



Agenda Item 7

**JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE
07 January 2021**

RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members of the committee with oversight of the risk registers for the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner. The report also provides an update on developments in the organisational risk processes of the Force.

BACKGROUND

West Midlands Police – Risk Management

- 2.1 Since the last committee, the Force's corporate risk register has been reviewed to ensure there is the appropriate definition, mitigation, leadership and scrutiny for each risk.
- 2.2 In response to the feedback received at the last Joint Audit Committee, and alongside our broader review of our corporate risk management approach (see paragraph 2.8 onwards), we have 'deep dived' risks in the Crime Portfolio risk register as a way to draw out a sharper definition around the scope and impact of certain risks and in order to consider some of the JAC's suggestions around integration and aggregation of risks.
- 2.3 Based on the above, the following amendments, outlined in paragraphs 2.4 - 2.6, have been made.
- 2.4 The definition of the following risk has been updated:
 - "Vulnerability" now referred to as "Vulnerability and Hidden Crimes" (CRR40) – to reflect the broader challenge facing the Force now and in the future¹, and the multitude of key controls

¹ As we start to introduce a more strategic lens to the way we assess corporate risks, we will be able to clearly align our corporate risk management processes with our organisational strategy and long-term strategic objectives, ensuring that these risks are being addressed across the whole Force rather than through single business units. This risk, around vulnerability and hidden crimes, is a good example of where wider reforms may be required in the future and a shift in policing focus and operations needed to help tackle the complex safety problems communities face.

and activities we are putting in place², regarding the changing trends we are seeing in this area of police demand (links to a number of other risks in the corporate risk register).

- 2.5 In response to an increase in the materiality of some of the risks since the last JAC meeting – either due to an increased likelihood or proximity of a risk arising (e.g. Brexit), or an increase in its impact (e.g. Covid-19) – additional control measures have been implemented and noted against the following risks:
- “Information Management - Records Management & Crime Data Integrity” (CRR20)
 - “Demand Management” (CRR41)
 - “Covid-19 Organisational” (CRR48)
 - “Covid-19 Operational” (CRR49)
 - “WMP2020 Benefits Realisation” (CRR50)
 - “Britain's Exit from the EU” (CRR47)
 - “Recruitment, Retention and Workforce Resilience” (CRR33)
- 2.6 New risks which have been added (see Appendix 1 for details):
- “Information Management - Records Management & Crime Data Integrity – Attorney General’s Guidance on Disclosure” (CRR20iii) – this risk has been added to the overall risk around records management, as new guidance from the Attorney General with regards to disclosure will place additional demands on the Force’s investigations officers/staff.
 - “Criminal Justice Case Backlog” (CRR51) – this has been called out as a distinct corporate risk due to its multifaceted nature. The case backlog could result in reputational damage to the Criminal Justice system, there is the resource strain on CJS resources and it also puts at risk cost recovery from Police Led Prosecutions.
 - “Safeguarding - Local Policing” (CRR52) – this is mostly an external risk (linking to CRR40), but does have some internal aspects. It has been included due to the reliance the force has on external agencies for managing this risk, as well as the risk of inconsistent local safeguarding arrangements across the Force area. The risk has been included at this time as there is an opportunity post-Covid for the Force to influence local partners more greatly and put in place more effective partnership working arrangements.
- 2.7 As reported at the previous JAC on 28 September 2020, the Force continues to respond to the coronavirus pandemic. This is being managed under a separate governance structure with full programme and project management support, including its own risk register.
- 2.8 Strategy and Direction’s review of the Force’s corporate risk management governance and assurance processes is approaching finalisation. The scope of this review is as follows:
- The *categorisation* of risk
 - Risk management *approach* and *guidance*
 - The *schedule of review* and any new *inputs/outputs* required for the relevant governance boards (including the Joint Audit Committee).
- 2.9 During the same time period, Strategy and Direction has also coordinated a full review of the Force’s progress against our outstanding HMICFRS recommendations (see separate HMICFRS Update paper from DI Ahmed), which has also helped us to recalibrate our view on corporate risks facing the Force.
- 2.10 The formal recommendations of Strategy and Direction’s review of the Force’s corporate risk management governance and assurance processes will be put to the Force’s Risk and Organisational Learning Board for approval and conveyed to the Force Executive team for ratification. The JAC will receive a summary of the recommendations and actions agreed at its next meeting.
- 2.11 As per the original timings, we still anticipate a refreshed corporate risk management governance and assurance approach taking hold in the organisation during the first two quarters of 2021. In the

² The Force is currently reviewing the way it manages demand around vulnerability (e.g. domestic abuse, missing persons) to gain a better understanding of how demand moves through the system.

meantime, risks will continue to be managed through the current approach and JAC will continue to receive updates on escalated risks in the usual way.

Police and Crime Commissioner – Risk Management

2.12 The Police and Crime Commissioner's risk management strategy is based on the delivery of the police and crime plan. Members of the Committee are aware the Commissioner has recently developed an emergency chapter of the Police and Crime Plan covering the COVID-19 crisis. The emergency chapter includes the four key objectives:-

- Ensuring West Midlands Police responds efficiently and effectively to COVID-19, and works in partnership to protect the public of the West Midlands.
- Protecting the organisational health of West Midlands Police, so it not only responds to the national emergency effectively, but recovers and returns to normality as quickly as possible.
- Lead and support the partnership response to the national emergency.
- Ensuring the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner does all it can to effectively respond to the national emergency, commissioning services that mitigate its effect and support the return to normality.

2.13 The risks to policing in West Midlands is if the above objectives are not delivered. To manage these risks the Commissioner has a delivery plan to monitor the actions against each of the objectives. The delivery of the emergency chapter is reviewed by senior managers in the OPCC and the Commissioner's Board.

2.14 The existing risk register of the Commissioner continues to be actively managed by the senior management team. The appendix includes the current risk register for the Commissioner for the 12 risks that have highest present risk score. There are minimal changes to the register submitted to the committee in July. The register now includes activities relating to the emergency chapter in the risk register.

2.15 The risk register in the appendix includes the present risk score and the score from September 2020. The key developments that have arisen since the committee last reviewed the PCC's risk register include the following:-

- The present score relating to insufficient resources has increased. This is to reflect the increased financial pressure the PCC and Force are under. This includes financial pressures relating to policing, resources to fund crime prevention activities and victims services. There is also increased financial risks, including the level of resources to fund policing in the future.
- Crime levels across the West Midlands have returned to normal levels and there has been significant increases around recorded domestic abuse crimes and harassment offences.
- Activity relating to trust and confidence in the police includes work undertaken around diversity and inclusion. Specific activities include police officer recruitment, the development of a policing charter and surveying areas. The increased present score on the risk register reflects WMP seeing decreases in overall public confidence over the past three years. This based on the Crime Survey for England and Wales.
- In relation to the criminal justice system partnership working has improved but court delays have increased during COVID-19. The regional Criminal Justice Recovery Group is working to tackle the immediate issues facing the criminal justice system from COVID, but also aims to identify opportunities and new ways of working that have emerged under COVID-19.
- The risk associated with the organisation not undertaking activities to create, provide and improve pathways into employment and training for young people has increased due to the impact of COVID-19 on the economy of West Midlands.
- In terms of developing a modern workforce and supporting our staff the risk score has remained the same. This is to reflect the police office uplift programme and the allocation of new officers is on track to meet the targets for 2020/21. A Fairness and Belonging Plan has been developed and being delivered which is a programme of work to ensure West Midlands Police is as inclusive, diverse and as fair an organisation as possible. A concern

relating to the development of the workforce is the public sector pay freeze for all police officers and staff who earn above £24,000 in 2021/22.

3 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 The Committee to note the contents of the report and appendices.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Risk Appendix 1 and 2