



## **Report of the Chief Constable to the Chair and Members of the Audit Committee 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

**Executive & Presenting Officer: Ian Wright, Director of Finance and Assets**

**Status: For information**

### **Annual Governance Statement 2023-24 Update**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This report reviews the Action Plan for 2024-25 that was included within the Annual Governance Statement 2023-24.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members note the actions taken throughout 2024-25 to address the issues raised.

#### **3. Issues/Areas for Concern**

- 3.1 There was one significant governance issue outlined in the Annual Governance Statement as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, and one issue for continued focus from previous years governance issues. These issues and the most recent update on progress to address them can be seen at Appendix 1.

#### **4. Implications**

##### 4.1 Finance

There are no financial implications arising from the content of this report.

##### 4.2 Diversity and Equal Opportunities

There are no diversity or equal opportunity implications arising from the content of this report.

##### 4.3 Human Rights Act

There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from the content of this report.

##### 4.4 Sustainability

There are no sustainability implications arising from the content of this report.

4.5 Risk

All of the issues that have been identified have been risk assessed and if required will be included in the risk register of the Force.

**5. Conclusions**

5.1 The update provided should provide members with the assurance that the identified areas of weakness have been managed effectively throughout the 2024-25 financial year.

Mark Webster  
Chief Constable

## Appendix 1

### Significant governance issue 1

#### Adverse Opinions from Audits

One of the Force Internal Audit reports published in 2023-24 was awarded 'Minimal Assurance', this related to Seized and Found Property (Force). Eleven actions were identified (1 Low priority, 6 Medium and 5 High). The Force have implemented a stronger ACC lead governance structure and are progressing these actions, with a number already closed or identified for closure. It is anticipated the current 3 critical issues outlined (Firearms and ammunition, Bladed weapons, and Freezer storage) will be rectified by September 2024 with work also commencing to reduce the overall volume of stored property reduced by the end of 2024. In addition, two actions remain outstanding from other audits prior to 2023-24, one High and one Low Risk. Both will to be reviewed for closure by RSM LLP in their June 2024 follow-up audit.

Update: January 2025

One of the Force Internal Audit reports published in 2023-24 was awarded 'Minimal Assurance', this related to Seized and Found Property (Force). Twelve actions were identified (1 Low priority, 6 Medium and 5 High). The Force have implemented a stronger ACC lead governance structure and are progressing these actions, with a number already closed or identified for closure, these will be reviewed by RSM LLP in their upcoming Follow-up Audits, this includes the critical issues outlined (Firearms and ammunition and Bladed weapons) with work ongoing to reduce the overall volume of stored property.

The two actions that were outstanding from older audits identified as 'minimal / partial assurance' were closure by RSM LLP in their June 2024 follow-up audit.

### Issue for continued focus 1

#### Embedding the Corporate Meeting Framework

Following changes to the meeting framework in 2023-24, including the implementation and embedding of the IMPACT board and SWPB, the framework will be enhanced and finalised during 2024-25.

Update: January 2025

The Corporate Meeting Framework is reviewed and adapted when required; following any internal, audit, or inspection requirements.