

Minutes

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Thursday 18 September 2014, 10.00am
at The Forum, 74-80 Camden Street, London

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Present:

Brian Phillpott, Chair
Catherine Crawford
Bill Matthews
Andrew Pollins
Stella Thomas

In attendance:

Simon Downey, Director of Capability and Resources
Simon Hart, Head of Finance
Lisa Howson, Head of Audit & Compliance

Paul Oliffe, National Audit Office
Rose Enemuwe, Internal Audit (DfT)

Andrew Figgures, Chief Executive
Charlotte Vitty, Authority Finance Director & Deputy Chief Executive
Ben Wright, Interim Finance Director
Iggi Falcon, Senior Policy Officer & Minutes

30/2014 Welcome and Apologies

Non-Agenda

1. The Chair welcomed Charlotte Vitty, Authority Finance Director & Deputy Chief Executive, to her first Committee meeting.

31/2014 Minutes of Meeting 30 May 2014

Agenda Item 1

2. The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

32/2014 Matters Arising

Agenda Item 2

3. It was noted that a review of the control issues relating to accruals (Item 6) was due to be completed in the coming weeks and a report would be submitted to the next Committee meeting.

4. All other actions had been discharged.

33/2014 BTP Quarterly Update

Agenda Item 3

5. The Director of Capability and Resources introduced a report which provided an update of developments across Corporate Resources since the previous Committee meeting.

Safety and Wellbeing

6. The Committee noted the ongoing work to address the risks relating to the Safety and Wellbeing function. Key areas of focus at the moment included the delivery of training and consolidating the Safety and Wellbeing team.
7. There had been unforeseen staffing and resilience issues arising from the resignation of the newly-appointed Head of Safety and Wellbeing and a London-based Senior H&S Advisor, although the recruitment of replacements was now underway. The improvements to this area of business were being monitored by a Gold Group which would remain in place until at least the recruitment to the existing vacancies has been completed.

Information Management

8. The Director gave an update on the work to address issues with Information Management, which related to compliance with data protection and the management of historic backlogs. Compliance issues were being addressed through training, and the Director explained that a programme of work aimed at creating lasting improvements rather than simply providing remedial action.
9. The backlog issues related, specifically, to the need to classify the contents of some ten thousand boxes of archived material. The Committee probed the arrangements and level of resources which the Force was putting in place to deal with the issue and expressed concern about the direction and management of what seemed to be a considerable project. The Committee requested that a report be submitted to its next meeting in December to outline a project roadmap, including clear timescales and milestones.

Case and Custody

10. An update was provided to the Committee on the current dispute with the Case and Custody contractor.
11. The report was noted.
12. Agreed
 - 12.1. A report to be submitted to the next meeting of the Audit Committee in December to outline a roadmap of the project to deal with the historic backlog of some ten thousand boxes, including clear timescales and milestones

13. The Chief Executive of the Authority introduced a report which updated the Committee on significant developments since the previous Committee meeting.
14. The Authority Chief Executive had now written to Police Service Agreement (“PSA”) holders to inform them of two amendments to the PSA contracts, which would allow the Authority to inform of PSA provisional charges earlier in the year and to calculate the actual charges using the best available and most recent information. The responses from PSA holders received so far had been positive.
15. An updated version of the Force’s and the Authority’s Gift and Hospitality registers were reviewed, with no significant issues being raised. The NAO representative referred to the arrangements whereby officers could obtain home to work travel benefits directly from the Train Operating Companies (TOCs), as was the case with Greater Anglia, and queried whether the Force had any assurances that those officers were aware of the tax liability that those benefits carry. He hoped that this be considered further as part of the upcoming audit programme.
16. The report was noted.

35/2014 Quarterly Strategic Risk Reports (SRRs)
Agenda Item 5

BTPA Risks

17. The Committee considered two potential new risks as follows:-
 - 17.1. Challenge to 2013/14 Charges – there was a potential risk that PSA holders could legally challenge the Authority upon receipt of the actual PSA charges.
 - 17.2. Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP) – The Authority Chief Executive explained that Home Office officials had raised the need to discuss the terms on which the BTP would be involved in the programme, given its different financial arrangements as a non-Home Office force. The BTP’s continued participation therefore posed potential financial risks which should now be captured in the Authority’s risk register. Members noted that the progress of the discussions depended on the liaison between the Department for Transport, the Home Office and other government departments, and was therefore largely outside the Authority’s control.
18. The Committee agreed that it would be sensible to include these two entries in the Authority’s Risk Register.

BTP Risks

19. Attention was drawn to SR70 – Failure to Deliver Public Service Network Programme (PSNP) Accreditation, where an analysis was currently underway to establish the required level of work to achieve the Force’s readiness for

PSN. The simultaneous work of the IT programme may delay or come into conflict with the accreditation process. The proposed mitigating action was that all changes to IT systems consider potential impact on PSNP at business case stage, to ensure no adverse changes.

20. The report was noted.

21. Agreed

21.1. To include two new entries on the Authority's Risk Register, as follows:-

- Challenge to 2013/14 Charges
- Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP)

36/2014 HMIC Inspection Update
Agenda Item 6

22. The Head of Audit & Compliance introduced a report which provided an update of recent HMIC activity, which included recent inspections on Integrity and Corruption, Stop & Search, Police Custody and Crime Data Integrity, as well as miscellaneous reports published by HMIC.

23. The Committee noted good progress in implementing Stop & Search recommendations, a task which was being overseen by Operation Jupiter. It was also reported that the BTP had, alongside all other police forces in the country, adopted the voluntary scheme for best use of Stop and Search powers recently published by the College of Policing.

24. Initial feedback had been largely positive on the Integrity and Corruption Inspection conducted in August, with a few areas of improvement being highlighted: communication/organisational learning, the robustness of the system to conduct random drug testing, and the time it took to complete misconduct cases.

25. On Crime Data Integrity, HMIC reported that there was no evidence of unethical behaviour in the way officers recorded crime. There were some areas for improvement highlighted, in particular concerning the BTP's duty to ensure that options for out-of-court disposals were suitable to the individual offences and circumstances.

26. The report following the March inspection on Police Custody had been recently received for factual checking.

27. The report was noted.

37/2014 Internal Audit Progress Report
Agenda Item 7

28. A representative of the Internal Audit Team introduced a report which summarised progress to date on the delivery of the 2014/15 Internal Audit programme. One audit from the running programme had been completed since the last meeting:
- 28.1. BTPA 13/04 Core Financial Controls (Phase Three) - Levels of assurance were found to be substantial. The auditors commented that the overall controls over the Purchase to Pay system were effective. There were some minor compliance issues found in relation to delegated authorities and purchase orders.
29. One further audit from the 2013/14 programme was in progress
30. On a separate note, the Committee discussed the creation of the Government's Cross Departmental Internal Audit Unit (XDIAS), and the opportunities which this move might create for the Authority, particularly in connection with resilience.

38/2014 Any Other Business
Agenda Item 8

31. There were none.

Next Meeting
04 December 2014 at 10.00 am.