

Agenda Item 08

JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE
26th June 2025

PUBLICATION OF STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2024/25
ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the requirement to produce & publish an Annual Governance Statement on Corporate Governance along with the assurance processes and protocols that are associated with this production.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended) require that all principal authorities produce a statement on governance, having carried out a review of internal controls, at least annually. This requirement takes the form of an Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which accompanies the Statutory Accounts.
- 2.2 The Commissioner and Chief Constable are respectively the responsible corporate bodies for the production of the AGS.
- 2.3 Attached to this report, at **Appendix A**, are the draft Annual Governance Statements for 2024/25. The Statements have been prepared in line with the framework produced by CIPFA and Solace in 2016 'Delivering Good Governance.' This includes CIPFA's Guidance Notes for Policing Bodies in England and Wales and the Better Governance Forum's document referred to above. Both statements will be published in the 2024/25 draft statements of accounts for both organisations.

3. PROCESS

- 3.1 An assessment has been completed based on CIPFA's 'Delivering Good Governance' guidance notes. This including assessing both corporation's governance arrangements against the core principles of the 'Delivering Good Governance' framework. The core principles are as follows: -
- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
 - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
 - Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
 - Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
 - Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
 - Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
 - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability
- 3.2 To aid with the above assessment an exercise was undertaken of the governance arrangements of the PCC by using CIPFA's seven principles of good governance in policing. This assessment is included in the Appendix of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Governance Statement.
- 3.3 In addition to the above assessment, senior managers from the Commissioner's office and the Force, reviewed the draft Annual Governance Statements attached to this report to ensure they reflect the governance arrangements of the organisations. This includes the effectiveness of the arrangements and identifying any significant issues that need to be addressed. These are reported upon in the attached statements and actions will be put in place to address any issues during the year.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to consider and note the contents of this report.
- 4.2 The Committee is asked to consider the Annual Governance Statements for 2024/25, as attached at **Appendix A**.

Jane Heppel
Chief Finance Officer
Police and Crime Commissioner

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Annual Governance Statement

Position as of 31 March 2025 including plans for the financial years 2025-26 and 2026-27

Appendix A

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West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Annual Governance Statement

Position as of 31 March 2025 including plans for the financial years 2025-26 and 2026-27

Executive Summary

This statement explains how the Commissioner has complied with CIPFA/SOLACE 2016 updated framework: *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* and meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (amended 2020), regulation 6(1), which requires all relevant bodies to prepare an annual governance statement.

It has been prepared in accordance with the recommendations of the consultation by CIPFA/SOLACE in January 2025 relating to improvements to the format and content of the statement. This document therefore positions the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner as an early adopter of the new standards.

The organisations remain well governed, with low turnover in the most senior roles and relationships between the parties working well. Where issues have arisen, they have been resolved within existing governance arrangements.

Summary of Key Conclusions

The Commissioner is responsible for ensuring his business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Commissioner also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which his functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Commissioner is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of his affairs and facilitating the exercise of his functions, which includes ensuring a sound system of internal control is maintained through the year and arrangements are in place for the management of risk.

Although, the Chief Constable is responsible for operational policing matters, the direction and control of police personnel, and for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of the Force, the Commissioner is required to hold him to account for the exercise of those functions and those of the persons under his direction and control. The relationship between the Commissioner, the Chief Constable, the Police and Crime Panel and the Home Secretary is guided by the Policing Protocol Order 2023.

It therefore follows that the Commissioner must satisfy himself that the Chief Constable has appropriate mechanisms in place for the maintenance of good governance. For these to operate in practice, the Commissioner and the Chief Constable, as separate corporations sole, have separate but complimentary governance structures. These facilitate the achievement of effective governance arrangements, including the monitoring and assessment of performance in line with statutory responsibilities.

The scale of the change facing the OPCC, VRP and West Midlands Police remains extremely challenging, at a time when the demand and need for sustained and improved service to the public continues to increase. This will require firm leadership, careful management, innovation and robust governance.

The systems and processes which the PCC and Chief Constable jointly have in place to monitor the implementation of the Police and Crime Plan will ensure activities detailed in the statement are implemented. The governance arrangements of the PCC and the Chief Constable will remain under constant review in the forthcoming financial years.

In the opinion of those signing this statement, the governance was fit for purpose in 2024/25, that is to say that they were operating effectively to support the achievement of the authority's outcomes.

Areas of improvement in the forthcoming year are:

1. Financial reporting, its timeliness and content will continue to be improved, led jointly by the CFO and DFO.
2. Ongoing improvement activity is planned for Internal Audit during 2025/26 with the aim of reaching full compliance with new Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector by the end of the financial year.
3. WMP and the OPCC will work together to ensure that oversight by the PCC of officer training and recruitment is strengthened in the coming year.
4. Internal audit have developed an understanding of key themes emerging from audits, which links to the root cause analysis approach, and which we will jointly continue to track and monitor with a view to ensuring that any changes required to the overall strategic governance framework are adopted where required.
5. Strengthening the transparency of governance arrangements by early adoption of the best practice issued by CIPFA/SOLACE.
6. Strengthening the links between the Financial Governance Board and Change Programme.

Signed

Simon Foster
West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Date: _____

Jonathan Jardine
Head of Paid Service, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Date: _____

Jane Heppel
Chief Finance Officer, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Date: _____

1. Methodology for assessing effectiveness

The Commissioner has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the governance framework.

The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the managers within the Commissioner's Office, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment. This is collated into the Assurance Mapping provided as Appendix Two to this document which collates the views of the OPCC Senior Management Team on the adequacy of governance arrangements.

The Head of Internal Audit also provides an Annual report. During 2024/25, Internal Audit continued the approach of concentrating on the major risks faced by the PCC and the Force. The approach has allowed the Commissioner to have increased confidence in the governance, risk management and control processes. A mid-year review of the internal audit plan was undertaken to ensure the audits remained focussed on the key risk areas. Regular updates on progress against the audit plan and key findings arising are provided to the Commissioner.

In the construction of the Internal Audit Plan for the year ahead, consultation has taken place with senior managers to ensure the areas of greatest risk are prioritised, however, the plan will inevitably need to remain flexible and responsive to any change in the risk environment.

The CIPFA Financial Management Code (CIPFA FM Code) is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist police organisations in demonstrating their financial sustainability. The CIPFA FM Code therefore sets the standards of financial management for PCCs and Forces. A key goal of the FM Code is to improve the financial resilience of organisations by embedding enhanced standards of financial management. There are also clear links between the FM Code and the Governance Framework, particularly with its focus on achieving sustainable outcomes.

A self-assessment compliance review of the CIPFA FM Code was completed during 2024/25 across the Force, with the majority of the assessment being RAG rated as green with no areas of concern. The largest single change to the assessment will be around the need to embed the new Procurement Act 2023 which began to rollout from February 2025 as per the secondary legislation.

There was a significant level of change in Force during 2024/25 and as a result some areas for improvement identified through the work of internal audit have not yet been delivered, however they are now regularly reviewed at Financial Governance Board which should ensure delivery during 2025/26.

More up to date financial reporting was achieved by WMP during 2024/25 however staffing gaps meant that there were delays in reporting in the OPCC. This was resolved during the year and the financial outturn position has already been reported and agreed with SMT, some months earlier than 2023/24. Work will continue to develop the financial reporting, timeliness and content, led by the CFO and DFO in 2025/26. This will also ensure the delivery of internal audit recommendations around the reporting of progress and delivery of savings targets.

2. Assessment

The Commissioner's governance arrangements have changed in year such that a review of the overall arrangements to ensure that we have the most up to date picture, was undertaken. This is included as Appendix One in this document.

To review the effectiveness of the Commissioner's governance arrangements an assurance mapping assessment was undertaken, applying CIPFA's seven principles of good governance in policing. This is included as Appendix Two in this document.

Principle	RAG Status
PRINCIPLE A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law	Green
PRINCIPLE B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement	Green
PRINCIPLE C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	Green
PRINCIPLE D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes	Green
PRINCIPLE E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it	Green
PRINCIPLE F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management	Green
PRINCIPLE G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability	Green

With the exception of managing data, all areas in the assurance mapping have a green RAG status. Managing Data in Principle F remains amber due to recent data protection issues.

The withdrawal of WMP from the regional collaboration on officer training had the unintentional consequence of reducing the oversight by the PCC of this critical area. WMP and the OPCC will work together to ensure that this is strengthened in the coming year, given the shared responsibility to deliver the Neighbourhood Policing guarantee in a manner which recognises the need for the Police to be fully representative of the neighbourhoods and communities which they police.

Internal Audit Opinion

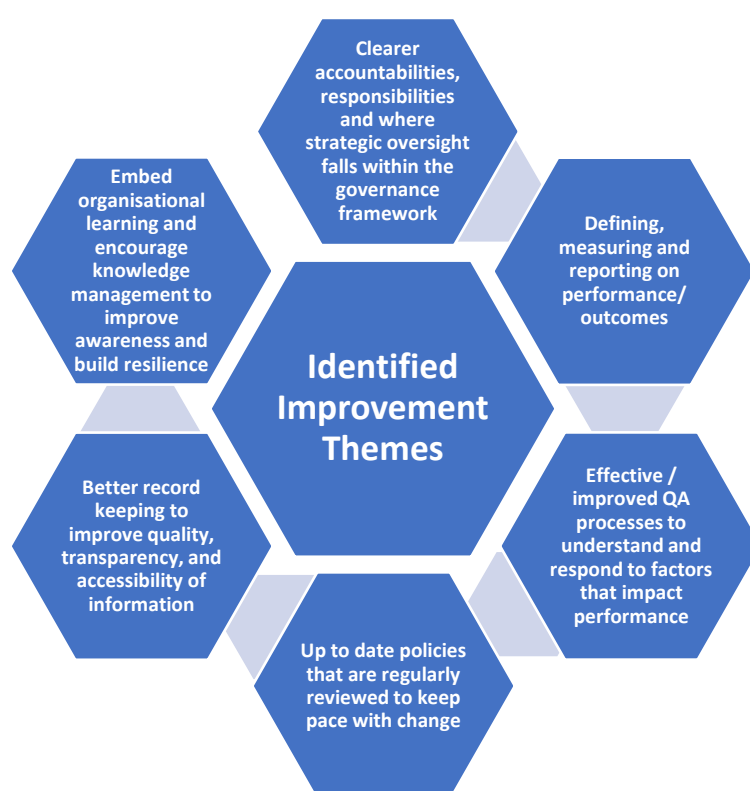
Whilst during 2024/25 a small proportion of audits received minimal or limited assurance opinions, indicating weaknesses in the governance and control frameworks operating, the majority received reasonable assurance with four audits being given substantial assurance demonstrating good governance and a strong application of controls. Only two high rated recommendations were made during the year which represents a positive position and it is clear from progress updates received that management remain committed to resolving the weaknesses identified.

Financial practices at the museum fell below expected standards, increasing the risk of fraud and error. Aspects of the governance regime had lapsed resulting in some gaps around financial oversight and as a result the forecast financial gap between expenditure and income was significant, without any plans in place to address this. Weaknesses in maintenance of

volunteer vetting and training records presented some safeguarding risks that could leave staff, volunteers and visitors vulnerable. Whilst a minimal assurance opinion was given, this should not detract from the passion and enthusiasm observed throughout the audit from staff and volunteers, who continue to deliver a positive experience for visitors.

Overall Conclusion: *“Reasonable assurance can be given that the governance, risk management and control frameworks in place are good and are adequate to support achievement of the organisations objectives, and that controls are generally operating effectively in practice.”*

The key themes emerging from the internal audit reports are all ones which are of relevance to this statement:



We will continue to review and reflect on those findings and the response to audit reports over the coming year to ensure that any strategic top down action which is required is delivered appropriately.

The overall opinion has been agreed based on the preponderance of positive assurance that governance arrangements are in place, and the lack of significant governance failures in year.

3. Where our governance needs to improve

Governance arrangements should be reviewed where significant governance arrangements have arisen. Examples of those are shown in the table below alongside an assessment of whether this took place in the organisations in the past year.

Example of Significant Governance Issue	2024/25 Assessment
An issue which has prevented or seriously prejudiced achievement of a principal objective	The meetings between the PCC and Chief Constable during 2024/25 included a review by exception of the Force's Corporate Risk Register and there were no instances where a risk arose which prevented the achievement of a principal objective.
An issue where additional funding has had to be sought in order to resolve it	<p>The PCC continues to receive financial support from Home Office in relation to legal claims arising from the Hillsborough disaster. This is through the Special Grant scheme operated by the Home Office. This will continue into 2025/26, although less of the cost than was historically the case will be met by the Home Office.</p> <p>A business case presented by the Chief Constable to the PCC has proven to be inaccurate in its original understanding, creating a situation whereby a decision notice will now be triggered. The PCC will consider the need for a decision to be made and take his decision independently of the Chief Constable's own advice and consideration in due course.</p>
An issue which has resulted in a material impact on the accounts	There are no issues which have arisen which are likely to have a material impact on the statement of accounts
An issue which the Head of Internal Audit has specifically highlighted in the annual audit opinion	The PCC is sighted on any significant issues arising from the work of Internal Audit and will, where necessary, question the Chief Constable on any actions being taken to address the issues raised. The Head of Internal Audit has highlighted no specific issues in the annual audit opinion which require action to redress by the PCC.
An issue which has attracted significant public interest and has damaged the reputation of the Commissioner	There have been no instances of this nature in 2024/25.

Example of Significant Governance Issue	2024/25 Assessment
An issue which has resulted in formal action being taken by the Chief Finance Officer and/or the Monitoring Officer.	The Chief Constable awarded a low value contract without recourse to a formal exemption from standing orders. The matter was resolved with the provider no longer being used for further business. The Chief Constable apologised for his oversight and has taken steps to ensure that where an exemption is justified in future it will be recorded accurately and reported to the PCC as required.

Core governance arrangements are operating effectively and are continuously under review. The implementation of a new Joint Financial Governance Board in year has been slow to bed in but Change Board papers will shortly be reviewed there before going on to Change Board, where there are significant financial implications.

The withdrawal of WMP from the regional collaboration on officer training had the unintentional consequence of reducing the oversight by the PCC of this critical area. WMP and the OPCC will work together to ensure that this is strengthened in the coming year.

AGS Action Plan, to be monitored by Joint Governance Board

	Assigned to	Action
Monitor Internal Audit findings in terms of key themes of relevance to this statement and the governance framework	Chief Finance Officer	Identify any weaknesses in the overall governance framework and act to address those
Identify and put in place appropriate governance and PCC oversight of police recruitment and workforce development	Chief Executive	Identify the appropriate governance and oversight route jointly with WMP
Complete the review of the Joint Code of Governance and adopt the new code	Chief Executive	Finalise revisions and negotiate agreement with WMP with a view to adoption at the earliest opportunity
Refresh the OPCC website to adopt best practice guidelines in relation to the AGS	Head of Business Support	Provide the information suggested in an easily searchable manner on the OPCC website
Create internal communications to show staff and Board members, the Advisory Panel and Ethics Panel how they support good governance	OPCC Head of Communications	Co-create this with the Head of Business Support as a training package or newsletter item for staff and advisors
Ensure that the Financial Governance Board and Change Board align to ensure the	Chief Finance Officer	Work with the Director of Commercial Services to

significant financial implications of change projects are fully captured and aligned with financial reporting		align the timing of papers to Boards
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Improvements in 2024/25

The Force governance arrangements were reviewed during 2023/24 to improve consistency and streamline the number of boards in place. These new arrangements were embedded during 2024/25 and at a strategic level the governance arrangements are well established with clear reporting lines into boards and effective leadership, appropriate membership with suitable representation, good attendance and contributions. The Deputy Chief Constable holds monthly Performance Panels where senior officers across the Force are held to account for performance in their area of responsibility. At a local level, each Force Executive Portfolio lead holds monthly governance boards to review progress and performance within their area. A separate governance Board, also chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, maintains oversight of HMICFRS recommendations and during 2024/25 we saw good progress made by the Force to address causes for concern, with West Midlands Police moved to default phase of monitoring, having been moved to Engage phase of monitoring in November 2023 following their police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy (PEEL) programme of inspection.

The Police and Crime Commissioner also reviewed his governance arrangements during 2024/25 following his re-election in May 2024, introducing a new Accountability and Governance Board which meets monthly, in public, and is designed to hold the Chief Constable and West Midlands Police to account. These meetings include key reports aligned to the Police and Crime Plan themes and regular scrutiny of the West Midlands Police performance. The Commissioner also established an Advisory Panel which meets regularly, providing critical thinking and expertise that supports him when holding West Midlands Police to account. Work is underway to revise the Scheme of Governance to reflect this new governance regime, which will conclude during the early part of 2025/26 providing clarity on accountabilities, roles and responsibilities.

Considerable amounts of work were undertaken to review the Joint Code of Governance in light of the Procurement Act 2023 and business as usual change. This has not been completed in 2024/25 as had been hoped and will now be completed in 2025/26.

There were no audits with minimal assurance in 2023/24 so there is no progress to comment on in this regard.

Looking forward there are several initiatives that will potentially impact on the role and remit of the Commissioner that may require governance arrangements to be amended. These include:

- Victims and Prisoners Bill 2023 which, if it becomes law, will introduce a duty to collaborate and make compliance with the Victims Code a statutory requirement.
- The implementation of new misconduct processes for serving officers which will see WMP chair the hearings and legally qualified advisers in attendance but not in the chair.
- The implementation of new appeals processes for serving officers, dismissed for failing vetting whilst serving.
- The implementation of Police Reform which will require the PCC to be represented on a number of new bodies and involved in their development, including the National Centre of Policing.

- Further collaborative working with police forces and national bodies in areas such as serious and organised crime, counter terrorism, roads policing and uniformed operations, with a concurrent requirement to develop effective collaborative governance arrangements based on formal collaboration agreements.
- The potential future implementation of a revised funding formula for policing, which will have implications on the level of resources available for policing services across the West Midlands.
- Monitoring and oversight of the new neighbourhood policing operating model to ensure effectiveness.
- Implementing changes arising from the Procurement Act 2023.
- The risks associated with maintaining the police officers recruited as part of the Uplift programme or the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee are deployed in priority / target areas across the Force.
- The continued implementation of the Estates Strategy approved by the Commissioner in October 2023, including the investment in new facilities and releasing vacant properties.
- Continuing to embed the Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnership chaired by the Commissioner.
- Continuing to embed partnership working in key areas such as Ending Male Violence against Women and Girls and supporting scrutiny panels such as the Custody Scrutiny Panel and Young people Scrutiny Panel for Stop and Search.
- Having regard to recent changes to the Strategic Policing Requirement which introduced an additional priority area around Violence Against Women and Girls.
- Ensuring compliance with the recently implemented Serious Violence Duty which aims to ensure relevant services work together to share information and collaborate on interventions to prevent and reduce serious crimes.
- Expectations arising from the wider use of novel technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Live Facial Recognition (LFR) and Drones as First Responders.

The consultation document which suggests improvements to the governance framework has highlighted the following as good practice which will be adopted during 2025/26:

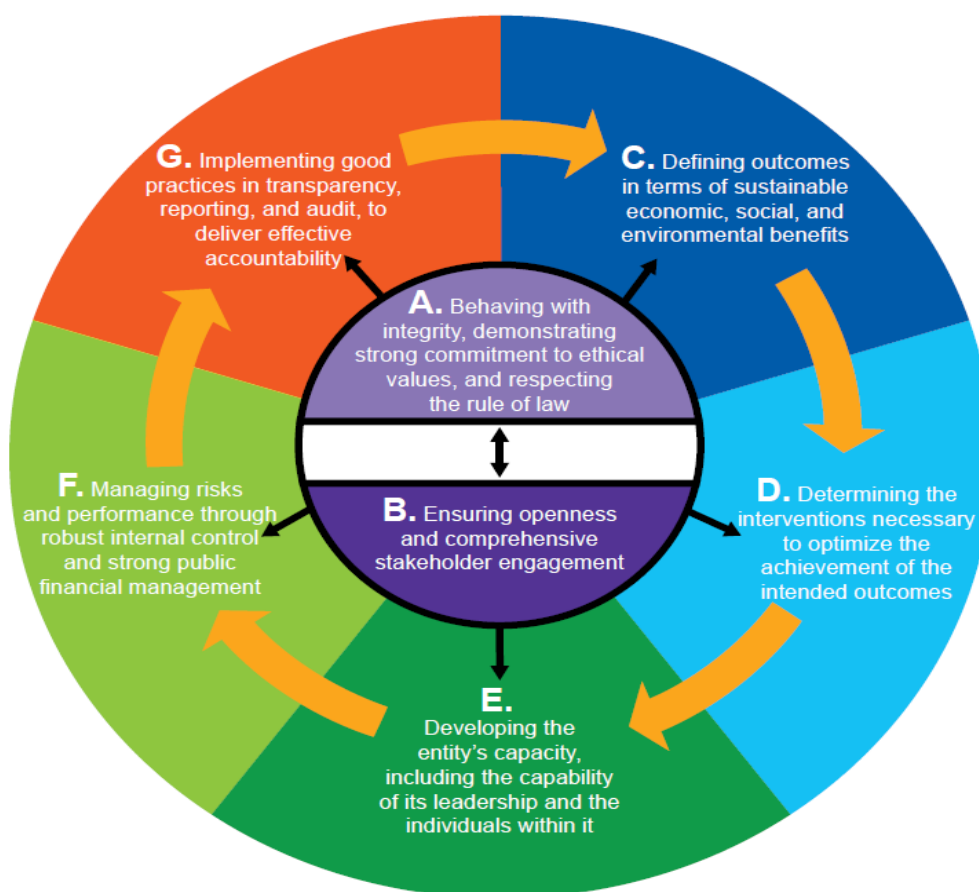
- Create a webpage on the OPCC website with plain English explanations of what governance is and why it is important.
- Include the AGS on the governance webpage, alongside other materials such as a local code.
- Ensure the AGS is easily identifiable on the OPCC website.
- Create internal communications to share key messages and show staff and Board members, Advisory Panel and Ethics Panel how they support good governance

Appendix One The Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and the culture and values by which the Commissioner directs and controls his activities and through which he is accountable to the community. It enables the Commissioner to monitor the achievement of his strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services, including achieving value for money.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable and foreseeable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Commissioner's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them effectively, efficiently and economically.

The diagram below sets out the core principles of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Governance Framework which conform with the CIPFA/SOLACE 2016 framework: *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* and are unchanged in the current consultation on changes to reporting on that code.



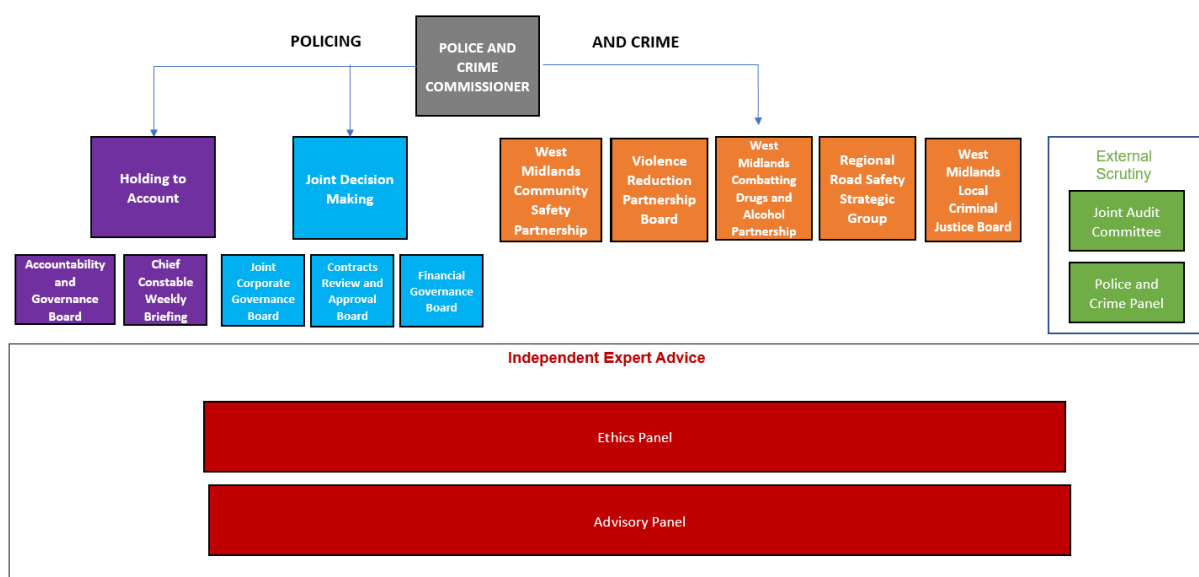
The Commissioner adopted a number of systems and processes to operate the governance arrangements, the key elements of which are detailed below:

- The West Midlands Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2025 sets out the Commissioner's objectives for policing and community safety, the policing to be provided, the financial and other resources that will be available, how performance will be measured, what grants will be made and how the Chief Constable will be held to account.
- The operation of the Accountability and Governance Board (AGB) that assists in holding to account West Midlands Police. The AGB meets monthly in public. The meetings are webcast.
- Working with the Chief Constable to ensure there are processes and systems in place to deliver the Police and Crime Plan. This allows the Commissioner to be satisfied the Chief Constable has regard to the Police and Crime Plan through the strategic and operational plans of the Force.
- Measuring the quality of services, to ensure they are delivered in accordance with the Commissioner's objectives and represent the best use of resources and value for money.
- Defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of the executive, non-executive, scrutiny and officer functions, with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication, in respect of the Commissioner and partnership arrangements.
- Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the head of paid service and monitoring officer functions.
- Ensuring the Commissioner's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Finance Officer of the Chief Constable.
- Ensuring compliance with the Commissioner's statutory responsibilities, including:
 - Setting the budget and precept
 - Issuing a Police and Crime Plan
 - Publication of an Annual Report
 - Publication of specified information
 - Duties to consult with victims of crime, the population as a whole and ratepayers
 - Safeguarding of children and promotion of child welfare
 - Having regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement. This is demonstrated through an annual report to the SPCB
 - Duties relating to equality and diversity
- Procedure rules, policies and internal management processes are established for Financial Management, Procurement, Health and Safety, Confidential Reporting ("Whistleblowing"), Complaints Handling, Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption and Records Management, including security of information and information sharing.
- Codes of conduct, defining the standards of behaviour for the Commissioner, Members of the Strategic Policing and Crime Board, Statutory Officers and Staff.
- The Joint Scheme of Corporate Governance sets out in detail the respective roles and functions of the Commissioner and Chief Constable, outlining all significant decisions which are consented or delegated and which are of a statutory, financial or management nature.
- A Joint Audit Committee (with the Chief Constable) is responsible for independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, the independent scrutiny of the Chief Constable's and PCC's financial performance to the extent that it affects the Chief Constable and PCC's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment. The Joint Audit Committee has a fully independent membership as well as Chair, which is identified by the Home Office's Code of Practice for Financial Management and CIPFA's Audit Committee – Practical Guidance for Local

Authorities and Police. An Ethics Committee which advises the Commissioner and Chief Constable on data science projects being proposed by the Force's Data Analytics Lab. The Lab is led by specially recruited data scientists and will develop programmes of work that use data more intelligently to help the Force prevent crime, allocate resources more efficiently and help it to do its job of keeping the public safe. The Ethics Committee has been set up to help ensure that ethics and people's rights are put at the heart of the Lab's work. Using the Committee's expertise, the Force will be in a better position to help people avoid crime and support the communities of the West Midlands.

- The PCC has a Corporate Risk Register, prepared and reviewed by senior management.
- The Joint Audit Committee is responsible for independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework.
- Procedural rules, policies and internal management procedures are established for financial management.
- Oversight of the management of change and transformation within the Force.
- Ensuring the Commissioner's assurance arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2019) and, where they do not, explain why they deliver the same impact.
- An External Audit function reports to "those charged with governance" in respect of the Annual Accounts and Value for Money. The Commissioner provides information to External Audit to enable them to provide assurance and also ensures External Audit's recommendations are implemented.
- Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful.
- Identifying the development needs of members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by appropriate training.
- Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation.
- Developing good governance arrangements in respect of partnership and other joint working arrangements.

The diagram below details how the Commissioner's 2024-25 governance structure was aligned to the governance structure of West Midlands Police and the Commissioner's wider powers and responsibilities.



The Commissioner has in place a number of collaborative arrangements to deliver services in conjunction with both national and neighbouring Police and Crime Commissioners. These include:

- A regional forces collaboration agreement for the counter-terrorism policing network that also includes responsibility for Special Branch services.
- The National Ballistics Intelligence Service (NABIS) where the West Midlands Police is the co-host force. The arrangement is also subject to a collaboration agreement and the Commissioner is represented on the NABIS governing board.
- The West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) which is a four-force collaboration agreement between Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia and West Midlands.
- The West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership which involves WMP, health and education professionals working together to understand the causes of serious violence in the West Midlands and agreeing a co-ordinated response.
- A West Midlands wide Community Safety Partnership enabling crime reduction activities to be commissioned more effectively and efficiently.
- A Safer Travel Partnership with West Midlands Combined Authority, and WMP that continues to significantly reduce crime on all modes of transport across the region.
- A West Midlands Combatting Drugs & Alcohol Partnership has been established to co-ordinate activity to reduce drug harm in the local area.
- An agreement with Birmingham Airport for WMP to provide policing services to the airport.
- The Regional Criminal Justice Forum, which is a collaborative partnership between PCCs, forces and criminal justice colleagues across the West Midlands, designed to address cross cutting themes and issues that are affecting all four areas.
- Collaborations with Warwickshire PCC whereby WMP deliver the following services to Warwickshire Police:
 - Forensic Services
 - ANPR capabilities
 - Public Order training
- The Staffordshire and WMP Joint Legal Services agreement which provides Legal Services to WMP, Staffordshire Police, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire and the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Midlands.
- Collaboration with Staffordshire Police whereby Staffordshire delivers WMP firearms and explosives licensing capabilities.

For the arrangements detailed above, governance is conducted in compliance with the relevant collaboration agreements. Also, collaborative working is supported by the appointment of two Regional Policy Officers working with the four West Midlands regional forces.

Through working with the West Midlands Combined Authority, the Commissioner is collaborating on a wide range of issues, this includes mental health and youth offending services.

The Commissioner is also in collaboration with other bodies this includes West Midlands Fire Service and local councils through the estates programme where policing is being delivered in shared buildings.

In maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements, the following roles are undertaken:

- **The Commissioner**

The Commissioner is responsible for the maintenance and review of the governance arrangements overall and has asked his Statutory Officers, together with the Head of Internal Audit to continue with the review of the corporate governance arrangements, designed to assess and monitor:

- Code of Corporate Governance
- Review of the System of Internal Control
- Performance / Assurance Protocols and associated information
- Production of the Annual Governance Statement

- **The Joint Audit Committee**

The Commissioner's and Chief Constable's Joint Audit Committee is responsible, on behalf of both Corporations Sole, to:

- Advise the Commissioner and the Chief Constable according to good governance principles.
- Provide independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Commissioner's and Chief Constable's internal control environment and risk management framework.
- Oversee the effectiveness of the framework in place for ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.
- Independently scrutinise financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Commissioner's and Chief Constable's exposure to risks and weakens the internal control environment.
- Oversee the financial reporting process and consider the arrangements to secure value for money
- Ensure the Force is implementing agreed actions resulting from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspections.

The Terms of Reference of the Committee, encompasses and reflects these duties by defining that they:

- Be the conduit through which the Governance work is channelled.
- Provide assurance on risk management arrangements on behalf of the Commissioner.
- Recommend approval of the Statutory Accounts of the Commissioner and Chief Constable.

To ensure that it is ably qualified, assessments of its abilities in line with best practice are undertaken confirming that the Committee is well suited and equipped for such responsibilities. Members of the Committee undergo regular training to ensure the Committee is effective in its role in advising the Commissioner and the Chief Constable.

- **Internal Audit**

The system of Internal Audit is a primary tenet of corporate governance and is the joint responsibility of the Commissioner and Chief Constable. The provision and maintenance

of an effective Joint Internal Audit Service, has been delegated to the Chief Finance Officer (CFO). The Joint Audit Committee oversees the provision of this service, reviewing associated plans and work outputs.

- **Police and Crime Panel**


The West Midlands Police and Crime Panel (WMPCP) scrutinises the work of the Commissioner. The Panel acts as a critical friend to the Commissioner - assisting him through independent challenge.


The Panel has a number of powers and responsibilities, including:


- Reviewing the draft Police and Crime Plan to ensure local priorities have been considered
- Scrutinising the Commissioner's Annual Report
- Scrutinising the decisions and actions of the Commissioner
- Reviewing, and potentially vetoing, the Commissioner's proposed policing precept (the part of Council Tax collected for policing)
- Holding confirmation hearings for the proposed appointment of a Chief Constable, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and senior support staff

Mapping of Governance Framework Key Elements / Governance Dashboard – 2024/25 – Applying CIPFA’s Seven Principles of Good Governance in Policing


PRINCIPLE A: BEHAVING WITH INTEGRITY, DEMONSTRATING STRONG COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL VALUES, AND RESPECTING THE RULE OF LAW


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Behaving with Integrity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the PCC, their chief officers and staff behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated, thereby promoting and upholding the reputation of the organisation among its stakeholders. • Ensuring the PCC and their chief officers lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for their organisations and staff and that they are communicated and understood. The values build on the Nolan Principles and the Code of Ethics. • Leading by example and using above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions. • Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police and Crime Plan and Force strategies (Force Vision and Values) communicate shared values with staff, the community and partners. • Policies and procedures in place across the organisations setting out the expectations for staff to meet the required standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ PCC code of conduct ◦ Standards of professional behaviour which also reflect relevant principles enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the College of Policing Code of Ethics 2024. ◦ Adoption of the Karl George RACE (Reporting Action Composition Education) Equality Code ◦ The Force’s People Strategy ◦ Fairness and Belonging plan ◦ West Midlands Police Race Action Plan • Performance appraisal process in place for all staff across the PCC and Force (WMP Conversations and WMP Ratings) to ensure these policies, procedures and standards are adhered to • Up-to-date register of interests for PCC, chief officers and their respective staff. The Force maintains a Business Interest Register. • Up-to-date register of gifts and hospitality for PCC, CC, chief officers and their respective staff • Policy in place for declaring interests for board members, police officers and staff • Joint Governance Board in place to review and revise the Code of Governance and other significant policies. 		


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking to understand, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical performance. • Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation. • Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values. • Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with ethical standards expected by the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Ethics Panel is in place, showing a commitment to balancing advances in the use of technology in Policing with ethical concerns • Police Complaints and Standards arrangements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policing helpline for officers to be reported by the public ○ Professional Standards Corruption line in place to allow confidential reporting. ○ Force and PCC have a complaints policy in place. ○ Whistleblowing and Confidential reporting policies in place to protect individuals raising concerns. ○ Anti-fraud and corruption policy reviewed regularly and communicated with AGB and Force Executive Team ○ Force complaints are monitored and reported against through performance reports to Force Executive Team and PCC's Board. ○ Complaints about the PCC are reported and monitored to West Midlands Police and Crime Panel ○ Professional Standards Dept, reports to Accountability and Governance Board (AGB) and Joint Audit Committee on fraud and corruption ○ PCC meets quarterly with Professional Standards Department to discuss a range of monitoring information relating to officer complaints and conduct ○ PCC received a report on every PSD investigation not completed within 12 months ○ There is evidence of changes/improvements as a result of complaints received and acted upon • Co-operation with the National Fraud Initiative. Latest data set submitted October 2024 and matches released December 2024/January 2025 which are currently being investigated. Results are reported regularly into Joint Audit Committee. The next data submission is October 2026 		

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement strategy and capital disposal strategy include requirements relating to Social Value • Social Value Portal in place to monitor and report on achievement of social value • Appraisal approach includes expected behaviours of suppliers and providers • Terms and conditions of contracts include requirements relating to taking a trauma informed approach, and having safeguarding policies • Modern Slavery statement in place and procedures for monitoring suppliers and providers • The OPCC is a Living Wage Funder and will continue to encourage WMP to take the same approach 		
Respecting the rule of law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the PCC, chief officers and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations. • Creating the conditions to ensure that statutory chief officers, other key post holders and (where appropriate) statutory committees are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with best practice. • Striving to use full powers for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders. • Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively. • Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with CIPFA statements of the role of statutory finance officers • Legal implications considered as part of decision-making process • Where there is determined to be a potential conflict of interest, Legal advice is sought externally rather than through Joint Legal Services. • Conflicts of interest in the matter of legal advice are documented • Robust follow-up of complaints about WMP to the OPCC about matters within the purview of the OPCC • Internal Audit can and do conduct investigations into breaches of legal and / or regulatory matters • Annual report by the Chair of Joint Audit Committee to the Accountability and Governance Board 		

PRINCIPLE B: ENSURING OPENNESS AND COMPREHENSIVE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Openness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that the PCC, chief officers and staff behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby promoting and upholding the reputation of the organisation among its stakeholders. Ensuring the PCC and chief officers lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for their organisations and staff and that they are communicated and understood. The values should build on the Nolan Principles and the Code of Ethics. Leading by example and using above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions. Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029 had the widest engagement of any previous plan, which was representative of each LPA, according to ONS data from the most recent census <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCC Decisions are open and transparent: PCC decision making policy published on website Record of PCC decisions published on website Decision making reports produced for PCC decisions Internal PCC processes for decision making in Contracts Governance Board and Quarterly Resources Board focus on ensuring that grant making and contract tendering meets the Police and Crime Plan targets Grant making is published on the Commissioning Dashboard, allowing the public to assess its fairness in terms of reach KPIs in the Police and Crime Plan are published online allowing the public to easily see performance Accountability and Governance Board and Joint Audit Committee meetings are published with live webcasting. All reports include legal and financial comments A forward workplan is in place for Weekly Chief and PCC meetings, Accountability and Governance Board and Joint Audit Committee FOI publication scheme Independent Advisory Groups in place Independent Scrutiny Panels for key policy areas in place Advisory Panel provides independent, expert advice, knowledge and guidance to the PCC Ethics Panel provides independent expert advice and knowledge to the PCC and CC 		

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively engaging with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably. Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively. Ensuring that partnerships, including collaborations, are based on trust, a shared commitment to change, and a culture which promotes and accepts challenge among partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCC Governance structures are in place with the local Criminal Justice, Drugs and Alcohol, Local Authority, Policing and Transport communities PCC chairs or attends a significant number of regional partnership meetings with clear terms of reference PCC annual report is produced for the Police and Crime Panel to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities VRP produces an annual report to enable key stakeholders to understand and appreciate their work and impact Collaborations agreements in place with neighbouring PCCs where services are delivered jointly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Governance Group in place to manage those collaborations effectively West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) Strategic Board oversees both the work of the VRP and delivery of the Serious Violence Duty in the region and supports seven local multi-agency forums responsible for co-ordinating the local delivery of the Serious Violence Duty West Midlands Community Safety Partnership acts as a platform to bring senior responsible authorities together and hold them to account for the PCC budget allocated to local partnerships The seven local Community Safety Partnerships are responsible for annual strategic needs assessments and 3 year community safety plans which assist in the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan Heads of Community Safety (HOCS) meets monthly to engage on matters of local delivery of community safety targets Each CSP and LPA has a named lead from the OPCC SMT to strengthen collaboration and communication Every Route to market paper for the CRAB considers whether a national or regional partnership or framework exists which could be used instead of local procurement or delivery. 		


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Engaging with individual citizens and service users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a clear policy about the type of issues on which the organisation will meaningfully consult with, or involve, individual communities, citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that a service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes. • Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that the PCC and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement. • Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs. • Implementing effective feedback mechanisms for those consultees in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account. • Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity. • Taking account of the interests of future generations of taxpayers and service users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication strategy for the PCC and Force developed and implemented • Engagement and Communications Strategy for PCC developed and implemented • Media monitoring being rolled out in the OPCC • The commissioner maintains a programme of engagement • WM Now can be used to target messages and ask for feedback in particular geographical areas • Social media posts are targeted at groups that the OPCC are keen to engage with, going to them rather than expecting them to come to us • WMP uses SOLH to engage with the public, adopting the same method as other Forces to ensure consistency • In developing the Police and Crime plan a variety of methodologies were used including qualitative feedback from small groups to ensure that hard to reach voices were heard • There is an active programme of listening to the voices of young people – Youth Commissioners, Young leaders and My Tomorrow • The Faith Alliance leads on supporting all faiths and none in understanding their role in preventing violence • Casework processes ensure that every contact to the OPCC is traced, and answered appropriately • FOIs completed on time and in a clear and open manner • There is a record of public consultations • My Community Fund bids are taken direct from the public and small organisations and are often coproduced with their service users • The interests of taxpayers are met by compliance with CIPFA statements of the role of statutory finance officers • The Police and Crime Panel budget sub committee are briefed on budget issues to inform decision making 		

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A precept survey is undertaken annually alongside business engagement with ratepayers <p>During 2025/26:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the OPCC intends to implement a Public Perception Survey to better inform it of the views of the public on the performance of WMP • WMP intends to implement a customer feedback tool to improve service delivery through continuous improvement and real-time feedback • the VRP will be utilising the 'You Said, We Did' concept to feedback on progress <p>During 2026/27 the OPCC will implement a service user feedback methodology for its commissioned services</p>		


PRINCIPLE C: DEFINING OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
Defining outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a clear vision – an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators which provides the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions. • Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including individual citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All contracts clearly state the purpose for the grant or contract and the outcomes expected • KPIs for key contracts are monitored on LeanLink by WMP • The Procurement Act 2023 requires that KPIs are published for significant contracts and both WMP and OPCC will be compliant with this by the end of 2025/26. • The OPCC are expanding the use of SUMS in performance managing contracts and recording compliance with KPIs • Regular meetings with providers of services are held to understand progress against targets and expected delivery • The Police and Crime Plan clearly states the KPIs which will be used as a means of monitoring the achievement of its targets, 		


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available, while recognising that changing and unforeseen demands will place additional pressure on financial resources. • Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes as part of delivering goods and services. • Managing expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • and these will be published quarterly on the OPCC website for the public to see • West Midlands Violence Reduction Strategy clearly sets out the targets for reduction • The Road Safety strategy clearly sets out the targets for reduced KSI on the region's road network • The Force Management Statement clearly shows the intentions for improving outcomes, and the constraints in place • Needs assessments are in place across the Violence Reduction Unit, Community Safety Partnerships and Victims Services • The OPCC has established a new method of tracking progress on delivering the 2025-2029 plan with individuals clearly identified as being responsible for the delivery of each target • Performance reports are considered bi-annually in depth by the AGB • PCC and CC meetings consider performance of Force • Annual Regional Strategic Needs Assessment completed by the Violence Reduction Partnership • 7 x local serious youth violence strategic needs assessments • VRP produces dashboards setting out performance across a range of thematic areas including exploitation • WMP's performance day enables the Deputy Chief Constable to hold the Force to account for its performance and is attended by the Chief Exec of the OPCC • Medium term financial plan recognises the targets that are being sought within the funding envelope available • Acting on HMICFRS assessments and recommendations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Recommendation tracker in place and reporting to Joint Audit Committee • Established risk management strategy and monitoring of risks, also reported to Joint Audit Committee. 		

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about services. Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the PCC and the chief officer's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints Ensuring fair access to services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social value is considered and scored as part of the procurement and commissioning of goods and services Generation of social value is assessed in the disposal of land and buildings There are commitments in the police and crime plan in relation to social value, environment and access to police services There is a joint environmental strategy in place between WMP and OPCC and work has taken place to assess the scope of works required The OPCC is developing a three year workplan to work with stakeholders to move towards contracting and the use of frameworks and away from one year grant funding to ensure sustainable funding plans for partners Workshops and seminars are being delivered to support CICs to grow and thereby support development of the market In 2025/26 the IDVA provision across the West Midlands was reviewed in light of strategic needs assessments and reallocations of budget were made as a result 		

PRINCIPLE D: DETERMINING THE INTERVENTIONS NECESSARY TO OPTIMISE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE INTENDED OUTCOMES


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
Determining interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision making framework in place Joint Code of Governance in place WMP's change programme structures in place include agreed information requirements in place for project sign off and commencement 		


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>options. Therefore, ensuring that best value is achieved however services are provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements, or where services are no longer required, in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets, and bearing in mind future impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal recording of decisions takes place PCC Commissioning Strategy PCC Engagement and Communications Strategy Needs assessments across the Violence Reduction Partnership, Community Safety Partnerships and Victims Services Using lived experience on panels to evaluate tenders Victims Advocate will obtain, understand and present victims' expectations and needs in the commissioning process Where police buildings are being closed we have developed a communication plan with the public to avoid loss of public confidence and reassure them of the Police's presence 		
<p>Planning interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets. Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered. Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively, including shared risks. Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances. Establishing appropriate performance measures as part of the planning process in order to assess and inform how the performance of the services and projects is to be measured. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The medium term financial plan is a joint plan between WMP and OPCC which meets government announcements and is mindful of grant terms and conditions The estates strategy is considered alongside the MTFP and aligns closely with the annual budget Within the MTFP there remains sufficient room to reassess the need for using reserves or investing in change during the year AGB are consulted on the MTFP and budget and JAC scrutinise arrangements for budget setting along with the Police and Crime Panel Plans are in the place across the Force and PCC for delivering specific priorities within the police and crime plan Performance reports highlight areas where corrective action is necessary. These areas are followed up and reported on Performance targets are detailed in the police and crime plan, and published quarterly Strategy, Delivery and Assurance function and internal audit provide service quality review capacity Regional Governance Group considers risk in formal collaborations Fees and Charges strategy aligned with National charging guidelines 		

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly. Preparing budgets in accordance with government funding announcements, organisational objectives, strategies and the medium-term financial plan. Informing medium- and long-term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure, together with estimates of grant, precept, and other income streams, aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget assumptions have been tested with CIPFA on an annual basis to ensure they are realistic and representative of other approaches in the sector. Capital programme states clearly what is not as well as what is included 		
<p>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the medium-term financial strategy integrates and trades off service priorities, affordability, and other resource constraints. Ensuring that the budgeting process is all inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term. Ensuring the medium-term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for the outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium term financial plan and annual budget aligned to police and crime plan and other strategies The delivery plan for the police and crime plan details actions and includes an assessment of budget requirements Force Management statement shows the inputs needed and where the resource gaps are WMP undertake priority based budgeting reviews on a rolling cycle to ensure that savings opportunities are identified and made Strategic policing requirement and strategic assessment completed and presented to Accountability and Governance Board. Updated procurement strategy includes social value. Also work ongoing to embed social value further The risks around ongoing funding to the VRP were explicitly planned for and mitigation was in place for 2025/26 Social value is considered at all stages in procurement and insource / outsource decisions as well as upon the disposal of assets 		

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. 			

PRINCIPLE E: DEVELOPING THE ENTITY'S CAPACITY, INCLUDING THE CAPABILITY OF ITS LEADERSHIP AND THE INDIVIDUALS WITHIN IT


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Developing the entity's capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing operations, performance and asset management on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness. Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how policing resources are allocated so that defined outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently. Recognising and promoting the benefits of collaborative working where added value can be achieved through partnerships. Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings Portfolio Board sets standards for building usage, and classifies buildings according to operational requirement to ensure they are used to their maximum efficiency, and capacity Force workforce plan in place which is continuously updated Longer term workforce planning continues to develop, to ensure that future L&D and recruitment needs are identified and acted upon WMP's talent management initiatives WMP's Conversations - performance framework in operation Use of AI being developed in the Force Control Room to more accurately respond to high risk incidents and provide a more measured response to low risk enquiries OPCC Core training offering and onboarding for all staff VRP supporting the delivery of trauma informed practice training in line with the delivery of the Police Trauma Informed Strategy Public order training brought inhouse during 2024/25 and will be a focus for review in 2025/26 National uplift programme completed successfully and targets met 		


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear plans in place for the delivery of the neighbourhood policing guarantee • HMICFRS value for money indicators reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that any potential learning is identified • Collaboration arrangements in place with neighbouring forces for significant services areas • Collaboration playbook developed to provide a gateway mechanism when entering into collaboration arrangements • There is a gap around the governance of fleet utilisation and performance, identified by internal audit, which will be developed during 2025/26 		
<p>Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained. • Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body. • Ensuring the PCC and chief officers have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief officers lead by implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by the PCC and/or chief constable, and each provides a check and balance for each other's responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCC, Chief Executive and Chief Constable have established communication processes in place • Scheme of governance in place across both corporations that is reviewed annually • Job descriptions are maintained and reviewed periodically • Senior officers meet regularly formally and informally and attend each other's boards to ensure that decision making is informed and agile 		


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing the capabilities of the PCC and chief officers to achieve effective shared leadership where appropriate, and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks. Ensuring the PCC, chief officers and staff receive appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged. Ensuring that the PCC, chief officers and staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis. Ensuring personal, organisation and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance failures both internal and external. Ensuring the PCC is independent of management and free from relationships that would materially interfere with its role. The OPCC, in conjunction with the force, should ensure that appropriate information is available for potential PCC candidates. Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCC induction ensures that where there is a change of political representative this is within the context of business as usual functions continuing The new neighbourhood guarantee places more focus on knowledge transfer and handover OPCC induction programme is rated highly by new starters The OPCC has regular awaydays which focus on skills and knowledge transfer The Chief Constable continues to host a number of senior leadership events to develop the capability of its leadership at all levels within the organisation. WMP's talent management initiatives OPCC invests in staff training and development to ensure that each member of staff not only maintains professional standards but has the opportunity to develop those, reporting this annually as part of the pay and gender gap report OPCC addressed the report by Max Caller into failing local authorities and incorporated key questions and learning from that into its annual staff survey Gifts and hospitality register is kept up to date OPCC monitor all requests for engagement which are discussed at the weekly diary meeting where engagements are allocated between the PCC, Deputy PCC, Chief Exec, Deputy Chief Exec and other members of the team There is an established PCC handover process in place Ask the Chief on WMP website is used widely to challenge key decisions 		



Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs. Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OPCC undertake a 360 degree appraisal annually to ensure that they are perceived to deliver their roles in accordance with the principles and standards in the code of conduct Performance appraisal process in place for all staff across the OPCC and Force (WMP Conversations and WMP Ratings) Occupational health support is in place for OPCC and WMP staff An employee wellbeing scheme, Vivup, is in place for OPCC and WMP staff Steps are taken to avoid exposure to traumatic incidents and a TRIM approach is adopted where this cannot be achieved OK (Oscar Kilo) has been adopted by WMP 		

PRINCIPLE F: MANAGING RISKS AND PERFORMANCE THROUGH ROBUST INTERNAL CONTROL AND STRONG PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Managing risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be regarded as a continuous process. Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively. Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated. Ensuring that the organisation is risk aware and that its risk appetite is defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Deputy Chief Constable has refreshed and reviewed the previous risk process WMP have had training and development on new risk processes Approved risk strategies are in place Risks are managed through an agreed risk processes Risk registers are reviewed on a regular basis Risk strategy and registers are scrutinised by Joint Audit Committee Business continuity plans are in place OPCC specifically monitors and reports on risks to delivering the Police and Crime Plan 		


Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
and communicated clearly to those responsible for making decisions.			
<p>Managing performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review. Making decisions based on relevant, clear, objective analysis and advice, pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook. Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing the organisation's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible. Providing the PCC and chief officers with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement. Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change Board processes include monitoring the delivery of projects as well as the post implementation review PCC decision papers consider financial, social, legal and environmental implications Oversight and ownership by PCC and/or chief officers of the performance of organisations Regular performance reports to Accountability and Governance Board Regular reporting to the independent Joint Audit Committee External scrutiny of performance by bodies such as the police and crime panel Publication of relevant reports from the Force to the PCC, supported by minutes of public forums attended by both the PCC and the chief constable Performance management systems, targets and reports on all areas of business including VRP OPCC monitoring of delivery of Police and Crime Plan External audit's value for money review helps the organisations to understand if there are fundamental concerns on performance 		



Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Robust internal control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the organisation's objectives. Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor. Ensuring an independent audit committee or equivalent group or function, which is independent of the executive and accountable to the PCC and chief constable, provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risks and maintaining an effective control environment and that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon. Evaluating and monitoring the organisation's risk management and internal control on a regular basis. Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a single framework of corporate governance, including contract standing orders and financial regulations Effective internal audit service is resourced and maintained – with a co-sourced arrangement in place to provide resilience Independent Joint Audit Committee complies with best practice as outlined in Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (CIPFA, 2022) including terms of reference, membership and training All members of the Joint Audit Committee are independent Quarterly assurance statement provided by JAC Chair to Chief Constable and PCC Annual report produced by audit committee and presented to AGB External audit reports reported quarterly to Audit Committee Internal audit charter and Internal Audit Strategy have been completely updated for new Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector (effective from 1/4/25) Self-assessment completed against CIPFA Code of Practice for the Governance of Internal Audit in UK Local Government (effective from 1/4/25) Internal Audit plan that is aligned to the key risks of the organisations and Police and Crime Plan objectives Risk management strategy/policy has been formally approved and adopted and is reviewed and updated on a regular basis Fraud and corruption policy that is reviewed on a regular basis Regular reporting to Audit Committee by professional standards department on cases of any internal fraud Commissioner's Accountability and Governance Board receives regular reports on the Professional Standards Department Compliance with the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption (CIPFA, 2014) 		

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
Managing data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data. Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies. Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) is defined OPCC has recorded any breach with data protection and appropriately considered reporting WMP has been criticised for data loss and put in place improved systems and training as a result Data protection policies and strategies in place Data retention policies in place across the organisations Op Stemson has improved the arrangements for the storage of physical items which may include personal data Compliance with policies and strategies including the specified information requirements Publication strategies Information sharing protocols in place between OPCC, WMP, VRP and partners as required Investment in Force IT systems continues to ensure that technological debt is reduced where possible, which ensures better treatment and storage of data Force has a digital evidence management system 		
Strong public financial management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short term financial and operational performance. Ensuring well developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual assessment completed against CIPFA's FM code to ensure compliance and best practice HMICFRS assessments and recommendations followed where it is appropriate to do so Internal audit reports are considered and actions followed up Finance teams are being upskilled through the addition of CIPFA trainees The CIPFA AFEP training offer is used across WMP and OPCC around financial management Financial Governance Board established in year to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget monitoring reports Annual statement of accounts Treasury management monitoring reports 		

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Savings and income generation proposals ○ Change Board papers • It is expected that the 2024/25 external audit value for money conclusion will be an improvement on 2023/24 when the PEEL findings were reflected by the auditors in a manner that was not agreed with by those charged with governance in WMP and WMPCC • Receipt of unqualified audit opinion 		

PRINCIPLE G: IMPLEMENTING GOOD PRACTICES IN TRANSPARENCY, REPORTING, AND AUDIT TO DELIVER EFFECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
Implementing good practice in transparency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring they are easy to access and interrogate. • Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports • Standard decision report template is used consistently • Information published on the website in accordance with the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011 and its revisions • Publication (subject to confidentiality tests) of force board papers • Publication (subject to confidentiality tests) of reports presented to the PCC's board 		

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>Implementing good practices in reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money, and the stewardship of resources to stakeholders in a timely and understandable way. • Ensuring the PCC and chief officers own the results. • Assessing the extent to which the organisation is applying the principles contained in the Framework and publishing the results of this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance in action (the AGS). • Ensuring the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other similar entities. • Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed functions as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal annual reports to Police and Crime Panel • Annual financial statements • Outturn position considered at FET, weekly holding to account and OPCC SMT • The external auditor's annual letter and management actions • Annual governance statement advice and guidance followed • Narrative to the statement of accounts conforms with guidance from CIPFA for content 		
<p>Assurance and effective accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon. • Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations as appropriate. Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Audit recommendations are implemented where agreed • Publication of responses to HMICFRS assessments and recommendations • Guidance is followed in terms of completing the Annual Governance Statement 		

Expected Behaviours & Outcomes	How the Requirements Are Met	Direction of Travel	RAG Status
<p>third party suppliers and that this is evidenced in the AGS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that when working in partnerships, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met. • Ensuring an effective internal audit service, with direct access to the PCC, chief constable and audit committee, provides assurance with regard to the organisation's governance arrangements, and produces recommendations which are acted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance is assured at Blue Light Commercial and Police Digital Services Board meetings • Regional Governance Group meetings are attended • NPAS and other national decision making meetings are attended • Compliance with the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit • Internal Audit charter setting out reporting lines across the PCC and WMP, and independence of Internal Audit function • Annual Head of Internal Audit report giving opinion on risk governance and control • Head of Internal Audit quarterly update report to Joint Audit Committee on audit findings and recommendation progress • Internal audit are externally assessed every 5 years against relevant professional standards. The last inspection was undertaken in 2022/23 where the function was assessed as fully compliant with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). • New Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public sector were launched in 2024/25 and will come into effect in from April 2025, replacing the PSIAS. The new Standards place more emphasis on the working relationship of internal audit, the Joint Audit Committee and senior management. 		



West Midlands Police

Annual Governance Statement

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Annual Governance Statement

Position as at 31 March 2025 including plans for the financial year 2025-26

1. Introduction

This Annual Governance Statement (AGS) explains how the Chief Constable governs West Midlands Police Force through a system of internal controls. The Chief Constable has adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE 2016 updated framework: *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*, a copy of which is on our website at www.west-midlands.police.uk or can be obtained by contacting us, details at www.west-midlands.police.uk/contact-us/index.aspx. This statement explains how the Chief Constable has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, regulation 6(1), which requires all relevant bodies to prepare an annual governance statement.

2. Scope

The Chief Constable is responsible for ensuring the force's business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Chief Constable also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Chief Constable is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the exercise of its functions, which includes ensuring a sound system of internal control is maintained through the year and that arrangements are in place for the management of risk.

3. The Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which the Chief Constable directs and controls activities through which it accounts and engages with the community. It enables the Chief Constable to monitor the achievement of strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services, including achieving value for money.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the governance framework and is designed to manage risk. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

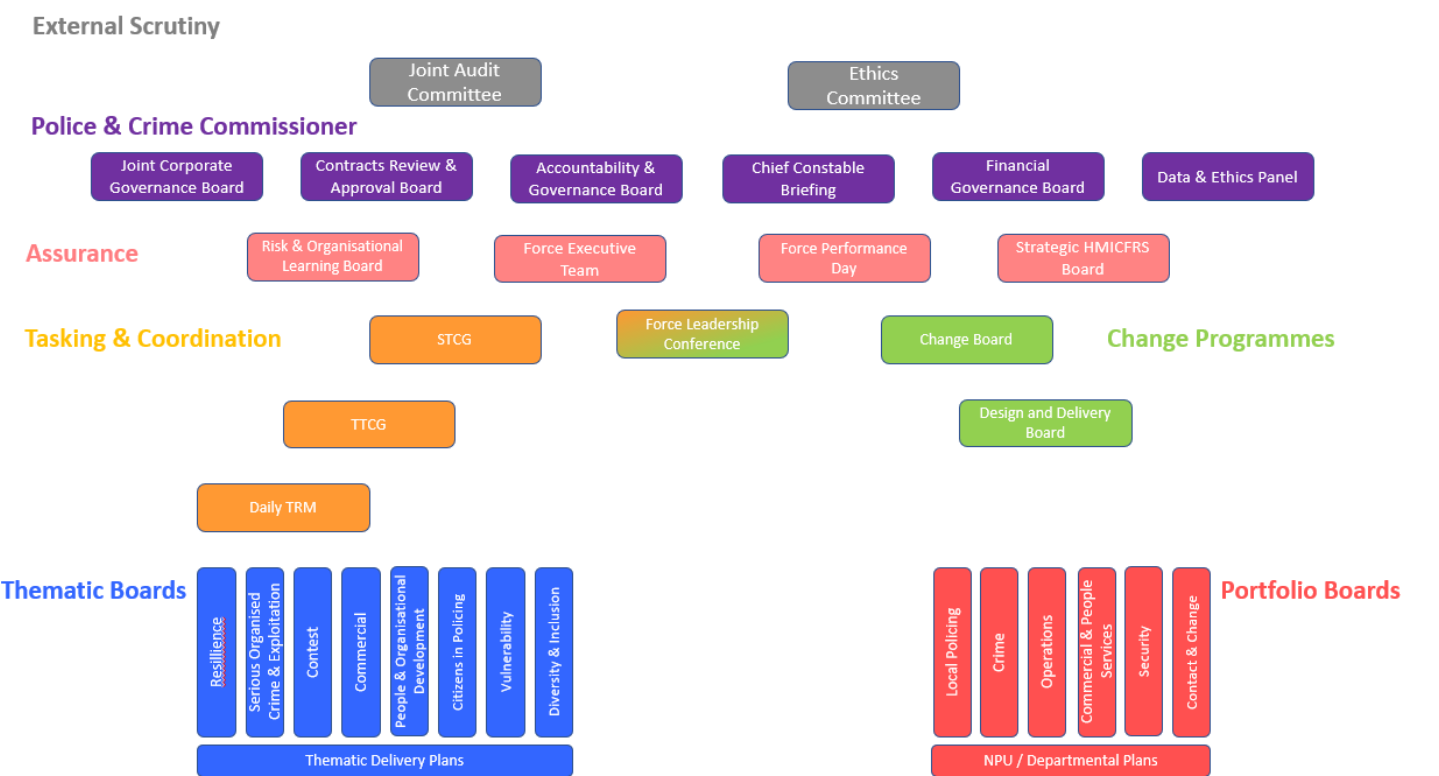


The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Chief Constable's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them effectively, efficiently and economically.

The Chief Constable is responsible for operational policing matters, the direction and control of police personnel, and for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of the force. The Chief Constable is held to account for the exercise of those functions and those of the persons under his direction and control, by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

It therefore follows that the Commissioner must satisfy himself that the force has appropriate mechanisms in place for the maintenance of good governance. For these to operate in practice, the Commissioner and the Chief Constable have separate but complimentary governance structures. These facilitate the achievement of effective governance arrangements, including the monitoring and assessment of performance in line with statutory responsibilities.

West Midlands Police Strategic Governance Structure:



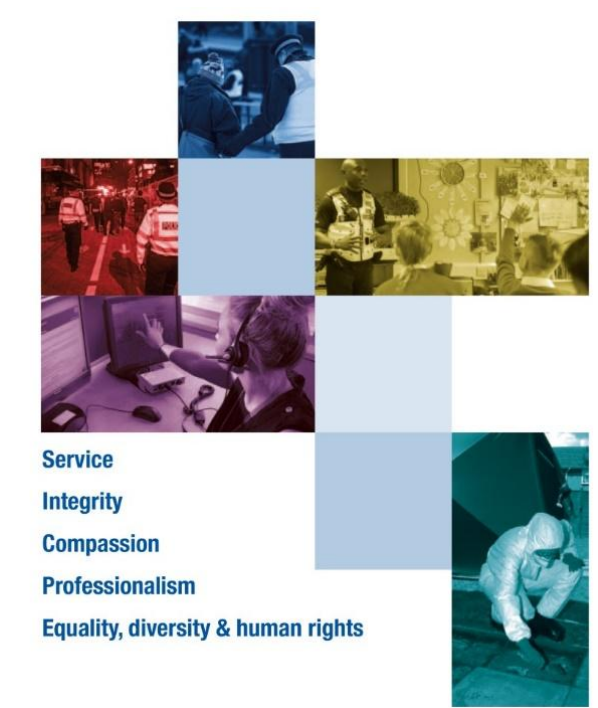


The 'Delivering Good Governance standard for public services 2016' sets out the seven good governance core principles. The key elements of the systems and processes that have been put in place for the force and how the force adheres to these seven principles is evidenced below.

4. Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law

Evidence to demonstrate Principle A includes;

- ✓ The Chief Constable's Vision and Values, in conjunction with the Code of Ethics, define the standards expected of everyone working in policing and is communicated to all officers and staff.



- ✓ The Standards of Professional Behaviour reflect the expectations of the public and are governed by specific policies, procedural rules and internal management processes that cover the activities of the force:

- Financial Management
- Procurement
- Health and safety
- Gifts and Hospitality
- Business Interests
- 'Whistleblowing' – Confidential Reporting
- Complaints Handling



- Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption
 - Information Security
 - Information sharing
 - Data Protection
 - General Data Protection Regulations
 - Change of Circumstances
- ✓ At a national level, the force cooperates in the National Fraud Initiative which attempts to identify fraud by sharing and comparing employee data across the public sector.
- ✓ Within the force there are two formal codes of conduct, one for police officers and one for police staff. Both codes define the standards of personal behaviour expected. The officer code also sets out requirements in terms of use of force, performance, execution of duties and other general conduct expectations. Certain staff, e.g. qualified accountants or solicitors, will have professional codes of conduct to which they are held to account.
- ✓ An Ethics Committee has been established which is responsible for providing the Chief Constable and PCC with independent advice around ethical issues arising from the data analytics projects.

5. Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Evidence to demonstrate Principle B includes;

- ✓ One of the strategic pillars that support the force vision is 'Engaged Communities'. The change to the force operating model in April 2023 was done with the ambition of further building on relationships with the communities served by WMP. Clear ownership, affinity and pride in local teams will help us tackle local criminality, prevent crime and keep people safe.



✓

- ✓ The West Midlands Police website includes the current Freedom of Information (FOI) publication scheme in its 'Your right to information' pages.
- ✓ The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner sets the overall strategic direction for the Chief Constable and the force through the objectives contained in the Police and Crime Plan, setting the force budget and determining the precept, commissioning services, and holding the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the public. The Police and Crime Plan covers the period 2021-25. This has been updated for 2025-2029.
- ✓ The force website aids agile accessibility to the police service by providing advice, enabling a member of the public to report an incident, track their case and undertake live webchat to report all non-emergency crimes online.
- ✓ The force actively involves communities across the force geography. The approach involves public meetings including community forums, independent advisory groups, scrutiny panels and messaging via WMNOW.
- ✓ There is also active involvement with the full range of media such as press, TV, social media and public surveys.
- ✓ The force works closely with Independent Advisory Groups and independent scrutiny panels to increase levels of trust and understanding in our diverse communities, support the most vulnerable and make sure our engagement is targeted and meaningful.



- ✓ Governed by the Citizens in Policing Board, the force has a comprehensive Citizens in Policing programme which seeks to increase citizen participation in policing and community safety by developing the scale and variety of opportunities for volunteers, special constables, cadets and a number of watch schemes.
- ✓ The force engages and collaborates with a significant number of partners within the region. An example being the work of the West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit which is jointly chaired by an Assistant Chief Constable and Public Health Lead. The WMVRU aims to bring together partners to work together with the shared understanding that violence and its associated harms are preventable. The WMVRU is a member of the World Health Organisation Violence Prevention Alliance international network.
- ✓ WMP regularly speaks to its communities and partners to share the experiences and develop ideas and practices. We use the Four Key Principles (Voice, Dignity and Respect, Trustworthy Motives and Neutrality) to ensure we all understand what we're doing. Understanding what people think of the Force's practices helps WMP to change and constantly improve what it does. With greater levels of citizen satisfaction comes an increase in trust and legitimacy.

6. Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

Evidence to demonstrate Principle C includes;

- ✓ A new force strategy for 2025 – 2029 has been developed, building on the Chief Constables ambitions that were set as part of the new Local Policing model that was delivered in April 2023.
- ✓ The Policing Vision 2030 highlighted trends most likely to impact policing by 2030 and the College of Policing's Future Operating Environment 2040 provides an insight into policing's operating environment as far as 2040, we consider the implications of these kind of trends, scenarios and future challenges on WMP as part of our annual strategic assessment within our strategy and business planning cycle.

7. Principle D: Determining the outcomes necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

Evidence to demonstrate Principle D includes;

- ✓ Strategic governance is in place to monitor and track activity against WMP's strategy. This includes regular Chief Officer meetings, the monthly Force Leadership Conference and biannual Strategic Tasking and Co-ordination group meeting which are in place to drive the key deliverables of the strategic assessment.



- ✓ Force performance is scrutinised via both strategic and tactical force level governance structures, with the monthly Performance Day acting as the main oversight body. Portfolio and thematic boards are in place to manage performance within the portfolio areas and provide the necessary oversight and assurance.
- ✓ A dedicated Assurance team within Corporate Development and dedicated governance for all aspects of HMICFRS activity including preparedness for upcoming inspections as well as scrutiny of open recommendations.
- ✓ The force planning cycle incorporates an annual strategic assessment, annual Force Management Statement (FMS) and financial planning.
- ✓ The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been updated which forms the basis of the annual budgets and provides a framework for the evaluation of future proposals.
- ✓ Decision-making at all levels of the force is undertaken within the framework of the National Decision Model, which has the Code of Ethics at its core.
- ✓ WMP continue to utilise the Threat Harm Risk Investigation Vulnerability Engagement (THRIVE) framework across functions. It underpins all decision making in the force and encourages flexible and adaptable risk management, while empowering staff and officers at all levels to have confidence in the decisions that they make.



8. Principle E: Developing the Force's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Evidence to demonstrate Principle E includes;

- ✓ The Force Executive Team have clearly defined leadership roles and objectives; they are responsible for implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services within their respective portfolios.
- ✓ WMP Conversations continue to be delivered across the force as a way of engaging with the workforce and evidencing individual and team performance and capability. The process retains a focus on measuring and improving our performance to meet the strategic objectives and drive personal, departmental and force-wide deliverables.



- ✓ During 2024-25 there has been continued investment in leadership training, with the Op Excellence programme continuing for first line leaders, and a further programme created for second line leaders. The programmes equip leaders with all necessary skills needed as a leader of people.
- ✓ To build on capacity, collaboration arrangements are in place with neighbouring forces for significant service areas including Forensics, Legal Services and Operations as well as Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) and future collaborations continue to be considered.
- ✓ Regional and national governance arrangements are in place in relation to national and regional programmes (Single Online Home, Specialist Capabilities, and Blue Light Commercial etc.)
- ✓ The Data Driven Insight Lab continues to utilise the vast amounts of data available to the force to predict future demand, as well as the use of data science to allow to more targeted operational activity.
- ✓ The forces 'digital workforce' that was identified by HMICFRS as 'Innovative Practise' continues to improve efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.

9. Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Evidence to demonstrate Principle F includes;

- ✓ The force has an Organisational Risk Management Policy and Corporate Risk Register, prepared and reviewed by the Deputy Chief Constable and managed via the Force Executive Team Meeting and Risk and Organisational Learning Board. The Joint Audit Committee (with the PCC) is responsible for independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework.
- ✓ The force ensures all decision-making processes are overseen by correct governance structures. Each member of the Force Executive Team (FET) leads a specific portfolio board and chairs thematic boards, all of which incorporate sub-groups for specific functions and themes. This oversight from the highest level ensures that there is no disconnect at any level of management in the continued delivery of force performance and ambitions. Risk is discussed as a regular agenda item within these portfolio and thematic boards. These meetings ensure risks are being managed and mitigated. Oversight of force risks is through the Risk and Organisational Learning Board that is chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable.



- ✓ Objectives are defined within the WMP Conversations of each executive team member and cascaded throughout the organisation's approach to performance management.
- ✓ Performance management forms part of the force governance arrangements. Performance information is scrutinised by the Force Executive Team via the boards they chair and the Quarterly Performance Reviews (QPRs) they hold. Force performance is monitored through the force performance day chaired by the DCC. All aspects of performance are tracked through an assurance calendar that includes operational areas such as Serious Organised Crime to financial management.
- ✓ The Performance Data Improvement project has transformed how all levels of the organisation view, use and understand performance information. The first dashboard from this project seeks to refresh the force's approach to performance dashboards, ensuring that they are providing detailed management information as well as supporting officers to manage their work efficiently.
- ✓ His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) independently assesses operational policing processes and reports the performance of the force at a national level. The force tracks and monitors all recommendations and areas for improvement from HMICFRS via the force governance structures.
- ✓ In September 2025, the force was removed from the engaged state of enhanced monitoring by HMICFRS as a result of the significant improvements that had been made across the force. This was in record time and the force continues to address outstanding areas for improvement.
- ✓ Strong public financial management is evidenced through the following strategies and reports:
 - Medium Term Financial Plan
 - Annual Financial Strategy
 - Budget Monitoring reports
 - Annual Statement of Accounts
 - Treasury Management Strategy
 - Treasury Management Reports
 - Reserves Strategy
 - Benefit Realisation plans
 - HMICFRS Value for Money Profile
 - CIPFA Financial Management Capability Review



- ✓ The CIPFA Financial Management Code (CIPFA FM Code) is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist police organisations in demonstrating their financial sustainability. The CIPFA FM Code therefore sets the standards of financial management for PCCs and Forces. A key goal of the FM Code is to improve the financial resilience of organisations by embedding enhanced standards of financial management. There are also clear links between the FM Code and the Governance Framework, particularly with its focus on achieving sustainable outcomes.

The PCC and the Force are compliant with the principles of the FM code and work will continue in 2025-26 to improve and enhance financial accountability through reinforcement of roles and responsibilities, formalised training and enhanced financial reporting. The enhanced financial reporting will include data on policing performance and outcomes against financial information to enhance operational decision making.

10. Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

Evidence to demonstrate Principle G includes;

- ✓ A Joint Audit Committee is responsible for independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, the independent scrutiny of the Chief Constable's and the PCC's financial performance to the extent that it affects the Chief Constable and PCC's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment.
- ✓ The Joint Scheme of Corporate Governance, updated in 2021, sets out in detail the respective roles and functions of the Commissioner and Chief Constable, outlining all significant decisions which are consented or delegated and which are of a statutory, financial or management nature.
- ✓ All major change and transformation programmes and projects have their own project boards and adhere to consistent force change control processes which include addressing risk management and mitigation. When projects close, any risk still in existence is reviewed for inclusion on the relevant departmental or corporate risk register.
- ✓ An External Audit function reports to "those charged with governance" in respect of the Annual Accounts to ensure they are prepared in accordance with legislation, accounting standards and good practice. As well as issuing a statutory opinion on the accounts they also issue a statutory opinion on the Chief Constable's arrangements for securing value for money, measured as economy, efficiency and effectiveness, which sits alongside the HMICFRS assessment work.



- ✓ This Annual Governance Statement is published alongside the Statement of Accounts.
- ✓ Regular publication (subject to confidentiality tests) of reports presented to the Strategic Policing and Crime Board.

11. Review of effectiveness

The Chief Constable has responsibility for an annual review of the effectiveness of the Governance Framework. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the Force Executive Team within West Midlands Police, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Internal Audit Annual report, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates. In maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements, the following roles are undertaken:

The Force

The Chief Constable operates a system of strongly controlled arrangements for the delivery of operational policing in its communities, together with management and monitoring arrangements for:

- Performance management and associated reporting;
- Financial management;
- Standards of data quality that underpin key reporting requirements;
- The professional standards of police officers and staff in the force;
- Programme and project management.

These functions are organised within clear reporting structures in the force, designed to provide the Chief Constable and the Executive Team with assurances as to the effective delivery of operational policing and the Commissioner's Policing and Crime plan.

Group Activities:

Violence Reduction Partnership

The Violence Reduction Partnership is funded by the Home Office, and shares joint governance arrangements between both the OPCC and West Midlands Police. The partnership is made up of public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations with the aim of tackling the root causes of violence.



Commissioned Intervention Services

There are a number of commissioned intervention services funded by the OPCC that are used as part of a community resolution or conditional caution for offenders. These are for a range of offences and evaluations have shown reductions in reoffending of between 55% - 70%.

The Joint Audit Committee

The Commissioner and Chief Constable have established a Joint Audit Committee to be responsible, on behalf of both Corporations Sole, to:

- Advise the Commissioner and the Chief Constable according to good governance principles;
- Provide independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Commissioner's and Chief Constable's internal control environment and risk management framework;
- Oversee the effectiveness of the framework in place for ensuring compliance with statutory requirements;
- Independently scrutinise financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Commissioner's and Chief Constable's exposure to risks and weakens the internal control environment;
- Oversee the financial reporting process.
- Ensure the Force is implementing agreed actions resulting from HMICFRS inspections and thematic reviews/reports.

Internal Audit

The system of Internal Audit is a primary tenet of corporate governance and is the responsibility of the Commissioner. The provision and maintenance of an effective shared Internal Audit service for the PCC and CC has been delegated to the PCC's Chief Finance Officer. The Audit Committee oversees the provision of this service, reviewing associated plans and work outputs.

12. Significant governance issues 2024-25

The CIPFA Financial Management Code (CIPFA FM Code) is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist police organisations in demonstrating their financial sustainability. The CIPFA FM Code therefore sets the standards of financial management for PCCs and Forces. A key goal of the FM Code is to improve the financial resilience of organisations by embedding enhanced standards of financial management. There are also clear links between the FM Code and the Governance Framework, particularly with its focus on achieving sustainable outcomes.



A self-assessment compliance review of the CIPFA FM Code was completed during 2024/25 across the Force, with the majority of the assessment being RAG rated as green with no areas of concern. The largest single change to the assessment will be around the need to embed the new Procurement Act 2023 which began to rollout from February 2025 as per the secondary legislation.

The Head of Audit Conclusion for the 12 months to the 31 March 2025 stated that 'Reasonable assurance' can be given that the governance, risk management and control frameworks in place are good and are adequate to support achievement of the organisations objectives, and that controls are generally operating effectively in practice. Internal audit recommendations relating to financial governance are also regularly reviewed at Financial Governance Board which should ensure delivery during 2025/26.

WMP and the OPCC continue to work together to ensure that oversight of regional collaborations is strengthened in the coming year, given the shared responsibility to deliver the Neighbourhood Policing guarantee in a manner which recognises the need for the Police to be fully representative of the neighbourhoods and communities which they police.

The meetings between the PCC and Chief Constable during 2024/25 included a review by exception of the Force's Corporate Risk Register and there were no instances where a risk arose which prevented the achievement of a principal objective.

Core governance arrangements are operating effectively and are continuously under review. The implementation of a new Joint Financial Governance Board in year has been slow to bed in but Change Board papers will shortly be reviewed there before going on to Change Board, where there are significant financial implications.

The Force governance arrangements were reviewed during 2023/24 to improve consistency and streamline the number of boards in place. These new arrangements were embedded during 2024/25 and at a strategic level the governance arrangements are well established with clear reporting lines into boards and effective leadership, appropriate membership with suitable representation, good attendance and contributions. The Deputy Chief Constable holds monthly Performance Panels where senior officers across the Force are held to account for performance in their area of responsibility. At a local level, each Force Executive Portfolio lead holds monthly governance boards to review progress and performance within their area. A separate governance Board, also chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, maintains oversight of HMICFRS recommendations and during 2024/25 we saw good progress made by the Force to address causes for



concern, with West Midlands Police moved to default phase of monitoring, having been moved to Engage phase of monitoring in November 2023 following their police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy (PEEL) programme of inspection.

Considerable amounts of work were undertaken to review the Joint Code of Governance in light of the Procurement Act 2023 and business as usual change. This has not been completed in 2024/25 and will now be completed in 2025/26.

13. Conclusion and Commitment Statement

The scale of change facing the Chief Constable remains extremely challenging, at a time when the demand and need for sustained and improved service to the public continues to increase. This will require firm leadership, careful management, innovation and robust governance.

The systems and processes the Chief Constable has in place to monitor the implementation of the Police and Crime Plan will ensure activities detailed in this statement are implemented. The governance arrangements of the PCC and the Chief Constable will remain under constant review in the forthcoming financial year.

Signed

Craig Guildford
Chief Constable of West Midlands Police

Peter Gillett, CPFA
Director of Commercial Services West Midlands