of non compliance with some of the controls.
Moderate	Whilst there is a basically sound system of control, there are weaknesses in the system that leaves some risks not addressed and there is evidence of non compliance with some of the controls.
Limited	The system of control is weak and there is evidence of non compliance with the controls that do exist.
No	There is no system of control in place.


Warwickshire Police Authority and Warwickshire Police Force have introduced a number of systems, processes and documentation since 2008, demonstrating compliance with the key principles of corporate governance. It is acknowledged that work is still progressing in a number of areas, which is reflected in the moderate assurance opinion.


The CIPFA schedule, designed to assist in putting the principles into practice, used throughout this review should be considered as work on corporate governance progresses.


Appendix A – Findings & Action Plan


Explanation of Priority ratings:


Priority	Explanation
	<p>Fundamental:</p> <p>Action that is considered imperative to ensure that Warwickshire Police Authority and Warwickshire Police Force are not exposed to high risks. Major adverse impact on achievement of objectives if not adequately addressed.</p>
	<p>Significant:</p> <p>Action that is considered necessary to avoid exposing Warwickshire Police Authority and Warwickshire Police Force to significant risks.</p>
	<p>Merits Attention:</p> <p>Action that is considered desirable and should result in enhanced control or better value for money. Minimal adverse impact on achievement of objectives if not adequately addressed.</p>


	Aspect of Governance Considered	Finding	Recommended Action	Priority	Management Action
General governance considerations					
01	Governance is embedded throughout the Police Authority and the Police Force.	There have not been any formal exercises completed to promote corporate governance throughout the Police Authority or the Police Force since the introduction of new governance procedures in 2008.	<p>In order to embed corporate governance throughout the Police Authority and the Police Force steps are taken to publicise the core principles of corporate governance, as determined by CIPFA. This could include an internal advertising campaign using the intranet, posters, newsletters etc.</p> <p>Following the promotion of the principles of corporate governance a staff survey should be completed to enable an assessment on how embedded corporate governance is throughout the organisations.</p>		<p>Police Force Management Response: We agree with the overall thrust of the recommendation. We will undertake the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify needs of staff 2. Plan targeted communication 3. Staff survey <p>Responsibility: Superintendent Chris Ward - Head of Corporate Development</p> <p>Target Date: 31 March 2010</p> <p>Police Authority Management Response: The Police Authority intends to update and re-publish the Members' handbook. This will be followed up by a survey to establish Members' and Police Authority officers' understanding of the key governance principles to establish whether and what further training is needed.</p> <p>Responsibility: Sue Howl - Chief Executive Warwickshire Police Authority</p> <p>Target Date: 31 March 2010</p>


	Aspect of Governance Considered	Finding	Recommended Action	Priority	Management Action
Focusing on the organisations purpose and outcomes for citizens and service users; and general governance considerations					
02	<p>Policies set out the roles and responsibilities of both the Police Authority and the Police Force.</p> <p>Develop and promote the Police Authority's and Police Forces purpose and vision.</p>	<p>A number of policies in place covering elements of corporate governance are joint between the Police Authority and Police Force. However, there was not a record of all joint policies and they did not all have a joint foreword or rationale.</p> <p>In addition, there was no schedule detailing when Police Authority policies are due for review.</p>	<p>Review all joint policies to ensure they clearly outline the respective roles of the Police Authority and Police Force and contain a joint foreword or rationale.</p> <p>Create a formal record of all joint Police Authority and Police Force policies. This should detail when policies are due for review.</p>		<p>Police Force Management Response: We will consider registering Police Authority and shared policies as part of the current Force Policy Register.</p> <p>This would form 2 separate sections, and demonstrate clear visibility. The review process would be actioned for Police Authority, or Force as required.</p> <p>Responsibility: Superintendent Chris Ward - Head of Corporate Development, and Sue Howl - Chief Executive Warwickshire Police Authority</p> <p>Target Date: 30 September 09</p> <p>Police Authority Management Response: Agree the actions above. Following this, we will take part in a joint exercise with the Force to review joint policies ensuring clarity of respective roles.</p> <p>The Police Authority will also form a list of review dates for all existing policies and strategies.</p> <p>Responsibility: Sue Howl - Chief Executive Warwickshire Police Authority</p> <p>Target Date: 31 December 2009</p>


	Aspect of Governance Considered	Finding	Recommended Action	Priority	Management Action
03	<p>Put in place effective arrangements to identify and deal with failure in service delivery.</p> <p>Ensure that effective, transparent and accessible arrangements are in place for dealing with complaints.</p>	<p>The Police Force website demonstrates how a complaint can be made. However, there is no formal complaints policy or procedure, outlining specifically how complaints are dealt with.</p>	<p>Consider whether the Police Force requires a formalised complaints procedure, similar to the Police Authority.</p>		<p>Police Force Management Response: The force complaints, compliments, and feedback process is under review and we will consider the required documentation as part of this.</p> <p>Responsibility: Mick Hayward - Head of Professional Standards</p> <p>Target Date: 31 December 2009</p>


	Aspect of Governance Considered	Finding	Recommended Action	Priority	Management Action
Performing effectively in clearly defined functions and roles					
04	Develop protocols to ensure that the chair and chief executive (or equivalent) negotiate their respective roles early in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained.	<p>There were no formal protocols in place setting out the relationship between the chair and the chief executive.</p> <p>The Police Authority Policy and Governance Advisor confirmed that this was because there had not been a driver to necessitate the protocol.</p>	Consider whether there is the need to develop protocols to ensure that the relationship between the chair and chief executive is formally set out to avoid confusion in the event of a change in personnel.		<p>Police Authority Management Response: Steering Group will be asked to consider whether, in principle, a protocol is required. If so, a protocol will be drafted for approval by the Authority.</p> <p>Responsibility: Sue Howl - Chief Executive Warwickshire Police Authority</p> <p>Target Date: 31 December 2009</p>

	Aspect of Governance Considered	Finding	Recommended Action	Priority	Management Action
Taking informed, transparent decisions and managing the risk					
05	Ensure that professional advice on matters that have legal or financial implications is available and recorded well in advance of decision making and used appropriately.	<p>The Police Authority were not able to demonstrate that professional advice has been obtained on matters that have legal or financial implications and recorded well in advance of decision making and used appropriately.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that both the Monitoring Officer and Treasurer are present at Police Authority meetings and provide relevant legal and financial advice. However, it was not clear if advice is obtained in advance of items presented for decision making.</p>	Consider whether items presented to the Police Authority should outline that relevant professional advice has been obtained on matters that have legal or financial implications, and that these have been considered in advance of items presented for decision making.		<p>Police Authority Management Response: The Police Authority believes that appropriate professional advice is readily available to Members but recognises that arrangements may need to be reviewed to ensure consistency and transparency.</p> <p>Members will be asked to consider this along with options for addressing the issue raised by the auditor.</p> <p>Responsibility: Sue Howl - Chief Executive Warwickshire Police Authority</p> <p>Target Date: 31 December 2009</p>

	Aspect of Governance Considered	Finding	Recommended Action	Priority	Management Action
Developing the capacity and capability of the governing body to be effective, and Engaging stakeholders and making accountability real					
06	Assess the skills required by members and officers and make a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively	<p>There was no evidence of a process designed to assess and develop the skills of all Police Authority staff.</p> <p>The Police Authority Policy and Governance Advisor confirmed that an appraisal process will be introduced throughout 2009. However, this has not yet been formally documented.</p>	A process designed to assess and develop the skills of all Police Authority staff is introduced.		<p>Police Authority Management Response: An appraisal scheme is under preparation and this will be implemented during Autumn 2009.</p> <p>Responsibility: Sue Howl - Chief Executive Warwickshire Police Authority</p> <p>Target Date: 30 November 2009</p>

	Aspect of Governance Considered	Finding	Recommended Action	Priority	Management Action
07	Ensure that effective arrangements are in place to encourage individuals from all sections of the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the Police Authority and Police Force.	Both the Police Authority and Police Force websites state that information on how the community can engage with work of the Police Authority and Police Force will be published at the appropriate time. However, no further details are provided.	Police Authority and Police Force websites are updated to provide further information, such as, on locality forums.		<p>Police Force Management Response: There is considerable work underway to ensure that we engage effectively with the community. We will ensure that the website is accurately updated. Responsibility: Sasha Taylor - E-Communications Officer Target Date: 30 September 2009</p> <p>Police Authority Management Response: The Police Authority website is in need of an overhaul but the timing of this depends on decisions about ICT infrastructure. In the meantime, the website will be updated to include more to encourage community engagement. Responsibility: Sue Howl - Chief Executive Warwickshire Police Authority Target Date: 31 December 2009</p>

	Aspect of Governance Considered	Finding	Recommended Action	Priority	Management Action
08	Produce an annual report on the activity of the scrutiny function.	<p>The purpose of the Steering Group was to scrutinise the priority performance issues of the Force; to liaise with the Chief Constable and co-ordinate the work of the Authority across its Governance Streams.</p> <p>There are regular performance and governance stream reports to the Police Authority, but there is no annual overview report on the arrangements for and co-ordination of performance scrutiny.</p>	The Steering Group are required to produce an annual report to the Police Authority on the arrangements for the co-ordination and reporting of performance scrutiny.		<p>Police Authority Management Response: Agreed that the arrangements for scrutiny should be reported on. Police Authority will consider how best to address this, i.e. whether it is via report by the Steering Group or some other means.</p> <p>Responsibility: Sue Howl - Chief Executive Warwickshire Police Authority</p> <p>Target Date: 31 December 2009</p>

	Aspect of Governance Considered	Finding	Recommended Action	Priority	Management Action
Approach to tackling issues notified as part of the Annual Governance Statement					
09	A formal approach is in place to tackle the issues notified as part of the Annual Governance Statement.	There was an effective process in place to deal with issues raised as part of the Annual Governance Statement. However, this had not been formalised by a member approved terms of reference.	A terms of reference for the remit of the PURE / Governance group is approved by members.		<p>Police Force Management Response: A terms of reference will be drafted at the meeting on 6th July 2009 for approval by Members.</p> <p>Responsibility: Dave Weston - Business Intelligence Manager</p> <p>Target Date: 30 September 2009</p>