

Warwickshire Police Authority – 28th July 2010

Governance Framework

Report of the Governance Stream Lead and Chief Executive

Summary

This report presents the changes to the Governance Framework document and poses a number of questions that need to be addressed before the framework can be finalised.

Recommendation

That the Police Authority considers the governance questions raised in this report and instruct the Chief Executive to amend the Governance Framework and present it to the September meeting of the Authority.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In July 2009 the Police Authority approved the Governance Framework as attached as Appendix A. A refresh of the document has been undertaken and a number of changes have been made as detailed in Appendix B. These include the recommendations made by the Equalities, Diversity and Human Rights Panel of 9th June.
- 1.2 However, there are a small number of significant questions that the Police Authority needs to answer before the Governance Framework can be finalised. These questions are posed below.
- 1.3 ***Should the Police Authority Merge the Audit Committee with the Standards Committee?***
 - 1.3.1 Currently the Police Authority has a separate Audit Committee and Standards Committee. The Audit Committee is chaired by Bob Hicks and meets four times a year. The Standards Committee is chaired by John Bridgeman, who is independent of the Police Authority, and the Committee is scheduled to meet twice a year. However, the last meeting of the Standards Committee was in November 2008.
 - 1.3.2 Because of the lack of business for the Standards Committee we are under utilising the skills of the committee members. The merger of the two committees could act to strengthen the skills and knowledge of the joint Audit and Standards Committee.

1.4 ***Should a merged Audit and Standards Committee be chaired by an individual who is independent to the Police Authority?***

1.4.2 Cipfa give a strong recommendation for independence of the audit committee when its guidance states that the audit committee is “to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the authority’s financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority’s exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process”.

1.4.3 A significant step in introducing independence into the process would be to look to appoint a chair of the combined Audit and Standards Committee who is independent of the Police authority.

1.5 ***Are the governance accountabilities set out appropriate for the role of Lead for Assets?***

1.5.1 Following the departure of Izzi Seccombe from the Police Authority in May the opportunity has been taken to re-evaluate the role of the lead for assets. Set out below is a draft set of governance accountabilities for the Police Authority to consider.

Lead for Assets

Purpose: Producing medium and long term capital plans that meet the Policing Plan priorities and scrutinising the implementation of the Capital plan and initiatives to generate income

Lead Member – Appointment

Governance Accountabilities:

In partnership with the Governance Stream Lead:

- Coordinating the advice from this governance stream to the Authority on the formulation of its policies, objectives and risks for the assets of the Force and Authority,
- Leading for the PA, with the Treasurer and the Director of Finance the production of annual and medium term capital financial plans for approval by the Authority
- Developing and supporting income generation by ensuring that all available funding opportunities are explored and creative uses of the asset base
- Scrutinising and recommending to the Authority development of the Force Assets – Estates, ICT and Fleet Strategies
- Representing the Authority at the Regional Corporate/Business network

1.6 ***Should the role of the Lead for publications and use of information be expanded to include the identity and visibility of the Police Authority?***

1.6.1 The identity and visibility of the Police Authority has always been important. However, this may become even more important as the debate about the Directly Elected Individual and the structural changes start to take shape. The

proposal is therefore to expand the role to embrace the Authority's identity and visibility.

1.7 *Should the Authority trial a new lead role for performance governance under the local policing stream?*

1.7.1 The Audit Commission and HMIC inspection report raised an area for improvement regarding "... the Authority needs to consider whether the challenge they provide is sufficiently ambitious to deliver both year on year improvement and close the gap between Warwickshire and the better performers." One approach to help address this would be to trial a new lead role to help District leads get to grip with performance data and provide contextual information regarding relative performance against other Forces. This new lead role would best sit under the local policing stream.

1.8 The Authority is asked to provide a view on the above key questions and instruct the Chief Executive to subsequently amend the Governance Framework and bring a completed version to the September meeting.

**Phil Robson
Stream Lead
Protective Services, Standards,
Planning and Governance**

**Oliver Winters
Chief Executive**

Summary of Key Amendments

Page	Amendment
4	Add extra bullet point to the purpose of the Authority – “Ensuring human rights principles underpin all functions and activities”
5	Under Authority Governance Accountabilities change “overseeing force performance on human rights” to “meeting human rights duties in the Authority, including overseeing force performance on human rights”
5	Delete the 4 th bullet point of the Vice Chair (A) regarding the authority’s governance planning cycle as this should be a role of the Chief Executive
5	Add an additional bullet point for the Vice Chair (A) as being the Authority represent on the Southern Justice Centre Strategic Board
5/6	Swap the responsibility for the sustainability programme and governing the corporate business change programme (currently Vice Chair B) with the responsibility for leading on the recruitment process for independent members (currently Vice Chair A)
7	The wording “by prior arrangement” have been removed from the treasurer’s attendance at the Steering Group
10	The word “all” has been inserted for inspection reports from HMIC and other regulatory bodies to be taken to the Audit Committee
11	An additional role of “scrutinising the Annual Governance Statement” has been introduced for the Audit Committee
11	The remuneration of police staff has been added to the purpose of the Appointments and Remuneration Committee
15	Add extra bullet point to the Resources Stream purpose – “ensuring compliance with human rights legislation and that the Authority meets its obligations under the human rights act.”
15	Additional bullet points have been added under the purpose of the resources Stream for the production of the production of the capital programme and its scrutiny and implementation
16	Amend the role of the Deputy lead for Resources to that of deputising in the absence of the Streamlead
17	Adding the words “Human Rights” to the title of the Equalities and Diversity Panel
17	Change the purpose of the Equalities, Diversity and Human Rights - “Advising the Authority and the Force on all aspects of diversity, equality and human rights and monitoring the Authority and the Force in meeting all their statutory responsibilities in relation to these subjects”.
19	Under the purposes of the Standards Committee add an extra bullet point – “ensuring that statutory human rights requirements are addressed in conduct and performance.”
21	Expand the title of the Lead for Publications and Use of Information to include the authority’s identity, visibility and communications
21	Increase the score for the Lead for Publications and Use of Information (see paragraph 1.6 of the main report) from 4 to 5
22	Increase the score for the Deputy Lead for Protective Services from 4 to 5