

Warwickshire Police Authority – 24 September 2008

Report of the Audit Committee

Summary

This report provides an update for Members on the progress of the Audit Committee following their meeting on the 10th September 2008.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

1. Police Use of Resources Feedback Report

We have considered the draft report prepared by the Audit Commission on the results of the 2007/08 police use of resources assessment.

We are very pleased to report the scores to date as follows:-

Use of resources theme	2007/08 score	2006/07 score
Financial reporting	To be reported in October 2008	1
Financial management	3	2
Financial standing	3	3
Internal control	2	2
Value for money	3	2

The above scores demonstrate the significant progress that both the Authority and the Force have made in a number of key areas which we have already been informed will result in the overall score changing from a 2 to a 3.

The score for internal control remains at 2 largely because changes made last year were not sufficiently embedded by the end of the financial year.

We recognise the work that has been put in to achieve these scores as well as the significant improvement in the working relationship between the Audit Commission, the Authority and the Force and trust that this will continue to develop.

2. Annual Governance Report

We also considered the Annual Governance Report by the Audit Commission for 2007/08. The Audit Commission expect to issue an unqualified opinion on the financial statements by the end of September 2008. Substantial progress has been made in the financial reporting of the Authority and the Auditors recognised the significant amount of

work which had been put in by officers to ensure that working papers were made available on time and in line with the accepted practice. This has allowed the Audit Commission to explore areas where efficiency gains could be made in the audit as a result of processes implemented by the finance staff.

The Audit Commission also propose to issue an unqualified conclusion on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

We have placed on report our thanks and appreciation to all the staff involved in the 2007/08 process.

3. Risk Register 2008/09

We have considered and approved the Authority's Risk Management Policy Statement and Framework Document.

The Policy Statement sets out the Authority's intentions with regard to risk management and summarises the key elements of the process. It also explains the main responsibilities for the production of the risk register and for its on-going maintenance and development.

The Risk Management Framework document is a guide to the process of producing and managing the risk register. It sets out in detail the stages and processes for diagnosing, managing and reporting on risks and gives guidance on how to go about producing our risk register.

Both documents are available to Members on request.

On behalf of the Authority, we have also approved the 2008/09 Risk Register. The Committee will continue to monitor the risks included in the Register on a regular basis and, where appropriate, seek assurances from the Member responsible for any given area of risk that it is being managed correctly.

A copy of the Risk Register has been sent to all Members of the Authority under separate cover.

4. Audit Committee Self Assessment

At our last meeting, we agreed to complete a self-assessment checklist compiled by CIPFA as a means of identifying any development needs for the Committee and training needs for individual Members.

We have now received an analysis of the responses and some suggestions for further action which has indicated that the Committee has a number of strengths and is in compliance with the CIPFA guidelines. The exercise did not identify any significant gaps in knowledge or training needs for individual Members or the Committee as a whole.

5. Gifts and Hospitality and Interest Registers

Members and officers are reminded about their obligation to declare gifts, hospitality and interests. Regular reminders will continue to be sent to Members about the need to declare gifts, hospitality and interests and registers containing these declarations are

held by the Chief Executive. The registers are also seen by the Chair of the Audit Committee and are referred for scrutiny to the Standards Committee.

JOHN VEREKER
Chair of Committee