

**JOINT
ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT
2024/2025**

**THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR GWENT**

AND

THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF GWENT POLICE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Annual Governance Statement is to explain how the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable of Gwent have complied with their joint Manual of Corporate Governance and to identify any significant governance issues facing the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and the Force.

To this end, the Annual Governance Statement is written in two parts:

- Part One describes the governance arrangements in place during 2024/25.
- Part Two reports on the review of the effectiveness and the outcomes of these arrangements.

PART 1: GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Police and Crime Commissioner (the Commissioner) and the Chief Constable are responsible for ensuring all business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money allocated to it is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively. To discharge this responsibility, they must put in place proper arrangements for governance, including arrangements for managing risk. Their legal duties and responsibilities are clearly defined within the following:

- [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#)
- The Policing Protocol Order 2023
- [Financial Management Code of Practice for the Police and Fire & Rescue Services 2018](#)

To support the delivery of their legal responsibilities, the Commissioner and the Chief Constable established a Governance Framework that includes a Code of Corporate Governance consistent with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) *Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Financial Officer of the Chief Constable*; the Home Office *Financial Management Code of Practice for the Police Service of England and Wales (2018)*; and the *CIPFA and Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) Framework for Delivering Good Governance Guidance Notes for Policing Bodies 2016* (as supplemented by CIPFA guidance in February 2021 on the 'Application of the Good Governance').

CIPFA's Financial Management Code (FM Code) provides guidance for good and sustainable financial management in local authorities (including the police); and this Statement explains how the Commissioner and the Chief Constable have complied with the FM Code and met the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK:

The Policing Protocol Order contains an expectation that the relationship between a Commissioner and Chief Constable is built on the principles of goodwill, professionalism, openness, and trust. The Manual of Corporate Governance (MOCG) and wider governance arrangements in Gwent Police set out the systems and processes, culture and values by which the Commissioner and Chief Constable manage their roles and responsibilities. It details arrangements for decision making designed to ensure an effective and constructive working relationship between the Commissioner and the Chief Constable, and it is published on the Commissioner's website. The Commissioner and the Chief Constable approve any changes to the

MOCG as part of the ongoing governance review. This is undertaken to ensure that these key documents continue to reflect and meet the needs of the organisation. The system of internal control is a significant part of the framework and whilst it cannot eliminate risk, it does seek to provide reasonable (rather than absolute) assurance of effectiveness.

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

The Policing Protocol Order requires the Commissioner and the Chief Constable to adopt and abide by the Nolan Principles for conduct in public life. These principles are reflected in the Principles of Relationship document agreed by the Commissioner and the Chief Constable; and they are also explicitly committed to providing a robust, timely and caring response to events affecting the public and communities within Gwent.

This is reflected in the Police, Crime and Justice Plan 2025 - 2029 'Improving Trust and Confidence Together' (launched 28th March 2025), with priority being given to Preventing Crime and ASB; Making our Communities Safer; Protecting the Vulnerable; Putting Victims First; and Reducing Reoffending.

Selflessness: Decisions taken solely in terms of the public interest, and not for personal financial or other gain, whether for such person, their family, or their friends.

Integrity: The Commissioner, the Chief Constable, their officers, and staff will not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that may seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, the Commissioner, the Chief Constable, their officers, and staff will make choices on merit.

Accountability: The Commissioner, the Chief Constable, their officers, and staff will be accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and will submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate.

Openness: The Commissioner, the Chief Constable, their officers and staff will be as open as possible about all decisions and action they take. Reasons for decisions will be made available and information will be restricted only when so required by the wider public interest.

Honesty: The Commissioner, the Chief Constable, their officers and staff will have a duty to declare any private interests relating to public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership: The Commissioner, the Chief Constable, their officers and staff will promote and support these principles through leadership and by example.

The MOCG is also consistent with the seven core principles of good governance set out in the International Framework for Good Governance in the Public Sector (2014): -

1. *Behave with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law.*
2. *Ensure openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.*
3. *Define outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.*
4. *Determine the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.*

5. *Develop the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.*
6. *Manage risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.*
7. *Implement good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to delivery effective accountability.*

Appendix 1 illustrates how these Standards were applied in the work of the Commissioner and Chief Constable during 2024/25.

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The governance framework aims to provide a strong focus on the drivers for policing, crime and justice within the OPCC and Force, and to ensure that there is a clear 'line of sight' between decisions taken and the Police, Crime and Justice Plan. Key elements are:

Manual of Corporate Governance: The Commissioner and the Chief Constable have a joint MOCG which includes a scheme of delegation, financial regulations, Principles of Relationship, and Standing Orders relating to Contracts. It also includes a decision-making framework which ensures that, where possible, all the Commissioner's decisions are published and available for public scrutiny.

Principles of Relationships: This document recognises the Chief Constable's operational responsibilities, within the policy and accountability framework set by the Commissioner. Notwithstanding their 'corporations sole' status, the relationship between the Commissioner and the Chief Constable is based on working together for the benefit of the people of Gwent. The Principles specify that the relationship between the Commissioner and Chief Constable will be

¹ SPB is the decision-making forum for the Commissioner and is the primary forum at which the Commissioner will hold the Chief Constable to account. In June 2025, SPB was replaced by the Accountability and Assurance Board (ABB)

built on trust, confidence, and transparency. The governance arrangements are consistent with the need to ensure accountability both between the parties and to the public. This transparent and auditable approach remained valid in 2024/25.

Governance Framework:

The development of a Board Assurance Framework (BAF) followed research across other public bodies and findings from Internal Audit reviews. The BAF considers the statutory functions of both the Commissioner and Chief Constable contained within the MOCG's Scheme of Delegation (which highlights areas of responsibilities for senior officers of both organisations and also areas from the forward work plan for both the Strategy and Performance Board (SPB)¹/Accountability Assurance Board (AAB) and Joint Audit Committee). It maps Gwent Police's governance arrangements (using the 'three lines of defence' model against six key enablers and outcomes (including the statutory functions above) to demonstrate the delivery of corporate objectives. Once mapped, the effectiveness of each level of governance for each enabler/success factor is rated and an action plan developed.

The BAF's current and future action plan continues to be monitored annually by the JAC, to provide reassurance that any material gaps and risks identified in respect of a failure to discharge statutory duties are being addressed. The action plan is also monitored on a quarterly basis at the Strategic Planning Group meetings.

A Single Point of Contact (SPOC) is also designated for both the OPCC's and the Force's actions, ensuring that the BAF is updated and

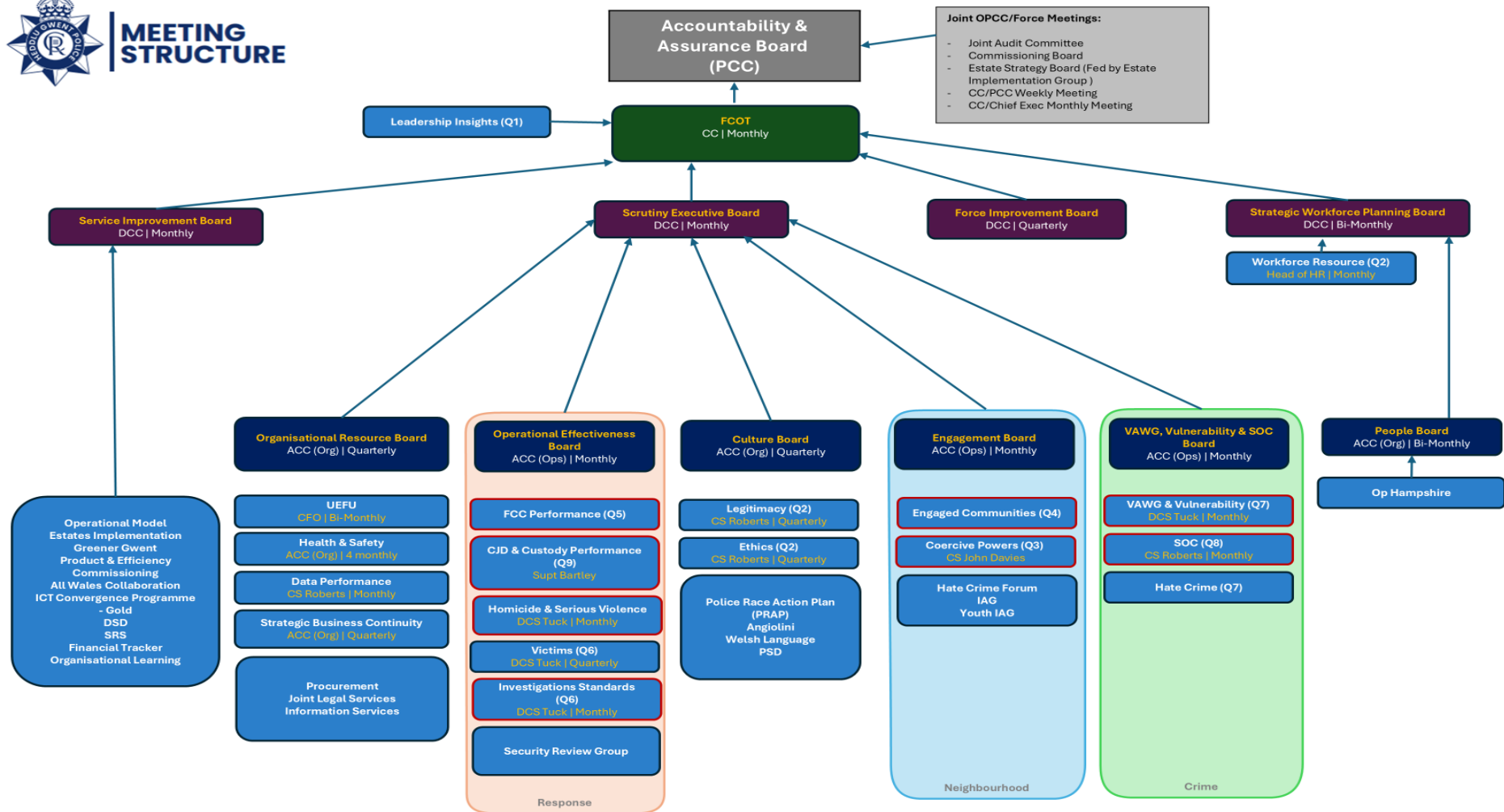
that progress is made between meetings. The overarching BAF document is reviewed every four years (with a review planned in 2025/6 to follow the May 2024 election of the new Commissioner). These reviews enable the identification of any new areas of risk.

Meeting Structure: The meeting and reporting structures for both the Chief Constable and OPCC are aligned to the delivery of the Police, Crime and Justice Plan; meeting statutory duties; and improving the capacity and capability of the respective organisations, with an aim of addressing both performance and delivery issues.

The Chief Constable's governance meeting structure in the diagram below sets out the meeting structure introduced within the Force in 2024/25. The reference to the OPCC meetings (Green box) are to those OPCC chaired meetings which directly interact with the Force's Governance arrangements.

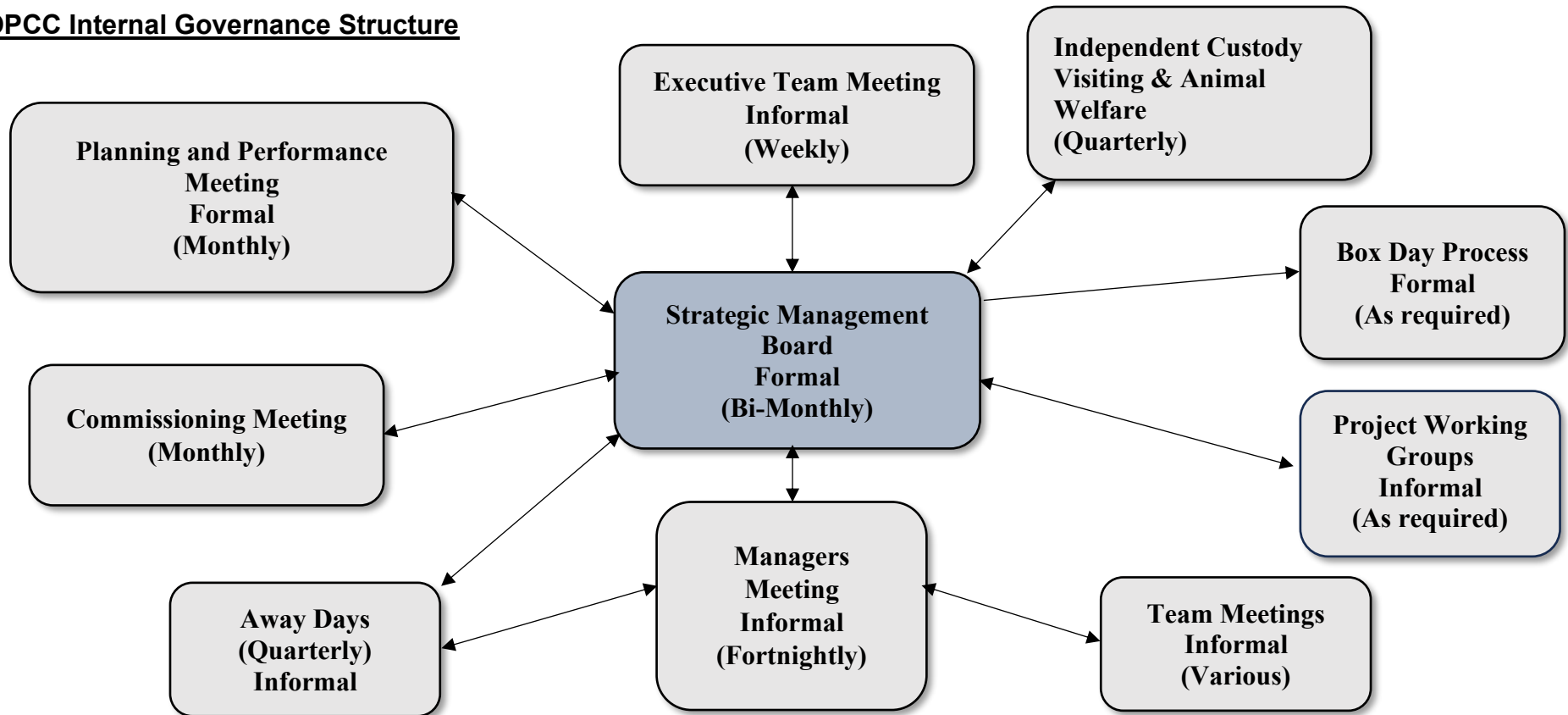
The second diagram confirms the internal meeting structure of the OPCC, which was last reviewed in 2022.

OFFICIAL SWYDDOGOL



Meetings with a red outline require performance packs from analysts.

OPCC Internal Governance Structure



PART TWO: REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS AND OUTCOMES

The Commissioner and Chief Constable have responsibility for conducting, usually annually, a review of the effectiveness of their governance framework including the system of internal control.

This review of effectiveness is informed by:

- Chief Officers and senior managers who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment;
- the Board Assurance Framework;
- the Internal Audit annual report;
- the annual report of the Joint Audit Committee;
- the view of the external auditor through the annual audit letter; and
- reports from other review inspectorates.

This Joint Annual Governance Statement [AGS] (and the work undertaken in its preparation) is itself a tool in the self-evaluation by the Commissioner and the Chief Constable of their governance arrangements. The AGS is submitted to the Commissioner's Strategic Management Board, Chief Constable's Formal Chief Officer Team Meeting and Joint Audit Committee before being approved at the Commissioner's SPB/ABB. Audit Wales also review the AGS and will report (by exception) if it does not comply with requirements.

EFFECTIVE REVIEW OF INTERNAL GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The preceding pages highlight the meeting structures of both the OPCC and Chief Constable. The following paragraphs confirm the most recent reviews of the effectiveness of the respective governance meeting arrangements.

OPCC

The Head of Assurance and Compliance within the OPCC is responsible for undertaking periodic reviews as to the effectiveness of OPCC governance. These reviews are two-fold, encompassing a review of the OPCC internal meeting governance arrangements as well as a review of how the Commissioner (and in part the OPCC) hold the Chief Constable account through meeting's governance.

The 2022 review made some recommendations with a view to maximising accountability and transparency of these arrangements, notably as regards:

Internal OPCC

- *Strategic Management Board;*
- *Planning and Performance Meeting; and*
- *Estate Strategy Board.*

OPCC

- *Commissioner and Chief Constable's 1:1s; and*
- *OPCC Executive team meeting with Force Chief Officers.*

To date, such changes have been embedded successfully with tangible improvements being seen. Peer reviews of Governance arrangements within the OPCC are conducted periodically across both Welsh and English OPCCs. Gwent's model consistently proves to be a robust and effective approach, with aspects adopted by other OPCCs.

Following the election of the new Commissioner in May 2024, a further review was commissioned into the arrangements on how the Commissioner (and OPCC in part) hold the Chief Constable to account in an open and transparent way. The refinements identified and to be implemented during 2025/26 relate to:

- An Accountability and Assurance Board to replace the Strategy and Performance Board;
- Professional Standards Scrutiny Meeting;
- Public Assurance Meetings in each of the 5 Local Authorities, where the Commissioner and Chief Constable will discuss issues impacting those communities with additional ad hoc themed meetings for issues such as PEEL Inspection outcomes; and
- Deep Dive analysis of an identified area of Gwent Police's work, based on local, regional or national sources.

The embedding and effectiveness of these new arrangements will be assessed in due course.

Chief Constable

The Governance and Assurance team are responsible for the processes that underpin the oversight of the Force, both internally and externally. They manage the structure, format, and functioning of the Force's meetings and boards to ensure that the Force is able to scrutinise and discharge matters of risk, policy, and audit properly. They are also the Force's main link to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and are responsible for ensuring the smooth discharge of the Inspectorate's function in Gwent.

The Department also has a team of Police Sergeants who assist in internal reviews and reality testing to understand Force performance and drive forward improvements. Governance and Assurance are also responsible for managing the Force Strategic Risk register, coordinating Force policies and procedures as well as the Futures Team, who are responsible for horizon scanning and adaptation of the Force to meet emerging threats, risks, and trends.

Each of the governance meetings noted above has standing agenda items relating to actions, risk management, and matters for escalation. These are considered by Chief Officers within the Force governance framework and ultimately jointly with the OPCC. The governance structure itself is reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

In addition, the Force Management Statement produced annually summarises the future demand, capacity and capability, as well as the risks and issues that could impact upon service delivery. This Statement also sets out the arrangements that monitor performance to provide the most effective and efficient service to the public, and the process to complete it adds a further layer of scrutiny to the effectiveness of Force process, procedures and arrangements.

THE ROLES OF THE VARIOUS BODIES ARE DETAILED BELOW:

Joint Audit Committee (JAC)

The independent audit committee provides assurance to enhance public trust and confidence in the governance of the Commissioner and the Chief Constable. The Financial Management Code of Practice states that such a body should consider the internal and external audit reports of both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable. The JAC also considers reports from HMICFRS; advises the Commissioner and the Chief Constable according to good governance principles; and provides:

- independent assurance to the Commissioner and the Chief Constable regarding the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment;
- independent scrutiny of the Chief Constable's and the Commissioner's financial performance; and

- oversight in relation to the financial reporting process adopted from CIPFA Audit Committees Practical Guidance (as amended in 2022).

The JAC also provides comments, advice and assurance on matters relating to the internal control environment and has specific responsibility to provide independent assurance on the arrangements for governance.

The JAC has formal terms of reference (TORs), which are set out in the MOCG and these accord with the 2022 CIPFA Guidance for audit committees of local authorities and police. The TORs were subject review in 2024/2025.

The independent JAC members assess the JAC annually against the Self-Assessment Checklist issued by CIPFA. The self-assessment exercise conducted at the end of the 2024/25 financial year highlighted the following key areas of improvement:

- JAC to further consider its role as regards collaborative projects as informed by the work of the All-Wales Collaboration Oversight Board.
- Further training to be considered by JAC in relation to the new Estate Strategy and Artificial Intelligence
- JAC to receive further briefings in relation to the force's Sustainability Strategy

These areas will be monitored by JAC in 2025/2026.

The JAC reports directly to the Commissioner and the Chief Constable who are both represented at all meetings of the JAC. The JAC is composed of five independent members and there were no new members appointed in 2024/25.

During 2024/25 a formal training day was held for JAC members in September 2024. Six formal meetings were also held in 2024/25 (one being an additional meeting relating to the signature of the 2023/24 financial accounts).

During 2024/5, 'Deep Dives' were also undertaken by JAC in relation to:

- Professional Standards (Ethics and Culture) (June 2024)
- Police Online Investigation Team (July 2024)
- Firearms Licensing and the Digital Services Division (September 2024)
- Financial Resilience/Value for Money (November 2024)
- Global Internal Audit Standards (March 2025)

The following risks were also considered in detail by JAC: Information Disclosure (June 2024), Insurance provisions (September 2024) and Culture (March 2025).

The Chair of the Committee formally reports annually to the Commissioner and Chief Constable regarding the performance of JAC during the year, with an overview of the core work delivered during the year against JAC's ToRs. The Annual Report also outlines the priorities for JAC for the forthcoming year and also provides a conclusion. The 2024/25 JAC Annual Report provided the following conclusion:

2024/25 Overall Governance Assurance Statement by the Joint Audit Committee. The JAC Annual Report for 2024/25 confirmed that based on JAC's scrutiny of information provided and its enquiries of management, it remains satisfied that the Commissioner and the Chief Constable can be assured that the control, risk and governance position for 2024/25 remained appropriate.

Independent Ethics Committee (IEC) and Internal Ethics Group (IEG):

An Independent Ethics Committee (IEC) was jointly established by the Commissioner and the Chief Constable to provide advice, support and assistance concerning ethical challenges arising from operational, administrative or organisational matters facing Gwent Police. This work was supported by an Internal Ethics Group (IEG), chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable. 2024/2025 saw work being undertaken by Gwent Police to further embed the principles from the Code of Practice for Ethical Policing and the revised new Code of Ethics, published in 2024.

Internal audit:

Until 31st March 2025, the role and standards of Internal Audit were defined in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). On 1st April 2025, the Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) superseded the PSIAS.

The GIAS encompasses the definition of Internal Auditing, a Code of Ethics and the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing. Internal auditors complete an annual programme of audits throughout the year. The plan is risk-based in compliance with the GIAS and can be changed to cover emergent risks. The plan includes key financial systems with recommendations for improvement provided to the relevant managers and the JAC. Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 makes provision in respect of the internal control system that should be maintained in accordance with proper internal audit practices. The responsibility for the maintenance of an efficient internal audit function rests with both the Commissioner and Chief Constable.

The review of corporate governance and risk management arrangements (captured in the risk registers maintained by both the Commissioner and Chief Constable) periodically feature in the annual audit plan. Corporate governance and risk management issues also arise through other reviews. Internal Audit present their reports on the adequacy of controls in the systems to the JAC, setting out any areas of concern.

The incumbent internal audit service providers for the Commissioner and Chief Constable are TIAA. In 2022, TIAA commissioned an External Quality Assessment (EQA) of its internal audit service. The independent EQA assessor was able to conclude that TIAA 'generally conforms to the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the mandatory elements of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF).' 'Generally conforms' is the highest rating that can be achieved using the IIA's EQA assessment model. Ongoing quality assurance work was carried out throughout the year and it continues to comply with ISO 9001:2015 standards.

Additionally, by virtue of the Commissioner and Chief Constable being members of the Shared Resource Services (SRS), for the delivery of Information Communication Technology (ICT) services, in collaboration with Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC), Monmouthshire County Council (MCC), Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC) and Newport City Council (NCC), from May 2016, the TCBC internal audit service was selected to undertake the audit plan for the SRS. This was to ensure that a consistent audit approach was adopted across all constituent SRS partners. Progress on the delivery of the internal audit plan for ICT services is reported to the JAC alongside the audit plan delivered by TIAA. Such assurance is provided by the TCBC internal audit function, to which the AW will refer to in considering the control framework for the ICT functions.

During 2024/25 TIAA carried out **sixteen** reviews designed to ascertain the extent to which the internal controls in the system are adequate, to ensure that activities and procedures are operating to achieve the Commissioner and Chief Constable's objectives. Additionally, two follow-up reviews were undertaken to check progress against all Priority 1 and 2 recommendations. These reports were discussed at JAC. Further details of the internal audits undertaken in 2024/25 are set out in **Appendix 3** to this Statement.

For each audit an assessment of the combined effectiveness of the controls in mitigating the key control risks was provided. Details of these are:

Assurance Assessments	Number of Reviews	Previous Year
Substantial Assurance	7	12
Reasonable Assurance	7	7
Limited Assurance	2	2
No Assurance	0	0

TIAA's Annual Audit Opinion 2024/25:

I am satisfied that, for the areas reviewed during the year, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent and the Chief Constable of Gwent Police have reasonable and effective risk management, control and governance processes in place.

For the SRS, Torfaen County Borough Council also provided an annual opinion that they were satisfied that sufficient audit work had been

undertaken to provide an overall opinion that the governance, risk management and control of the collaborative Shared Resource Services (SRS) is 'Generally satisfactory, some improvement required'.

The agreed audit plan contained **eleven** areas for review, generating 3 'substantial' and 9 'full' audit opinions.

Active Directory	Full
Application Integration Service	Full
Business Management	Full
HALO	Full
Information Security Management System	Full
Mobile Computing	Full
Software Asset Management	Full
SolarWinds	Full
IT Disposals	Substantial
IT Service Continuity Management	Substantial
Data Centre – GPA	Moderate

These resulted in the identification of 20 findings (5 high, 13 medium, and 2 low).

External Audit

The Public Audit (Wales) Act appoints the Auditor General for Wales to audit the financial statements of the Commissioner and the Chief Constable. The Act also requires the Auditor General for Wales to assess whether the Commissioner and the Chief Constable have made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

Audit Wales (AW), on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales, audit the financial statements of the Commissioner and Chief Constable, as well as the Group accounts and report (by exception) on the AGS if it does not comply with requirements. AW in their annual audit report also comment on the financial aspects of corporate governance. This includes the legality of financial transactions, financial standing, systems of internal financial control and the standards of financial conduct, fraud and corruption. Such external audit plans and reports, including the annual audit letter, are considered by JAC at appropriate times in its annual cycle of meetings.

Importantly, AW meet collectively and also individually with the four Welsh Finance teams responsible for the production of financial statements (via Post-Project Learning (PPL) sessions), to drive improvement and consistency in the production of financial statements.

Other Bodies

The Welsh Government, Home Office and a number of other bodies require financial returns to monitor expenditure on revenue and capital. Strict terms and conditions are in place to govern additional external funding received from these bodies.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

The role of HMICFRS (which has Fire & Rescue Service responsibilities for England only) is to promote the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of policing in England, Wales and Northern Ireland through inspection of police organisations and functions to ensure agreed standards are achieved and maintained; good practice is spread; and performance is improved. HMICFRS inspects the functions of the Chief Constable, not the Commissioner. It also provides advice and support to the tripartite partners (Home Secretary, Commissioners and Chief Constables). HMICFRS plays a key role in informing the Commissioner and the public on the efficiency and effectiveness of their forces and, in so doing, will facilitate the accountability of the Commissioner to the public.

HMICFRS is independent of the Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the United Kingdom and Welsh Governments. Its remit is to assess the work of police forces in different areas of business, including neighbourhood policing, serious and organised crime, anti-social behaviour and tackling major threats such as terrorism. HMICFRS actively monitors the performance of the Force in relation to their plans for ensuring the sustainability of an efficient and effective police service. Reports are published on: <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/>. HMICFRS reports are sent to the Chief Constable and the Commissioner for consideration and appropriate action. The Commissioner has a duty in law to respond to any Inspectorate report (with any response forwarded to the Home Secretary and HMICFRS). Responses should include an update on any actions the Force is/is not taking in relation to any recommendations made within the report.

Details of the Inspection work undertaken during 2024/25 are shown below.

The 2023-25 PEEL inspection of Gwent Police is complete. The final report was published in June 2025:

Outstanding	GOOD	ADEQUATE	REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT	INADEQUATE
Recording Data about crime		Police Powers and treating the public fairly and respectfully	Investigating Crime	
		Preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour, and reducing vulnerability	Protecting Vulnerable People	
		Responding to the public	Leadership and force management	
		Managing offenders and suspects		
		Building, supporting and protecting the workforce		
		Tackling workforce corruption		

The Chief Officer Team has carefully considered all of the areas for improvement identified by HMICFRS in their PEEL 2023-25 assessment.

Force leads are tasked with working towards developing a response and provide an update to Force Improvement Board, which meets on a monthly basis to monitor progress. This is overseen by the Deputy Chief Constable.

Furthermore, in August and September 2024, an inspection took place by HMICFRS and Health Inspectorate Wales to assess the effectiveness of custody services. The inspection report was published in January 2025 and made two recommendations and 12 areas for improvement. An action plan has been developed to address these, led by the Head of Criminal Justice Department.

Police and Crime Panel

The Police and Crime Panel is responsible for reviewing or scrutinising decisions or other action taken in the discharge of the Commissioner's functions. The Panel does not scrutinise the performance of the Chief Constable and the Force directly (as that is the role of the Commissioner).

The 2022 Guidance for Panels provided that 'the scrutiny focus of the Panel should be pitched at a strategic level and focused on outcomes, informed by details of performance throughout the previous year.'

The Panel is made up of twelve local Councillors, representing the local authorities in Gwent, along with two independent members.

The responsibilities and powers of the panel include:

- Making reports/recommendations re actions and decisions of the PCC;
- Scrutinising the Police and Crime Plan;
- Summoning the PCC, and their staff, for public questioning;
- Scrutinising and potentially, by two-thirds majority, vetoing the police budget and council tax precept;
- Scrutinising and potentially, by two-thirds majority, vetoing the appointment of the Chief Constable;
- Hold confirmation hearings for the Commissioner's senior staff (including the Deputy Commissioner, the Chief Executive and the CFO);
- Deal with lower-level complaints against the Commissioner.

The Panel's agendas and minutes are published on the following website:

<http://www.gwentpcp.org.uk/>

There were 5 meetings during 2024/25 – 12th July, 27th September, 13th December, 31st January 2025 and 28th March 2025

During 2024/25 the work of the Panel included consideration of the following:

- The 2023/24 OPCC Annual Report;
- Overview of PCC's achievements;
- Scrutiny of OPCC evidence for monitoring Force Performance;
- Medium Term Financial Projections and the budget setting timetable;
- Operational Context & Financial Strategy of the Chief Constable's budget bid;
- Financial Resilience Survey of Police Forces;
- Precept proposal 2025/26;
- Welsh Language Standards OPCC Annual Compliance Report 2023/24;
- Treasury Management Strategy;
- Reserves Strategy;
- Victims Support Review update;
- Presentations on Community Safety and Misconduct Changes as well as the PCC's new Police Crime and Justice Plan.
- Confirmation of appointment of DPCC on 24th May 2024 (special meeting)

CONCLUSION AND OPINION

The Commissioner and Chief Constable are responsible for ensuring that their business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, they are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of their affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of their functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

Based upon the above review of the sources and effectiveness of assurance set out in this Annual Governance Statement, the Commissioner and Chief Constable are satisfied that they have in place reasonable governance arrangements, including appropriate systems of internal control and risk management, which facilitate the effective exercise of their functions.

The Commissioner and Chief Constable propose over the coming year to ensure governance arrangements within the Police and Crime Commissioner team and the Force continue to be reviewed with a view to ensuring continuing compliance with the provisions of updated legislation and guidance.

.....
Police and Crime Commissioner

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Chief Constable

.....
Chief Finance Officer (Commissioner)

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Chief Finance Officer (CC)

.....
Chief Executive

APPENDIX 1

SEVEN CORE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

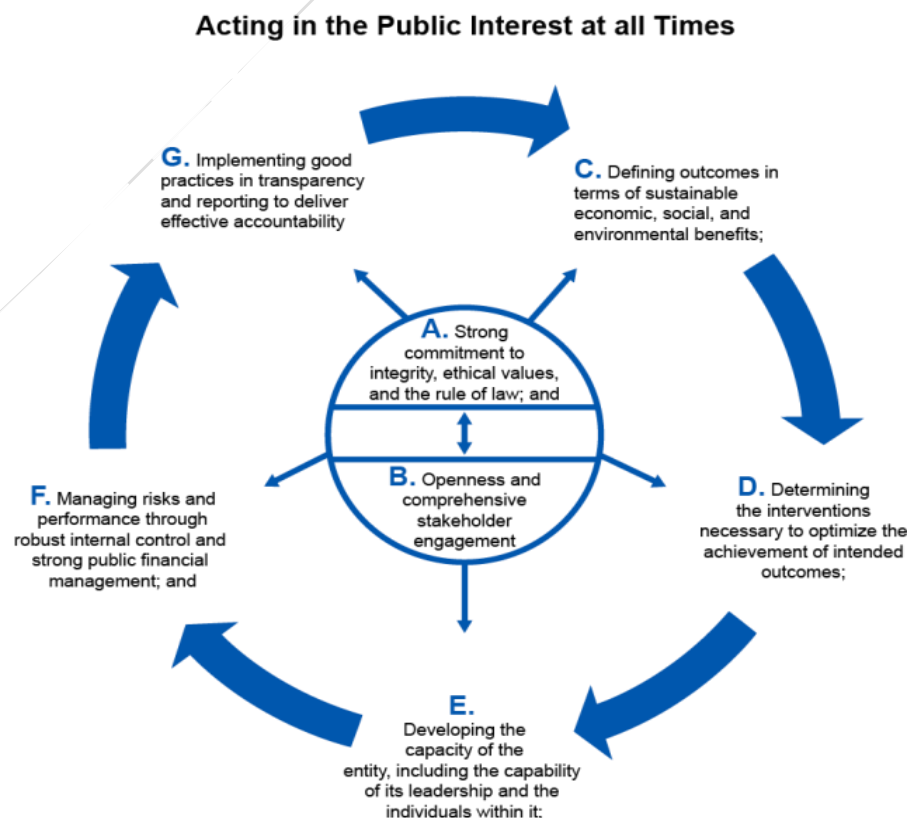
The diagram opposite shows the relationship between the seven core principles of good governance. The central two principles underpin the whole framework and relate to 'acting in the public interest'. These two principles are implicit in the remaining five which concern 'achieving good governance'.

An annual assessment of effectiveness is undertaken by both Chief Finance Officers considering a range of evidence: internal and externally published material, professional independent opinion, views of senior management, feedback from the Police and Crime Panel and views of professional leads. The Chief Finance Officers have also used the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (addendum covering the annual review of governance and the annual governance statement)' in their deliberations. A summary of the 2024/25 assessment is as follows:

Good Governance Category		Assurance
Acting in the Public Interest	Behaving with Integrity and Ethics	Reasonable
	Openness and Engagement	Reasonable
Achieving Good Governance	Sustainable Outcomes	Reasonable
	Determine Interventions	Reasonable
	Capacity and Leadership	Reasonable
	Risks and Performance	Reasonable
	Transparency & Accountability	Reasonable

Assurance Definitions	
Substantial	All areas reviewed were found to have effective corporate processes and external requirements in place. Behaviours and outcomes were well evidenced and risks against achieving the objectives were well managed.
Reasonable	Most areas reviewed were found to have effective corporate processes and external requirements in place. Most behaviours and outcomes were well evidenced and, in general, risks against achieving the objectives were well managed.
Partial	A number of areas were found not to have effective corporate processes and external requirements in place. Some behaviours and outcomes were

	well evidenced but key risks against achieving the objectives were not well managed.
None	A significant number of areas reviewed were found not to have effective corporate processes and external requirements in place. Behaviours and outcomes were not well evidenced and risks against achieving the objectives were not well managed.



There were no significant weaknesses identified for 2024/25 (as was the case for the previous year) and no further actions were identified. All actions previously identified are detailed in the table below:

Category	Risk Area	Actions to be delivered 2025/26 and beyond
Risks and Performance: Data Breaches	The force received a limited assurance internal audit report in relation to information management in March 2024. It was noted that there were concerns regarding the resources available. This issue was accordingly added to the Force risk register. During 2024/25 work progressed and JAC noted in their annual report that compliance in this area had improved significantly and the risk had been reduced to low. During 2024/25, the OPCC experienced no data breaches JAC concluded that there is no requirement for them to continue to specifically monitor this area of work in 2025/26. .	Officers and staff will continue to be reminded of the importance of security of data and the wider requirements and implications of the Data Protection Act¹⁸ and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR). There are mandatory National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) packages, the completion of which is monitored and promoted through the Information Assurance Board, including Management of Police Information and Data Protection Foundation (including assessment). Details of breaches, impact, mitigation and outcome are recorded and kept by the Record Review Officer (OPCC) and Data Protection Officer (Force) in line with Management of Police Information (MOPI) and Data Protection legislation. Appropriate advice and recommendations are given to individuals or departments where applicable and escalated to the Information Assurance Board and Professional Standards Department if necessary. The Data Incident report is monitored through the Information Assurance Board that details all data incidents reported to the Information Governance department per quarter. A data incident is recorded when reported in force and prior to investigation as to whether an actual personal data breach has occurred and an assessment of the severity of that breach.

Key Governance Principles

Behaving with Integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law

- A new Code of Ethics was introduced in 2024 together with a Code of Practice for Ethical Policing. These revised documents outline the professional behaviours required of officers, staff and volunteers in policing. The Code of Ethics and Code of Practice are embedded through the work of the Ethics Committee
- The chief officer team create a climate of ethical behaviour, leading by example and encourage others to challenge unprofessional behaviour. Officers and staff are aware of the boundaries of professional behaviour, and more serious unprofessional behaviour is investigated by the professional standards department.
- *HMICFRS previously noted in its PEEL inspection that:*

"Gwent Police is investing in the development and diversity of its leaders. It equips its personnel to uphold high standards of behaviour and fair treatment. Reassuringly, feedback from the workforce indicates that the force has created an ethical working environment where supervisors challenge discriminatory behaviour."

- The Police (Conduct) (Amendment) Regulations came into force during 2024/25 (7th May 2024)
- These legislative changes necessitated changes in internal force policies and practices as well as engagement with external stakeholders. The primary amendment being the composition of misconduct panels - giving responsibility for chairing proceedings for non-senior officers to chief officers (removing Legally Qualified Chairs) and the appointed of Legally Qualified Advisors.

- The force use a variety of media channels to raise awareness of integrity issues for staff.
- The central register of gifts and hospitality is well used and includes details of offers made to staff that are declined.
- The Force's business interest policy has been reviewed and is clear with requests being well documented.
- It is ensured that related parties' disclosure is made in the Statement of Accounts.
- There are confidential mechanisms and a clear policy to support staff reporting wrongdoing with officers and staff encouraged to be 'upstanders'.
- Ethics, behaving with integrity and conduct issues continue to be given prominence by the force (including the work undertaken following the presentation given by Dame Louise Casey to Team Gwent in January 2024).

Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

- The force and OPCC websites are updated to provide access to strategic information including key corporate documents.
- Widespread use is made of social media and of 'Neighbourhood Matters' (a neighbourhood alert system).

- The Police and Crime Commissioner consulted extensively with key stakeholders in relation to her first Police Crime and Justice Plan (which was published in March 2025)
- Regular meetings are held with the Leaders and Chief Executives of the force's local authorities as well as frequent meetings with other key partners, including the Welsh Government.
- The five key priorities in the Police, Crime and Justice Plan ensure bespoke engagement plans are in place for each local authority area and local teams will help facilitate this work.
- Dedicated Design Out Crime Officers (DOCs) provide a dual role, offering tactical advice on security as well as providing expertise in Secure by Design standards, influencing a variety of partners such as local authority planning departments, social landlords and developers. This in turn results in well-designed communities that deter and reduce crime.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner provides a Positive Impact Fund which is available for officers to fund proactive community-based initiatives that support localised problem-solving and help build community confidence and trust.

- In compliance with the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Orders (and guidance provided by the Information Commissioner) information has been made publicly available through the force and Commissioner's websites over the course of the last year.
- The Commissioner's decisions, which are of significant public interest, are publicised on her website (unless there are specific reasons why a decision should be exempt).
- Survey work undertaken in 2024/25 included consultation in relation to the precept in which the Commissioner sought views both on the proposed level of increase and how this should be spent.
- Neighbourhood ward managers and community support officers remain an important visible frontline presence in local communities.

- The HMICFRS PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency, and legitimacy) assessments provide assurance on how the force has performed in several important areas.
- HMICFRS recommendations are designed to improve service delivery.
- The details of HMICFRS reports and their recommendations are detailed in this Annual Governance Statement

Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement on intended outcomes.

Defining outcomes in terms of the sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits

The Commissioning Framework and Procurement Strategy consider the wider social elements and provide commitment to social value. Gwent Police signed up to the Welsh Government Code of Practice on ethical supply chains. Social Value is now built into the Commissioning Framework and Tender evaluation scoring. The force and OPCC published a refreshed Modern Slavery Statement in 2023/24. Gwent Police continues to raise awareness of modern slavery issues across its supply chain and in December 2024, it achieved its target to assess the top 100 suppliers. Plans are to continue to progress this activity in 2025/26. The Police, Crime and Justice Plan 2025 - 2029 has 'Sustainability' as one of its key foundations. Sustainability will remain a key strand of work for Estate and fleet management which has seen an increase in electric vehicles and charging facilities and the development of facilities with minimal environmental impact. Gwent Police continues to contribute to the commitments in the UK Climate Change Act 2008, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the 2022 WG Net Zero Plan.

Gwent Police recognise the need to build a more focused organisational approach to reducing environmental impacts. By way of example, Abergavenny Police Station is carbon neutral. Short/medium term plans include a Sustainability Strategy that seeks to achieve key targets by 2030. This will contribute to an All-Wales Policing Sustainability Strategy

The Force has adopted a 'Greener Gwent' agenda to drive forward environmentally friendly approaches that also deliver cost savings (including the achievement of the target to send zero waste to landfill, solar energy approach and use of electric vehicles for pool cars).

- The Commissioner and Chief Constable continue to be part of the strategic attendance at Public Services Boards and work with Regional Partnership Boards on the development and delivery of sustainable public services that make our communities safer and improve our well-being.
- **2024/25** saw the force further roll-out the national 'Right Care Right Person' approach aimed at ensuring that the public are directed to the public body most suitable to meeting their needs, and Gwent Police continues to work with public sector partners in relation to the same. This work will continue in 2025/26

The Force Management Statement contains an assessment of demand and the resources/capacity required to meet the same. Leadership and management roles have clearly defined responsibilities, with the College of Policing publishing national Authorised Professional Practices by way of reference. The Commissioner and Chief Constable demonstrate leadership in developing partnership working at both a local and All-Wales level, and this is expected to develop further in 2025/26. In terms of capacity, the Uplift and Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (NPG) programme enabled the force to increase the Gwent establishment. The force has a leadership development programme in place for frontline supervisors – both officers and staff. The programme covers topics such as performance management, decision making and the supervisor's role in the use of key IT systems.

PERFORM enables the setting of corporate, team and personal targets and the identification of training opportunities. During 2025/26 the force will further embed the PERFORM system to ensure the professional development of staff, supporting the HMICFRS recommendations in terms of using such process effectively to identify leadership potential. During 2024/25 the force embedded the new safety training for officers (PPST – public and personal safety training programme). The 'Talent manager' will continue to work with the People Services team to ensure Gwent Police have the necessary data to inform the Strategic Workforce Planning meeting. They are also responsible for PERFORM use/compliance.

Developing the entity's capacity including the capability of the leadership and the individuals within it

Managing risk and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

- Risk is a standing agenda item on strategic meetings within the Force and all decision-making meetings of the Commissioner. The risk management framework adopted establishes how risk is embedded throughout the various elements of corporate governance of the corporation(s) sole.
- Chief Officers and members of the Commissioner's Executive Group continue to own and manage the issues relevant to their remit and ensure that risks are formally captured and reviewed.
- The Chief Finance Officers for the Commissioner and for the Chief Constable advise their respective corporation sole on the safeguarding of assets, risk management and insurance.

Part of the approach to risk management involves the purchasing of insurance cover to protect assets and liabilities where it is either required or cost effective to do so.

The organisation is proactive in self-insuring some elements of the overall insurance package.

A new joint insurance tender exercise was undertaken in 2024. The provisions of the same will be kept under review in 2025/26.

- The Commissioner provides the Police and Crime Panel with any information which it may reasonably require (in compliance with section 13 of the 2011 Act), and seeks to keep them informed of significant developments.
- The Commissioner produces an annual report in accordance with section 12 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
- Whilst the Panel do not scrutinise the performance of the Chief Constable or those responsible to him as this is the responsibility of the Commissioner, both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable seek to ensure that Panel Members are well informed on operational issues.

The force and OPCC have fraud and counter corruption policies and mechanisms in place with arrangements being monitored throughout the year. Internal audit also provides independent objective scrutiny providing assurance on the controls in place to prevent error, fraud, or corruption.

The Chief Constable and Commissioner provide adequate resources and open access to information required by the auditors.

The Joint Audit Committee is a key component of the force's corporate governance providing assurance on the adequacy of internal controls, risk management and financial arrangements.

Any business interests are disclosed and maintained in a Register (which is accessible to the public).

Chief Officer pay, expenses and hospitality are posted on the force's website.

Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

A Register is maintained of the Police and Crime Commissioner's disclosable interests in accordance with Schedule 1, Paragraph 1(e) of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011 (as amended).

The emerging issues identified as impacting within the next four years include:

Financial vulnerability of officers and staff

Increased social media usage with the risks associated therewith.

NB: A 'engagement prevent' officer role has been developed to allow capability for early intervention strategies re counter corruption and police misconduct. This individual will give briefings to management, Learning and Development, HR as well as partner and third sector agencies.

APPENDIX 2

CIPFA FM CODE - ANNUAL ASSESSMENT/ACTION PLANS:

The expectation of the CIPFA Financial Management Code (FM Code) is that relevant public bodies will have to comply with all the financial management standards if they are to demonstrate compliance with the FM Code. It is important to note however, that whilst compliance with the CIPFA financial management standards is obligatory, the FM Code is not prescriptive about how this is achieved. CIPFA recognises that policing has in some respects different practices to other public bodies such as local authorities.

The six principles of the FM Code are: Organisational Leadership, Accountability, Transparency, Professional Standards, Assurance and Long-Term Sustainability (and these are translated into 17 financial management standards across seven sections of the FM Code – see below).

The 2024/25 assessment for the Commissioner and Chief Constable against the FM Code's financial management standards (and any actions identified) is detailed in this Appendix 2 below. Please note that throughout the assessment 'Force' is used to represent both Corporate Soles for ease of reference.

Assurance Definitions	
Substantial	All areas reviewed of the organisation's financial management arrangements were found to comply with the FM Code.
Reasonable	Most areas reviewed of the organisation's financial management arrangements were found to comply with the FM Code.
Partial	Most areas reviewed of the organisation's financial management arrangements were found not to comply with the FM Code.
None	All areas reviewed of the organisation's financial management arrangements were found not to comply with the FM Code.

Question		Answer	Assurance	Areas for improvement
Section 1 - The Responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer and Leadership Team				
A	The leadership team is able to demonstrate that the services provided by the Force provide value for money			
1	Does the Force have a clear and consistent understanding of what value for money means to it and to its leadership team?	There is clear reference to VFM in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan and the Procurement Strategy. Audit Wales consider annually the arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness to underpin their value for money conclusion.	Substantial	Substantial
2	Does the Force have suitable mechanisms in place to promote value for money at a corporate level and at the level of individual services?	VFM is embedded in all procurement documentation and all procurement staff understand the need to demonstrate VFM through tenders and contracts. A Benefit Realisation Co-ordinator post sits within the Force's Business Change Department.		

3		A corporate framework of management procedures and rules for securing value for money is incorporated in the PCC/Force 'Joint Corporate Governance Framework' and 'Financial Regulations'. The Chief Constable chairs a monthly Formal COT meeting where issues from the Force governance meetings are escalated. The Commissioner also chairs a quarterly Accountability & Assurance Board which considers organisational and financial performance at each meeting. The approach to savings and change adopted by the Force is evidenced by the savings delivery record in place since 2010. The on-going need to make savings will remain and the Force is well placed to deliver these albeit that it is important that the Force maintains its focus on efficiency and productivity. The Medium-Term Financial Plan sets out Gwent Police's comparative performance with its most similar family of forces and exemplifies the relative Value for Money through crime prevention and experience. Procurement savings are reported to Blue Light Commercial on a quarterly basis. Contract management is undertaken by service stakeholders, with strategic oversight from the Procurement department.	Substantial
B		The Force complies with the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Local Government as applicable to Policing	
1		Is the CFO a key member of the leadership team, involved in, and able to bring influence to bear on, all material business decisions? Both CFOs (Force and PCC) are members of their respective leadership teams and report directly to the Assistant Chief Constable and Commissioner respectively. In respect of the Chief Constable's CFO, although this reporting line is not consistent with CIPFA's (revised 2021) document 'The Role of the CFO in Policing.', this alternative arrangement is acknowledged. The Chief Constable's CFO is also S151 Officer with a reporting line to the Chief Constable.	Substantial
2		Does the CFO lead and champion the promotion and delivery of good financial management across the Force? Yes, both CFOs champion and lead the promotion and delivery of good financial management in the Force and PCC.	Substantial
3		Is the CFO suitably qualified and experienced? Yes, both CFOs are suitably qualified and experienced.	Substantial
4		Is the finance team suitably resourced and fit for purpose? Yes. Ideally more resources would be beneficial, but the Force finance team is properly resourced in terms of capacity and capability, and the annual	Substantial

internal and external audit opinions over many years demonstrate that the finance team performs to a high standard.

Section 2 - Governance and Financial Management Style

C The leadership team demonstrates in its actions and behavior responsibility for governance and internal control

1	Does the leadership team espouse the Nolan principles?	The Manual of Corporate Governance explicitly sets out the commitment of the leadership teams for both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable to abide by the seven principles set out in the Standards of Public Life (known as the Nolan Principles) as later extended by the Code of Ethics. Yes, the code of ethics is a key feature for all police officers and staff and is promoted during induction training and courses. Regular online training is also provided and followed up to ensure compliance. The Commissioner and Chief Constable have established a joint Ethics Committee and are represented on both. All Force policies and procedures embed the key principles from the Code of Ethics.	Substantial
2	Does the Force have in place a clear framework for governance and internal control?]	Yes, the PCC and Chief Constable review and update their joint Manual of Corporate Governance on a regular basis. The most recent review took place in 2024. The Annual Governance Statement clearly documents the arrangements, and these are evidenced as part of this process of review.	Substantial
3	Has the leadership put in place effective arrangements for assurance, internal audit and internal accountability?	The Joint Audit Committee (JAC) considers both the annual internal audit plan and all internal audit reports and management actions. The shaping of the internal audit plan also seeks to give assurance of key internal controls. Internal Audit also provides reports to each JAC as well as providing an annual audit opinion (as set out in this Annual Governance Statement). Good behaviour and accountability are discussed during all staff and officer performance reviews annually (performance development process) There is a whistleblowing policy which is managed, and reports of any breaches investigated by the Professional Standards Department (PSD) The PCC and Chief Constable have jointly procured through an open tender process and externally provided internal audit service that reports to both CFOs. This Internal Audit service attends and provides regular reports to each meeting of the JAC. There is a Force policy on gifts and hospitality, which is managed and promoted by PSD, and which also applies to the Commissioner's Team.	Substantial

4	Does the leadership team espouse high standards of governance and internal control?	Please see the response to C2 above. Much work has been undertaken over recent years to fundamentally review and strengthen the joint governance arrangements (as evidenced in this AGS for 2024/25) and such arrangements continue to evolve to ensure that they are fit for purpose and meet organisational needs. The Manual of Corporate Governance sets out clear responsibilities for decision making. All key PCC decisions of significant public interest are published on his website including full supporting documentation. Code of Conduct & business interests – see C1 and C3 above.	Substantial
5	Does the leadership team nurture a culture of effective governance and robust internal control across the Force?	The Manual of Corporate Governance includes Financial Regulations. These are regularly reviewed and updated.	Substantial
D The Force applies the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)			
1	Has the Force sought to apply the principles, behaviour and actions set out in the Framework to its own governance arrangements?	Yes, as evidenced through the Annual Governance Statement.	Substantial
2	Does the Force have in place a suitable local code of governance?	Yes, the PCC and Chief Constable publish a joint Manual of Corporate Governance, which sets out local governance arrangements, including a scheme of consent and delegation, financial regulations, principles of relationship and standing orders relating to contracts. This is updated regularly and reviewed by JAC.	Substantial
3	Does the Force have a robust assurance process to support its AGS?	The AGS is prepared in conjunction with both CFOs, the Head of Finance, the Commissioner's Head of Assurance and Compliance and relevant stakeholders. A draft version of the AGS is provided to the Commissioner's Strategic Management Board (SMB), Chief Officer Team meeting, Audit Wales and presented to JAC before publication for comments.	Substantial
E The Financial Management Style of the Force supports financial sustainability			
1	Does the Force have in place an effective framework of financial accountability?	Yes, through the Manual of Corporate Governance, including Financial Regulations and contract regulations.	Substantial
2	Is the Force committed to continuous improvement in terms of the economy, efficiency,	The Force maintains a record of specific efficiency and effectiveness reviews and has a Productivity and Efficiency Meeting to capture efficiencies and benefits. Please see the previous responses in Section A above.	Substantial

	effectiveness and equity of its services?		
3	Does the Force finance team have appropriate input into the development of strategic and operational plans?	The Chief Constable's CFO is a member of the Chief Officer Team and integral to the development of all strategic plans. The Head of Finance inputs at a tactical level, and Finance Business Partners are engaged at an operational level. The Commissioner's CFO is a member of the PCC's senior Executive Team and sits on a number of strategic boards to provide appropriate input, challenge and scrutiny. Senior finance representatives sit on all key decision making and informative boards.	Substantial
4	Do managers across the Force possess sufficient financial literacy to deliver services cost effectively and to be held accountable for doing so?	The Finance Department has specific finance business partners for each area of business, which strengthens the link between business and finance. The Business Partnering approach is well developed with presentations to SMT on medium term finances and the new business planning cycle as well as CFO and Head of Finance participation on the Productivity and Efficiency Meeting.	Substantial
5	Has the Force sought an external view on its financial style, for example through a process of peer review?	The Force continues to subscribe to the CIPFA Achieving Financial Excellence in Policing programme which includes a peer review of Financial Management.	Substantial
6	Do individuals with governance and financial management responsibilities have suitable delegated powers and appropriate skills and training to fulfil these responsibilities?	Yes, as set out in the Manual of Corporate Governance including the Financial Regulations therein.	Substantial

Section 3 - Long to Medium Term Financial Management

F The Force has carried out a credible and transparent Financial Resilience Assessment

1	Has the Force undertaken a Financial Resilience Assessment?	The Medium-Term Financial Plan is a comprehensive assessment of the financial resilience and the resource requirements, it has proven its worth by informing funding and savings decisions, it is underpinned by the Force Management Statement, the Estate strategy, 5-year procurement and fleet strategies as well a digital services and ICT strategy. The forward projections are based on sound evidence and professional judgement on the national economic assessment. There is firm commitment to the prudential code and an effective Reserves and Committed Funds Strategy.	Reasonable	The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) along with Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) have jointly sponsored a financial survey of forces, in order to understand the financial resilience across
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The Chief Financial Officers are adequately represented on National Forums to better anticipate demand and resource implications.

forces and for UK policing as a whole. In addition, CIPFA has also developed a financial resilience dashboard. These two sources of information, whilst complementary and highly refined, are still relatively early in their utilisation and understanding by forces. As both sources become embedded and developed, a more refined picture of individual and holistic financial resilience will emerge.

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| 2 | Has the Assessment tested the resilience of the Force's financial plans to a broad range of alternative scenarios? | As above. |
| 3 | Has the Force taken appropriate action to address any risks identified as part of the assessment | As above. |

Reasonable

Reasonable

G The Force understands its prospects for financial sustainability in the longer term and has reported this clearly to Members

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|---|---|--|
| 1 | Does the Force have a sufficiently robust understanding of the risks to its financial sustainability? | The key risks are highlighted in the MTFP and annual budget and there are risk registers maintained by the Force to manage organisational and strategic risk. |
| 2 | Does the Force have a strategic plan and long-term financial strategy that address adequately these risks? | Yes, the MTFP is reviewed and updated annually. This also links to the annual work undertaken in terms of the Force Management Statement. We also publish a separate report on Reserves and Committed Funds. |
| 3 | Has the Force sought to understand the impact on its future financial sustainability of the strategic, operational and financial challenges that it might | Scenario planning is used internally to formulate the medium-term financial plans.
Published budget reports include a risk assessment which highlights the financial risk to key budget assumptions e.g., changes in future pay awards, precept levels etc. |

Substantial

Substantial

Substantial

	face (e.g., using a technique such as scenario planning)?	The risk assessment priorities detailed in the Force Management Statement are reflected within the MTFP. The MTFP fully documents the key budgetary assumptions in terms of future pay awards, inflationary increases, changes in grant funding and potential precept levels etc.	
4	Has the Force reported effectively to the leadership team and to members its prospects for long-term financial sustainability, the associated risks and the impact of these for short- and medium-term decision making?	Regular reports to the respective Leadership Teams, the Commissioner's Accountability & Assurance Board and the Police & Crime Panel during the budget preparation process highlight the various risks and possible scenarios. During the year revenue and capital monitoring reports are prepared and exception items reported upwards to the Commissioner's Accountability & Assurance Board, highlighting changes in significant risks and issues, and suggesting appropriate action. There is regular discussion of financial considerations and risks at key strategic and executive boards, and these are reported and escalated accordingly.	Substantial
H	The Force complies with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities		
1	Has the Force prepared a suitable capital strategy?	The current overall Capital Strategy until 2029/30 was endorsed by JAC and approved by the Commissioner in March 2025. The respective Capital Programme for 2025/26 was approved as part of the Budget and Precept deliberations by the Police & Crime Panel on 31 st January 2025.	Substantial
2	Has the Force set prudential indicators in line with the Prudential Code?	Yes, these are included in the Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Capital Strategy; both of which have been endorsed by JAC and approved by the Commissioner for 2025/26.	Substantial
3	Does the Force have in place suitable mechanisms for monitoring its performance against the prudential indicators that it has set?	Yes, these are monitored by the by JAC and approved by the Commissioner twice a year.	Substantial
I	The Force has a rolling multi-year Medium Term Financial Plan consistent with sustainable service plans		
1	Does the Force have in place an agreed medium-term financial plan?	Yes, we published our MTFP in February 2025 and this covers the period 2025/26 to 2029/30, alongside the annual revenue budget for 2025/26.	Substantial
2	Is the medium-term financial plan consistent with and integrated	Yes. Considerable work is undertaken to align the MTFP to such plans.	Substantial

	into relevant service plans and its capital strategy?		
3	Has the medium-term financial plan been prepared on the basis of a robust assessment of relevant drivers of cost and demand?	The MTFP has been prepared to reflect the current review of demand undertaken by the Force alongside the prioritised risks identified as part of the FMS. The MTFP includes both capital and revenue implications of transformation and technological programmes and projects together with a range of local, regional and national initiatives. COT and the Commissioner's Accountability & Assurance Board (as appropriate) also consider information on current and future operational demand pressures (as currently known) including the implications for new technology and equipment. The Force also considers relevant NPCC guidance and best practice e.g., stop & search, body worn video. Across the Chief Constable's Leadership Team, members are engaged in national forums which enables the potential financial implications of new national systems and changes to national guidelines and procedures to be identified early.	Substantial
4	Has the medium-term financial plan been tested for resilience against realistic potential variations in key drivers of cost and demand?	Yes, changing contractual and service delivery requirements are all factored into the MTFP as are inflationary assumptions.	Substantial
5	Does the Force have in place a suitable asset management plan that seeks to ensure that its property, plant and equipment including infrastructure assets contribute effectively to the delivery of services and to the achievement of the Force's strategic aims?	Yes, the Asset Management Strategy is reviewed regularly and updated accordingly.	Substantial

Section 4 - The Annual Budget

J The Force complies with its statutory obligations in respect of the budget setting process

1 Is the Force aware of its statutory obligations in respect of the budget-setting process? Yes, the budget setting process is well embedded in the governance of the Force with formal budget reports presented to the Chief Constable's COT meeting, the Commissioner's Strategic Management Board and Commissioner's Assurance & Accountability Board, Joint Audit Committee and then to the Police and Crime Panel.

Substantial

2 Has the Force set a balanced budget for the current year? Yes, as endorsed by the Police and Crime Panel and approved by the Commissioner.

Substantial

3 Is the Force aware of the circumstances under which it should issue a Section 114 notice and how it would go about doing so? Yes, both CFOs are fully aware of the s114 requirements.

Substantial

K The budget report includes a statement by the Chief Finance Officer on the robustness of the estimates and a statement of the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves

1 Does the Force's most recent budget report include a statement by the CFO on the robustness of the estimates and a statement of the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves? Yes.

Substantial

2 Does this report accurately identify and consider the most significant estimates used to prepare the budget, the potential for these estimates being incorrect and the impact should this be the case? Given that pay related costs accounts for 75% of the net budget, pay award assumptions, inflation assumptions and grant income are the most significant elements of variability within the budget. The zero-based budgeting processes and year-on-year refinement on variances ensures effective budget assumptions. The grant and precept income assumptions are necessarily cautious and assumptions on pay, and prices are benchmarked nationally. This has ensured a highly accurate budget to actual out-turn year on year.

Substantial

3 Does the Force have sufficient reserves to ensure its financial sustainability for the foreseeable future? Yes, a separate report on the Reserves and Committed Funds Strategy, including balances and provisions is produced to accompany the annual MTFP.

Substantial

4 Does the report set out the current level of the Force's reserves, whether these are sufficient to ensure the Force's Yes, the report provides a forecast for the next 5 years which is fully compatible with the MTFP.

Substantial

ongoing financial sustainability and the action that the Force is to take to address any shortfall?

Section 5 - Stakeholder Engagement and Business Plans

L The Force has engaged where appropriate with key stakeholders in developing its long-term financial strategy, medium term financial plan and annual budget

1	How has the Force sought to engage with key stakeholders in developing its long-term financial strategy, its medium-term financial plan and its annual budget?	The PCC undertakes public consultation on the overall Police. Crime and Justice plan 2020-2029 and the proposed council tax precept increase as and when required. The PCC's annual budget and precept proposals are subject to scrutiny by the independent Police and Crime Panel, on behalf of the public, the Councillor members of which represent all local authorities across the Gwent area.	Substantial
2	How effective has this engagement been?	In recent years the PCC has consulted the public regarding the proposed increase in council tax precept, amongst a number of other issues including the Police Crime and Justice Plan 2025-2029 and Estate Strategy. The Police and Crime Panel has approved the PCCs proposed increase in council tax precept on the vast majority of occasions since the inception of Police and Crime Commissioners.	Substantial
3	What action does the Force plan to take to improve its engagement with key stakeholders?	Both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable actively undertake a range of engagement activities both separately and collectively. Social media platforms are actively used to extend engagement opportunities. There are comprehensive structures of partnership/ collaboration/ national meetings with an array of key stakeholders at the same.	Substantial

M The Force uses an appropriate documented option appraisal methodology to demonstrate the value for money of its decisions

1	Does the Force have a documented option appraisal methodology that is consistent with the guidance set out in IFAC/PAIB publication 'Project and Investment Appraisal for Sustainable Value Creation: Principles in Project and Investment Appraisal'?	Arrangements for assessing significant programmes are well developed with projects being managed using Prince2, UK Government Green Book and other relevant guidance and processes. Large Change Programmes are supported by a documented assessment of impact, with regular reporting during the project and post implementation reviews reporting to governance boards, including Chief Constable's COT and the Commissioner's Assurance & Accountability Board (as appropriate). Business Cases are scrutinised by the Productivity and Efficiency Meeting/Service Improvement Board (SIB) and compared against other business cases prior to approval, so that only those making the best use of scarce resources are approved for inclusion in the annual budget. The Benefits approach is outlined in Project Initiation Documents and this follows through to the development of benefits strategy templates which are	Substantial
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		included in Business Cases. At this stage, benefits are baselined by the Benefits Co-ordinator then during implementation data is captured on benefits performance, which leads to the Post Implementation Review process. The Benefits Co-ordinator keeps a central repository of programme benefits. The Head of Change Management also supports the Finance Department in the identification and progression of financial benefits, which are recorded within the Force's savings tracker. The degree of option appraisal undertaken reflects the level of investment required and the identified risks with the proposal/project. The level of option appraisal used for Estate and ICT schemes are different and reflect the number of realistic options available. Most significant technology schemes are led nationally either by the Policing Service or Home Office, and the Force is not directly involved in the development and implementation of those schemes e.g., Emergency Services Network, National Monitoring Centre, etc.	
2	Does the Force offer guidance to officers as to when an option appraisal should be undertaken?	Relevant staff within Service Improvement, Finance, Procurement, ICT and Estate understand the need to produce an appropriate level of option appraisal to support new growth bids. All new bids include some consideration of options.	Substantial
3	Does the Force's approach to option appraisal include appropriate techniques for the qualitative and quantitative assessment of options?	Where appropriate, qualitative and quantitative measures are included.	Substantial
4	Does the Force's approach to option appraisal include suitable mechanisms to address risk and uncertainty?	Risks are considered and there are more formal mechanisms in some cases i.e., depending on the value of the investment required and the associated risk e.g., selection of a new supplier and operational delivery for technology infrastructure.	Substantial
5	Does the Force report the results of option appraisals in a clear, robust and informative manner that gives clear recommendations and outlines the risk associated with any preferred option(s)?	Yes, when relevant e.g., selection of new mobile phones - the options are presented as part of the assessment process.	Substantial

Section 6 -Monitoring Financial Performance

N The leadership team takes action using reports enabling it to identify and correct emerging risks to its budget strategy and financial sustainability

1	Does the Force provide the leadership team with an appropriate suite of reports that allows it to identify and to correct emerging risks to its budget strategy and financial sustainability?	There is regular reporting that contains financial information and narrative on both revenue and capital as well as emerging risks and issues. These are considered widely within the governance structure e.g., Chief Constable's COT meetings are provided with financial reports which highlight emerging risk and issues, and these are acted upon as necessary. Financial reports are also provided to individual budget holders who also have regular engagement with their Finance Business partners.	Substantial	Changes to the Force operating model mean the wider reporting requirements of senior officers and staff on performance, people, and finance are being adapted across the Force. Specifically, in relation to finance, work continues to develop internal Force reporting on finance and overtime figures, including the Qlikview platform for accessing the data. Finance reports on the in-year financial position to governance boards and chief officers remain fit for purpose however.
2	Do the reports cover both forward- and backward-looking information in respect of financial and operational performance?	Yes.	Substantial	
3	Are there mechanisms in place to report the performance of the Force's significant delivery partnerships such as contract monitoring data?	The CFO (PCC) as portfolio lead for Commissioned Services, ensures robust contract and grant management is undertaken through receiving regular performance reports from partners confirming pre-approved financial and non-financial metrics. The CFO(CC) financial report to Chief Officers includes any emerging issues with contracts or delivery of services from outsourced partners and these issues are escalated to COT and to the Commissioner's Accountability & Assurance Board as appropriate.	Substantial	

4	Are the reports provided to the leadership team in a timely manner and in a suitable format?	Yes, produced monthly/quarterly and acted upon.	Substantial
5	Is the leadership team happy with the reports that it receives and with its ability to use these reports to take appropriate action?	Yes.	Substantial
O The leadership team monitors the elements of its balance sheet which pose a significant risk to its financial sustainability			
1	Has the Force identified the elements of its balance sheet that are most critical to its financial sustainability?	Yes, trade debtors and creditors are monitored closely by Finance. Cashflow, short and long-term borrowing, investments and the use of reserves and balances are monitored by the CFOs, JAC, COT and SMB. These are reported to the Commissioner's Accountability & Assurance Board as part of periodic updates on TM activity. Furthermore, the Police and Crime Panel receive Treasury Management reports and the Reserves and Committed Funds Strategy for information.	Substantial
2	Has the Force put in place suitable mechanisms to monitor the risk associated with these critical elements of its balance sheet?	Yes. Regular reviews are carried out by the Finance Department along with the CFOs.	Substantial
3	Is the Force taking action to mitigate any risks identified?	Yes, as risks are identified action is taken e.g., borrowing deferment based on cash-flow projections.	Substantial
4	Does the Force report unplanned use of its reserves to the leadership team in a timely manner?	Revenue and capital monitoring reports are reported through the governance structure and to the Commissioner's Accountability & Assurance Board. Any variation to the planned use of reserves is reported, with a formal recommendation to the Commissioner's Accountability & Assurance Board should additional monies be required to fund unplanned overspends.	Substantial
5	Is the monitoring of balance sheet risks integrated into the Force's management accounts reporting processes?	Yes, and reported through the governance structure.	Substantial

Section 7 - External Financial Reporting

- P The Chief Finance Officer has personal responsibility for ensuring that the statutory accounts provided to the local Force comply with the Code of Practice on Local Force Accounting in the United Kingdom**

1	Is the Force's CFO aware of their responsibilities in terms of the preparation of the annual financial statements?	Yes, both CFOs are fully aware of their responsibilities.	Substantial
2	Are these responsibilities included in the CFO's role description, personal objectives, and other relevant performance management mechanisms?	They are included in both CFO job descriptions/role profiles.	Substantial
3	Have the Force's financial statements hitherto been prepared on time and in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Force Accounting in the United Kingdom?	Yes, Gwent Police has a good track record of early closedown and external audit sign-off. Where extended closedown timescales have been necessary however, these have still been delivered within legislative requirements.	Substantial
Q The presentation of the final outturn figures and variations from budget allow the leadership team to make strategic financial decisions			
1	Is the Force's leadership team provided with a suitable suite of reports on the Force's financial outturn and on significant variations from budget?	An outturn report is presented to Chief Constable's COT, Commissioner's SMB and the Commissioner's Accountability & Assurance Board with clear explanations provided for each variation against budget.	Substantial
2	Is the information in these reports presented effectively?	Yes. This information matches that provided in the formal Statement of Accounts.	Substantial
3	Are these reports focused on information that is of interest and relevance to the leadership team?	Yes, it provides information on the full revenue and capital budgets and highlights variances which are both one-off and those that have an ongoing financial implication.	Substantial
4	Does the leadership team feel that the reports support it in making strategic financial decisions?	Yes.	Substantial

Appendix 3:

INTERNAL AUDIT WORK DURING 2024/25: The internal auditors, TIAA, undertook 16 audits (with a further two audits which were advisory only). Of these seven were assessed as providing substantial assurance, seven with reasonable assurance and in two the assessment was limited.

The table below summarises the audit findings.

AUDIT	Assurance Rating	Recommendations			Total
		Priority 1 Urgent	Priority 2 Important	Priority 3 Routine	
1. Finance: Payroll	Substantial	0	0	1	1
2. Finance – General Ledger	Substantial	0	0	0	0
3. Finance – Creditors	Substantial	0	0	1	1
4. Finance – Capital Programme	Substantial	0	0	0	0
5. Vetting	Substantial	0	0	0	0
6. Occupational Health – Referral, Process and Cost	Substantial	0	0	1	1
7. Whistleblowing	Substantial	0	0	3	3
8. Uniform Sores	Reasonable	0	5	4	9
9. Health and Safety	Reasonable	0	4	7	11
10. Sustainability	Reasonable	0	8	7	15
11. Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA)	Reasonable	0	1	0	1
12. HR Management - Absence Management	Reasonable	0	2	6	8

13. HR Management – Skills Map and Planning	Reasonable	0	4	4	8
14. Estate Management – Strategy	Reasonable	0	3	0	3
15. Business Continuity/Management	Limited	0	8	3	11
16. Contract Management – Custody Laundry	Limited	1	6	1	8
TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS		1	41	38	80

- In relation to the areas assessed as 'limited', the JAC have requested that an action plan is presented as a standing agenda item to each JAC meeting until the relevant issues have improved.
- The Force is also providing ongoing updates against the progress of all recommendations to the JAC.