

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

Minutes

A meeting of the **Corporate Governance Committee** was held on 13 March 2007 in the Conference Room, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, Endeavour House, Woodwater Park, Exeter starting at 10:00hrs.

Present:

Mr B Preston Chairman
Mr M Hicks and Mr C Wallin.

Officers in Attendance

Police Authority

Miss L Crandon (Meeting Administrator), Mr J Glasby (Treasurer), Miss J Norris (Assistant Chief Executive), Mr A Rutter (Interim Finance Manager), Mr E Wardle (Internal Audit Manager),

Constabulary

Mr T Burton (Senior Analyst – (Risk)) and Mr C Papworth (Interim Head of Finance),

Other Organisations

Ms C Brown (Audit Commission) and Mr R Hutchins (Devon Audit Services)

CG/73 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Mr J Currie.

CG/74 Urgent Item – External Audit

The Chairman invited the representative from District Audit to give an update on current work as having regard to the special circumstances pertaining in this matter, namely the need to keep the Committee informed, he was of the opinion that, despite its non-inclusion on the Agenda, the update should be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency.

Items discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Audit Commission was working on the 2006/07 plan for concluding work on Police Crime Recording Data Information, this should be in draft form by early April 2007 and finalised by May/June 2007 in time for the next meeting.
- The meeting were advised Police Use of Resources was in year 2 and the Audit Commission were currently looking at where they can make improvements
- Latest piece of work for 06/07 will be post statement work meeting needed in early September to discuss this
- During 2007/08 there would be changes around how HMIC deliver some of their work, meaning the Audit Commission will need to review their service delivery in order to minimise duplication
- Attendees were advised Peter Lawrence will be taking over from Peter Arkell as the District Auditor and he hopes to be present at the next Corporate Governance meeting
- The Treasurer wished to thank Peter Arkell for the work he has undertaken whilst with the Audit Commission

CG/75 Declarations Of Interest

No declarations of interest were made in respect of any item on the agenda.

CG/76 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2006 be confirmed as a correct record.

CG/77 Draft Code of Corporate Governance

The 2005/2006 Statement of Internal Control said that a Code of Corporate Governance would be developed during 2006/07. This report presented a draft Code of Corporate Governance and the related assessment and action plan

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Assistant Chief Executive advised that the code of Corporate Governance being developed for the Police Authority was in line with other Authorities around the country, this should complement other codes. CIPFA have produced a generic draft code for public authorities.
- It was suggested the committee write to the Force to enquire what statement of corporate governance they work under
- It was suggested the terms used in the Authority Code need to be reconsidered in order to make it more focused and make distinctions between the Authority and the Force clearer.
- There is no specified deadline for adopting a Code of Corporate Governance

RESOLVED that the draft Code of Corporate Governance for the Authority presented to the next Committee should be revised in the light of the Committee's comments and be re-presented to the next meeting.

CG/78 Progress Report – Statement of Internal Control Workplan for 2006-2007 and Beyond

The 2005/2006 Statement of Internal Control (contained in the Statement of Accounts) includes a workplan for 2006 / 07 and beyond. This report provided a progress report of the work undertaken.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The work plan for this year is work in progress, and some items are dynamic
- Most of the listed items are progressing in a positive way
- Attendees were advised the Property Sub Committee have recently had a presentation on various security issues including site security and computer security
- The Interim Director of Finance and Resources advised the Statement of Internal Control is to be replaced by an Annual Governance Statement for the financial year commencing 1 April 2007 there is no guidance for this as of yet.

RESOLVED to note the report

CG/ 79 Statement of Internal Control – Compliance Declaration

The Statement of Internal Control workplan for 2006/07 includes introducing a process to ensure that Departmental heads can sign up formally to the adequacy of internal controls within their portfolio.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- This document will be useful from both a corporate and consistency point of view
- It was hoped this would be in place for the current financial year (2006/2007)
- It was suggested the Compliance Declaration could be included in the end of year pack sent out to departments, which would then be returned for consideration and to look at a future work plan.
- Concern was expressed about the timing of issuing the document and asking officers to sign something of which they had no prior knowledge
- This is intended as a supportive process
- This first year of implementation will be a pilot for information gathering purposes
- Completed responses can be linked to the Risk Management Process
- District Audit support the implementation of a compliance statement
- The evaluation of completed responses will be done jointly by the Authority and the Force
- There may need to be a slightly different version of the compliance statement produced for the Authority's use

RESOLVED

- (i) That the pro forma compliance declaration is approved in principle
- (ii) That the list of officers required to sign the declaration is approved
- (iii) That the Chief Executive following consultation with the Chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee is given delegated authority to amend the pro forma if required following consideration by the Chief Officer Group
- (iv) That this is implemented as a supportive and dynamic process with information compiled being used to identify, prioritise and manage risks and develop workplans.

CG/ 80 Progress Report – Internal Audit Activity Report – 2006/07 Audit Plan

This report provided a progress report of the work undertaken towards completion of the annual internal audit plan for 2006/07.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- This was an update of the report produced in November 2006
- The performance of both Investec and Morley was below the target LIBOD level
- Access to all data on the FINEST computer software is still possible and can go be obtained as far back as 2001
- The FIMS software system has provided the opportunity to have continuous auditing
- The Treasurer stressed the importance of this report
- There had been an outstanding achievement in getting the payroll system installed and working, thanks from the Authority went to Colin Papworth and his team.

- Manual systems for firearms asset management were now working well and the risk had been diminished to the point it is was acceptable and the Auditors were content with this;
- The Internal Audit Manager and the Assistant Chief Executive had visited the Firearms Dept at the Force and undertaken asset checks; they were both satisfied with results
- Meetings are being held to discuss the next step of the FIMS implementation, this will build on an already sound foundation and help to achieve financial aims
- Work is still ongoing with Invoice Manager and a Post Implementation Review was being undertaken to find any problems or frustrations, this was producing useful pointers.
- Transaction volumes will start reducing enabling a capacity to deal with what is not being dealt with now.

RESOLVED to note report

CG/ 81 Post Implementation Review of Risk Management

The draft report on the implementation of risk management has been prepared by the Internal Audit Manager and is currently being considered by the Constabulary. The Committee is asked to endorse the principles contained within the report.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The first Post Implementation Review was issued in January 2007 and been the subject of consultation with Authority Members and the Force. This had gone through processes before being put before the Deputy Chief Constable

RESOLVED

- (i) to note the report
- (ii) This should become a standing agenda item

CG/82 Draft Internal Audit Plan – 2007/08

The draft internal audit plan for the year 2007/08 was presented for approval.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Some risks are proving difficult to audit
- Audit activity had not been particularly visible at BCUs, therefore this year a number of station visits would be undertaken
- Environmental issues, and ways in which attention may be given to this topic

RESOLVED to note the report

CG/83 Overview of Police Use of Resources Evaluation 2005/06 and 2006/07

This report presented an action plan regarding the recommendations resulting from the Police Use of Resources process

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- the process for 06/07 is focused around a refreshment of the existing data
- he Audit Commission has suggested areas where further improvements could be made, but overall performance was already satisfactory at level 3 and the Authority was performing well.

- Links to the 3 year plan

RESOLVED to note the report

CG/ 84 Supplementary Audit Fees

The Audit Commission has written to the Authority regarding charges regarding the Police Use of Resources process. The report requests the Committee to consider its response to the Audit Commission.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The PURE process had been extremely useful
- the Audit Commission is also trying to make savings in-house

RESOLVED that the audit Commission be requested to continue to absorb its costs on PURE

The meeting closed at 11.25hrs