

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

15 July 2005

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Report of the Chief Executive and Clerk

Corporate Governance Committee Draft Terms of Reference

Recommendation:

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| <p>(i) That the Authority agrees to the establishment of a Corporate Governance Committee in line with the constitution detailed in the report.</p> <p>(ii) That the draft terms of reference be approved.</p> |
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Introduction

1. The Police Authority approved the formation of an Audit Committee with specific terms of reference at their meeting in December 2004. The Audit Committee had a specified shelf life and has now disbanded. It was always intended to follow up on the work started by the committee, but to take a more long term view and to meet the wider requirements of the Authority. There is no doubt that statutory requirements will increasingly require the Authority to have in place demonstrably effective arrangements for good corporate governance. This has started with the required Statement on Internal Control but will develop to cover all the arrangements in place to deliver, and be seen to deliver, the objectives of the organisation.

2. It is intended to build on the good work by the Audit Committee and the Force and it is necessary to have a committee focus for this work. Accordingly, this paper suggests the Audit Committee develops into a Corporate Governance Committee, with the constitution and terms of reference as detailed in the report to cover this broader remit.

3. It is important to appreciate that these are difficult areas and that the role will not be delivered overnight. Much progress has been made but there is much more to do and it is envisaged that the full range of the committee's responsibilities will develop over time. There are a number of issues that would need to be addressed by the new committee. It is envisaged that some of the development work would be longer term in nature and could spread over more than one calendar year.

Constitution

4. It is suggested that the committee comprise 5 Members of the Police Authority. A quorum shall be at least 3 Members. In order to retain objectivity:

- The Chair of the Police Authority shall not be considered for membership of the committee.
- Chairs of other committees shall not be considered for chair or vice chair of this committee.
- The Chair of the Committee shall not sit on the Chairs' Group

5. It is envisaged that there would be 4 - 6 meetings per year. Members and officers will receive appropriate training in order to fulfil their responsibilities. The Chair of the Committee shall have direct access to external and internal audit, if required, subject to informing a senior officer of the Police Authority when this is occurs.

Overview

6. The committee is to advise the Police Authority as to whether the system by which the Police Authority and Force are controlled provides adequate and effective risk management, internal control and governance. This will encompass audit, risk management and other review work building up a picture of practice and progress to build on success and put right any shortcomings. Suggested terms of reference for the new committee are shown in the attached appendix.

7. This is a substantial agenda and it will no doubt take some time for the responsibilities to be fully developed. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the Authority will be obliged to go down this path at some stage soon. The arrangements discussed here are commended to enable members to build on the work done to date by the Authority and the Force and to develop arrangements for the future.

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