

Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

Title: Annual Assurance Report 2015
General Information

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Panel



Background

At 27 November 2015 Panel meeting Members discussed the Police and Crime Commissioners response to the report of the Committee for Standards in Public Life on Leadership, Ethics and Accountability in policing.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tone-from-the-top-leadership-ethics-and-accountability-in-policing>

One of the recommendations arising from this report was that Joint Audit Committees should publish an Annual Report in a form that is easily accessible to the public. The Joint Independent Audit Committee has recently published its Annual Assurance Report 2015 (attached as an appendix with its operating principles) and it was agreed that this should be brought to the Panel on an annual basis for information.

Grant Thornton undertook a piece of work in 2015 on police audit committees and commented that the Audit Committee plays a key part in creating a resilient and effective police service for the twenty-first century. At a National Police and Crime Panel Conference they emphasised the importance of the Panel and the Audit Committee being aware of the work each body was undertaking.

<http://www.grantthornton.co.uk/globalassets/1.-member-firms/united-kingdom/pdf/publication/examining-the-evidence-june-2015.pdf>

Information on the Audit Committee can be found via the following link:-

<http://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/Transparency/Audit/Joint-Independent-Audit-Committee/Joint-Independent-Audit-Committee.aspx>

The Joint Independent Audit Committee is a key component of the PCC and Chief Constable's arrangements for corporate governance. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

The purpose of the Committee is to provide independent assurance to the PCC and the Chief Constable regarding the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment within Thames Valley Police and the Office of the PCC. It will consider the internal and external audit reports of both the PCC and Chief Constable and advise both parties according to good governance principles. It has oversight of general governance matters and provides

comment on any new or amended PCC policies and strategies with regard to financial risk and probity.

The Committee will consist of five members (currently three Members) who are independent of the PCC and Thames Valley Police. They will be appointed by the Chief Constable and the PCC (or their representatives). This is usually done through a selection process and information on this process can be viewed via the link below.

<http://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/Get-Involved/Vacancies-for-Joint-Independent-Audit-Committee.aspx>

There are normally four meetings a year and the PCC and Chief Constable will attend or be appropriately represented at formal meetings. Committee meetings will be held at key strategic times of the year to coincide with the budget process and publication of financial management reports and accounts as follows:-

1. **March** – to consider the Internal Auditor’s Internal Audit Plan
2. **June** – to consider the End of Year Report, the External Audit Plan and Fee and the Annual Governance Statement;
3. **September** – to consider the Statement of Accounts;
4. **December** – to receive the Annual External Audit Letter and agree the Annual Assurance Report of the Committee.

Recommendations

To note and comment on the attached Annual Assurance Report 2015