MINUTES OF JOINT INDEPENDENT AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON FRIDAY 12 June 2026 COMMENCING AT

13:00HRS AND CONCLUDING AT 17:00 HRS - PART I

Committee Members Present:
S Page (Chair), M Strange, K Taylor, C Westcott, L Raffellini

Present:
B Snuggs (Deputy Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police TVP)
G Ormston (Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner OPCC)
M Thornley (Chief Finance Officer, OPCC)
D Murray (Assistant Chief Constable, TVP)
V Waskett (Head of Governance, OPCC)
M Lattanzio (Chief Digital & Information Officer, TVP)
C Widdison (Head of Governance and Change, TVP)
A Nicholls (Head of Strategic Governance, TVP)
K Saunderson (Head of Organisational Change, TVP)
N Shovell (Chief Internal Auditor, TVP & OPCC)
A Shearn (Principal Auditor, TVP & OPCC)
M Foley (Head of Strategic Planning, OPCC)
I McCall (Head of ICT Technical Services, TVP)
A Kennett (EY Audit)
C Wilkinson (EY Audit)
A Candalen (Head of Facilities, TVP)

J Katouzian (Governance Manager, OPCC)

Apologies – N Cornelius, S South, J Jack, T Wilson (CTC)
Observers: 1 work placement student.

PRELIMINARIES

1. Apologies and Introductions

Apologies as above. The Chair, Stephen Page (SP) welcomed Chloe Wilkinson (CWK) from EY audit as TVP's new External Audit Partner.

2. Minutes & Actions of the JIAC Meeting held on 06.03.26 (Part I)

(SP) reviewed the minutes and actions of the JIAC meeting held on 06 March 2026.

The following actions are completed and can be removed from the Action Log:

JIAC 011 + 012 + 013 + 014 + 018 + 020 + 021 + 022 + 023 + 024 + 025 + 026

Action 019 carried over to meeting 11.09.26. Action 015 is amended and carried over to the meeting 12.12.26

REGULAR UPDATES

3. Annual Report Internal Audit 2025/26. *(Neil Shovell – NS).*

Chief Internal Auditor Neil Shovell (NS) provided the meeting with an overview of the Annual Internal Audit Report.

(NS) advised that overall, the audits have proceeded well, the outcomes show improvement over the last 3-4 years.

This is Neil's last JIAC meeting before leaving the Office of the PCC at the end of June, the entire meeting wished Neil well and praised his hard work and diligent efforts, over many years, as Chief Internal Auditor. He will be greatly missed.

4. Joint Internal Audit Team contingency plans *(Neil Shovell – NS)*

Since Neil Shovell as Chief Internal Auditor is leaving the post at the end of June 2026, some contingency plans have been put in place to mitigate risks and these were discussed.

Martin Thornley (MT) advised there are standards and benchmarks that we will aim for:

- The recruitment process is underway; interviews are scheduled for 25 June.
- 24 audits are planned for this year, with a tolerance of 4 Audits. Good coverage consist of 20 audits, while carrying over low priority audits to the following year.
- Should recruitment take longer than anticipated the minimum is 15 audits.

(SP) one idea as a way of increasing the number of audits may be to task some existing internal employees to carry out audits on a project basis, though guided and supervised by the new Chief Internal Auditor. This approach can provide excellent development opportunities for high-flyers who would benefit from seeing the Force as a wider enterprise.

Gillian Ormston (GO) noted that it is important to maintain the independence of the audit, i.e. not having a Finance Officer auditing Finance functions.

(MT) we will take this suggestion on board and look at the feasibility.

(SP) the change of Chief Internal Auditor – and also a new External Audit Partner – provides a good opportunity to do a zero-based review – with the new incoming Chief Internal Auditor – of how many audits are undertaken. Reviewing the number and the scope.

Action: Review number and scope of audits undertaken – with the new Chief Internal auditor once in post. MT + LW (JIAC 027)

(SP) furthermore, also investigate the specialist skills which need to be added by employing an external specialist auditor.

Action: Review the skills required from external specialist support – with the new Chief Internal auditor once in post. MT + LW (JIAC 028)

5. Progress on the Delivery of Agreed Actions in the Internal Audit Report.
(Gillian Ormston – GO & Martin Thornley – MT, for the OPCC) (Ali Nicholls – AN, for TVP).

Chris Westcott (CW) requested that some of the charts are updated for ease of reviewing.

Ali Nichols (AN) we have already made the changes and will be moving the data to an App in future.

No Actions:

6. TVP Risk & Business Continuity update. ***(Ali Nicholls – AN)***

Kay Taylor (KT) regarding lithium batteries, page red.68, will the completion of the new forensic laboratory help lower the risk? (AN) yes, it will and the improvement is around some of the transport and storage of batteries; I will take this away and provide an update.

(KT) query regarding Project Vigilant - identifying early predatory behaviour targeting women in the Nighttime Economy. The target score and target date are both *TBC*, is there a reason for this?

Ben Snuggs (BS) this is funding related, the funding has traditionally come from the Home Office, the risk is around the area of continued funding. We will come back you on this.

Action: Update the committee re: reduced risk to storage and transportation of lithium batteries. AN (JIAC 029)

Action: Update the committee re: risk to funding, risk scores and completion dates for Project Vigilant. BS (JIAC 030)

7. OPCC Risk Register. ***(Gillian Ormston – GO)***

(CW) page red 100, two charts – the risk heat map, strategic risks 2 and 4 are listed, but 1,3 and 6 are not listed, however they are referred to elsewhere. Martha Foley (MF) these risks are amalgamated and are on page red 97, the diagram shows where the risks are now situated. They have been de-escalated. (CW) can it be presented differently in the future to make it easier for us and your colleagues to locate the data.

(GO) the biggest risk in funding is for SEROCU – South East Regional Crime Unit, funding is not guarantee beyond 2026. The possibility is that SEROCU moves into the National Crime Agency. The Chief Constable has written to the Home Office to request clarity and to understand the impact upon local policing.

Linda Waters (LW) all forces in the South East of England contribute toward SEROCU so any reduction in funding will affect them all.

Action: Reconfigure charts in the OPCC Risk Register for future reports. MF (JIAC 031)

8. Fire Safety Assurance – closing review *(DCC Snuggs – BS).*

The Committee discussed the progress of the Fire Safety Assurance programme. The Committee is satisfied that TVP have a proper grip on this issue with organisational changes and improvements and were briefed that TVP is now above the minimum level of compliance.

ACC Murray is providing coordination at a Gold level.

No Actions:

FINAL ACCOUNTS

9. Draft statement of accounts (incl Annual Governance Statement)
(Martin Thornley – MT & Linda Waters – LW)

(SP) how deeply are TVP using capital reserves and any underspend?

(LW), we are very strict on the use of our reserves; we are building up the estates reserve to fund, as capital, the refurbishment of our buildings. And we are building up a savings initiative to be able to invest in potential new buildings and new technologies.

There was some discussion regarding any administrative delays that may cause hold-ups in approving the process of purchasing new technologies. There were none identified, though the Committee noted it is an area worth keeping focus on should investment be needed.

The Annual Governance Statement was well received, and Vicki Waskett was complimented on the changes made to the document making it more readable.

No Actions:

10. EY Audit Plan update
(Chloe Wilkinson – CWK & Alison Kennett – AK verbal)

Chloe Wilkinson (CWK) provided the committee with a summary of the report. At a higher level the risks are consistent with the previous year. The only slight change is the risk of overvaluation of the land value – in reference to CIPFA Bulletin 22 which reassess the valuation regime for non-investment assets in the public sector.

(SP) how easy is the change in valuation regime in terms of the audit? (CWK) the intention of the bulletin is to reduce the burden upon auditing.

(SP) regarding value for money risks and benefits, do the external auditors delve into this?

(MT) the external auditors are not resourced to take on this kind of endeavour, however, we and TVP have structures, such as the efficiency board as well as internal polices, to drive forward the desire of value for money and efficiency.

(KT) gross expenditure on the provision of services is at the level of 1.8 listed in the draft report, can you provide further detail as to how these were chosen and the figures? The narrative does not reflect the numbers in the bubble? (CWK) apologies, this is an error in the document, the bubbles are the correct numbers, the narrative is slightly out of date. We will circulate an updated document.

(MS) to flag for the minutes, technology in some areas of the business is quite modern and up to date, in other areas they are older and more antiquated. It seems like a miss-match in service level?

(LW) the Aptos system is an older system and pulling off live reports can be difficult. We are working with our IT dept. looking at improving this system in the long term. But it remains an issue for us at the moment.

Action: Circulate updated report with data/narrative to match. CWK (JIAC 032)

Break 10mins

Updates and Requested Briefings

11. PEEL inspection report – deferred to next meeting
(DCC Snuggs – BS verbal update)

No Actions:

12. TVPs role in Community resilience
re: JIAC Actions 012 + 013 + 014
(DCC Snuggs – BS verbal update)

(SP) we received the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Risk Register, the key issue for us in terms of governance is the readiness of TVP to react and deal with disasters and critical incidents and be able to have the people and the equipment in place. The Committee is seeking evidence that readiness is well governed, ie has measurable targets and is being reported against those targets. Initial conversations suggest that although there is a lot of good activity and collaborative discussions with other external parties, it is unclear how TVP demonstrates/measures readiness.

(BS) there is a LRF Risk Register and a National Risk Register where we assess the top ten risks - e.g. cyber-attack, pandemic, flooding etc - where we have a duty as first responders. TVP and other agencies are tested for readiness, with mitigations and risk management all in place. We are duty bound to have Command training. All this is managed through the Joint Operations Unit (JOU) between TVP and Hampshire, including where the risks are managed, events are monitored, testing and exercise opportunities, multi-agency interaction. All this activity is reported into a delivery group, currently Chaired by ACC Darren O'Callahan.

The delivery group then reports to the LRF, chaired by the NHS and I am the Deputy Chair. Thames Valley is a more complex area due to the size of the region and local authority structures. Our planning is as ready as it can be in terms of plans and execution.

(SP) In particular, we are looking for TVP to have a clear understanding of those capabilities required in an emergency which cannot be generated on demand and therefore require managed attention before an emergency arises. What about necessary technologies, equipment and kit, specialist persons – how is this extracted from the multi-agency work and put into practice?
(BS) the Operations Planning Unit employ Contingency Planning Officers, they manage the actions to fulfil under the Civil Contingency Act requirements, ensuring that people, equipment, alert systems, coordination are carried out. The governance of this work goes through to the ACC Operations, Darren O'Callaghan, who reports to me.

(SP) question for the PCC, do we need to change anything in the PCC's Annual Report to reflect this area? (GO) we are reviewing this area from start to finish, the PCC is currently satisfied that TVP is able to deal with public disorder, though would welcome more advice and guidance in the work of the LRF. However, the LRF is not linked in with the PCC's Office as we are not a statutory partner – though we do have a representative who sits on the LRF.

(BS) there is additional scrutiny of the LRF through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Action: Review how the PCC provides scrutiny of resilience preparedness in TVP and what measures are used to demonstrate adequate readiness. MF (JIAC 015)

Action: Review scrutiny by MHCLG in relation to the Local Resilience Forum + TVP. MF (JIAC 033)

ANNUAL Reports (period ending 31.03)

13. Treasury Management Report
(Martin Thornley – MT)

The Chair noted the report shows excellent activity in all financial areas, good governance and excellent management control.

Some of the reports are very thorough and overly weighty and can be trimmed to make the data more accessible and easier to use as a management tool. A report more of the kind produced by a PLC business, that contains *sharp clear measured actions.*

The Committee gave advice on areas of the report that require less in-depth detail and keeping the report very much focussed on the history of the previous year and segregate that from future reporting. This allows the Committee to get a clear focus on the activity and business – for this report and all those submitted to the Committee. **Noted.**

Some more comparison data with other Police Forces would also be helpful in the report to allow for comparative analysis.

The Treasury Management Report was accepted by the Committee. The final version of the report will be included in the document bundle for publication.

Action: Forward updated final report for document bundle and publication – MT (JIAC 034)

14. CTC (Chiltern Transport Company) Annual Report
(ACC Murray – DM & Thomas Williams – TW CTC)

The Committee noted that Hertfordshire Police left the Consortium on 01 April 2026 and asked for further clarity on how this impacts TVP.

(LW) advised that the only element which remains of the contract is the telematics. We do not foresee a big impact upon TVP, and it does not affect the way we purchase vehicles.

ACC Murray (DM) – the telematics are within contract for another 18months, following this Hertfordshire will need to resource a solution themselves. The exit has been relatively smooth.

No Actions

***15.* People Directorate Annual Report**
(Kate Saunderson – KS)

Kate Saunderson (KS) gave an overview of the report. Items of note include, the strengthening of governance within our People Strategy linked to the Trust and Confidence Strategy – including an action tracker and metrics. These will be monitored by our Performance Team.

Retention is also showing improvement and a reduction in demand in key areas such as recruitment, foundation and continuous learning and Tutoring Officers.

Staff wellbeing continues to be a focus; sickness data shows an ongoing increase in psychological sickness.

The 2nd National Wellbeing Survey is ongoing at the moment; it is managed and organised independently and the results with be shared with the Chief Constable and his Senior Management Team.

No Actions:

16. Health and Safety Annual Report
(Ali Nicholls – AN & Claire Widdison – CW)

Ali Nicholls (AN) gave an update on the current Health and Safety engagement work, which is increasing across the departments and teams in TVP.

There was some discussion regarding data and figures of recorded *near misses* and what defines a 'near miss' – clarity on the definition will assist the committee in understand the figures provided. (AN) will provide a definition and some background.

Action: Clarify and provide examples of 'near miss' category in the H+S report. – AN (JIAC 035)

17. Trust and Confidence Annual Report
(ACC Murray – DM)

The Committee reviewed and discussed the report submitted by ACC Murray, and noted significant progress towards goals.

The Committee noted recent events in other forces, and public disquiet over perceived imbalances in policing communities; and public concerns that in some forces there has been DEI "overcorrection" (eg a perception that there are too many DEI specialist roles). Noting that the Committee is firmly apolitical and without straying into political territory, it would be remiss if we didn't query this area as there is so much public interest. Are there areas of concern, whether accidental or otherwise, identified in TVP?

(BS) we are aware of public concerns. It does not detract from the work we have done around Trust and Confidence in defining and dealing with community issues with regard to disproportionality.

(GO) the PCC recently reviewed this matter and a year ago we conducted a re-set. We welcome the focus from ACC Murray on Trust and Confidence and *Inclusivity*, rather than DEI. Thus, making sure there is a balance across all our communities, being fair and equitable to all members of the community.

(DM) TVP is pioneering in this area and a number of forces are adopting and replicating our model and methods.

We have accepted the national Race Action Plan, but with changes and adjustments to fit our communities. Some of the polarising language in the messaging we do not use.
An example, *eliminating disproportionality* is a term used, however if we are stopping the right people for legitimate crime purposes, then we will continue doing it.

Our plan does not confine itself solely to the Black community and is much more inclusive.

Some staff members have 'Diversity' in their job title/description, but this is only a small part of their work. Yet it can lead to the wrong impression that they are hired as 'Diversity Officers'. Therefore, we are updating the job descriptions to properly reflect what they do.

18. Environmental Strategy Annual Report
(Jennifer Jack - JJ)

(MT) our approach is a joint strategy with TVP, when it comes to financial spend in environmental projects and activity, we will only do this when it is sensible to do so and on a financial basis, not a drain on resources. There are plenty of activities that we can do which have environmental benefits, without negative cost implications.

Therefore, our approach is to take actions that have both environmental and financial benefits.

No Actions:

19. Any Other Business 16:30 -16:35 ***(Chair, Dr Stephen Page)***

- **Item AOB. Statutory obligation update** ***(Vicki Waskett + Chris Westcott)***

Vicki Waskett (VW) – we recently held a meeting to go through our statutory obligations.
We put them all together in one spreadsheet using Power Bi – so a good tidying up exercise.
There are no outstanding concerns regarding the Statutory obligations.

The Committee would appreciate a verbal update on the Annual Governance Statement at the next meeting.

Action: Annual governance Statement verbal update at the next meeting. VW + AN (JIAC 036)

- **Annual Reports**

The Chair (SP) raised the question of whether the Committee receives the right set of annual reports, in support of the Committee's focus on risk. For example, an annual report from the Professional Standards Department would be appropriate given that its work deals with organisational risks and threats. What other business critical activities that affect risk and reputation should the Committee be receiving reports from? We request that (BS) and (GO) review the Annual reports submitted for the next meeting.

Action: Review the Annual reports submitted to the Committee to ensure that they are appropriate and cover areas of the business most affected by risk and reputational harm. MF + CWI (JIAC 037)

- **2 items JK housekeeping**

Jim Katouzian (JK) 1. gave an update on the dates and times of future meetings. 2. Reminded the attendees that any data or information which is Operationally sensitive and/or confidential (not for publication) **must be included in the Part II section of the meeting.**

The meeting concluded at 16:28
Part II – Confidential 16:28-17:00

Date of next meeting: Friday 11 September 2026 at 1300-17:00hrs to be held in the CCMT Conference Room, HQ South/MS Teams