

# The Joint Audit Findings for West Mercia Police

**Year ended 31 March 2023**

January 2024



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The contents of this report relate only to the matters which have come to our attention, which we believe need to be reported to you as part of our audit planning process. It is not a comprehensive record of all the relevant matters, which may be subject to change, and in particular we cannot be held responsible to you for reporting all of the risks which may affect the PCC and Chief Constable or all weaknesses in your internal controls. This report has been prepared solely for your benefit and should not be quoted in whole or in part without our prior written consent. We do not accept any responsibility for any loss occasioned to any third party acting, or refraining from acting on the basis of the content of this report, as this report was not prepared for, nor intended for, any other purpose.

This Audit Findings presents the observations arising from the audit that are significant to the responsibility of those charged with governance to oversee the financial reporting process, as required by International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260. Its contents have been discussed with management.

## Jackson Murray

For Grant Thornton UK LLP

January 2024

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# 1. Headlines

This table summarises the key findings and other matters arising from the statutory audit of West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner ('the PCC') and West Mercia Chief Constable and the preparation of the PCC's and Chief Constable's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 for those charged with governance.

Financial Statements		
<p>Under International Standards of Audit (UK) (ISAs) and the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), we are required to report whether, in our opinion the financial statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• give a true and fair view of the financial positions of the PCC and Chief Constable's income and expenditure for the year; and</li><li>• have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting and prepared in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.</li></ul>	<p>Our audit work was completed between November 2023 and January 2024, with a mixture of remote work and site visits. Our findings are summarised on pages 5 to 21. To date, we have not identified any adjustments to the financial statements of the Chief Constable or PCC that impact upon the reported outturn or useable reserves. Audit adjustments are detailed in Appendix D.</p> <p>We have raised a recommendation for management as a result of our audit work. This is set out in Appendix B. Our follow up of recommendations from the prior year's audit are detailed in Appendix C.</p> <p>Our work is substantially complete and there are no matters of which we are aware that would require modification of our audit opinions. Areas outstanding are outlined on page 4. Following the satisfactory completion of these procedures, will be in a position to issue our audit opinions.</p> <p>We have concluded that the other information to be published with the financial statements is consistent with our knowledge of your organisations and the financial statements we have audited.</p> <p>Our anticipated financial statements audit report opinions will be unmodified. We have been able to satisfy ourselves that the PCC and Chief Constable have made proper arrangements in securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use of resources.</p>	
	<p>We are also required to report whether other information published together with each set of audited financial statements (including the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and Narrative Report) is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.</p>	

# 1.Headlines

Our work is substantially complete and there are currently no matters of which we are aware that would require modification of our audit opinion, subject to the outstanding matters detailed below.



- Receipt of queries surrounding supporting evidence for assumptions and the casting for eleven PPE revaluation samples;
- Write up of three queries on grant income samples – one of which also resolve short term debtors queries;
- Pensions LGPS: Awaiting receipt of queries from the actuary in relation to the calculation of the other Experience item as well observing an updated payroll pensions report onsite with HR;
- Receipt of two Capital Commitments queries;
- Receipt of one outstanding external borrowings confirmation from Gwent;
- Receipt of IT general control queries from Liberata; and
- Receipt of four queries surrounding supporting evidence of the existence of equipment assets.



- Receipt of management responses to accounts review points;
- Final quality review of the audit file;
- Receipt and review of the signed management representation letters; and
- Receipt and review of the final sets of signed financial statements.

## Status



Likely to result in material adjustment or significant change to disclosures within the financial statements



Potential to result in material adjustment or significant change to disclosures within the financial statements



Not considered likely to result in material adjustment or change to disclosures within the financial statements

# 1. Headlines

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## Value for Money (VFM) arrangements

Under the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), we are required to consider whether in our opinion, both entities have put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Auditors are now required to report in more detail on the overall arrangements, as well as key recommendations on any significant weaknesses in arrangements identified during the audit.

Auditors are required to report their commentary on the arrangements under the following specified criteria:

- Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- Financial sustainability; and
- Governance

We have completed our VFM work, which is summarised on page 20, and our detailed commentary is set out in the separate Auditor's Annual Report, which is presented alongside this report. We are satisfied that the PCC and Chief Constable have made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use of resources.

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## Statutory duties

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ('the Act') also requires us to:

- report to you if we have applied any of the additional powers and duties ascribed to us under the Act; and
- to certify the closure of the audit.

We have not exercised any of our additional statutory powers or duties.

We expect to certify the completion of the audit on completion of our specified procedures on the Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) consolidation pack under WGA audit instructions.

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## Significant matters

We did not encounter any significant difficulties or identify any significant matters arising during our audit. All responses were received to our audit queries promptly and the finance team worked well with our audit team, allowing us to conclude in our anticipated timeframe.

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## 2. Financial Statements

### Overview of the scope of our audit

This Joint Audit Findings Report presents the observations arising from the audits that are significant to the responsibility of those charged with governance to oversee the financial reporting process, as required by International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260 and the Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'). Its contents have been discussed with management.

As your external auditor we are responsible for performing our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) and the Code, which is directed towards forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance. The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or those charged with governance of their responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements.

### Audit approach

Our audit approach was based on a thorough understanding of the group, PCC and Chief Constable's business and is risk based, and in particular included:

- an evaluation of the PCC's and Chief Constable's internal controls environment, including their IT systems and controls; and
- substantive testing on significant transactions and material account balances, including the procedures outlined in this report in relation to the key audit risks.

A full statutory audit is required of both the PCC and Chief Constable.

We have not had to alter our audit plan, as communicated to you in July 2023.

### Conclusion

We have substantially completed our audit of your financial statements, and subject to outstanding queries on page 4 being resolved, we anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion on the financial statements of both the PCC and the Chief Constable following the Joint Audit and Standards Committee meeting on 22 January 2024, as detailed in Appendix G and Appendix H.

# 2. Financial Statements



### Our approach to materiality

The concept of materiality is fundamental to the preparation of the financial statements and the audit process and applies not only to the monetary misstatements but also to disclosure requirements and adherence to acceptable accounting practice and applicable law.

Materiality levels remain the same as reported in our audit plan in July 2023.

We set out in this table our determination of materiality.

	£	Qualitative factors considered
Materiality for the financial statements	5,400,000	We considered materiality from the perspective of the users of the financial statements. The group prepares an expenditure-based budget for the financial year and monitors spend against this, therefore gross expenditure was deemed as the most appropriate benchmark. This benchmark was used in the prior year. We deemed that 1.9% was an appropriate rate to apply to the expenditure benchmark.
Performance materiality	4,050,000	There is not a history of significant deficiencies or a large number of misstatements and there have not been significant changes to the team producing the financial statements.
Trivial matters	270,000	Calculated as a percentage of headline materiality and in accordance with auditing standards.
Materiality for senior officer remuneration disclosures	20,000	Due to public sensitivity.

We have determined financial statement materiality based on a proportion of the gross expenditure of the group, the PCC and the Chief Constable for the financial year. In the prior year we used the same benchmark. For our audit testing purposes we apply the lowest of these materialities, which is £5.4m (PY £5.3m), which equates to approximately 1.9% of the Chief Constable’s prior year gross expenditure.



# 2. Financial Statements: Significant risks

Significant risks are defined by ISAs (UK) as risks that, in the judgement of the auditor, require special audit consideration. In identifying risks, audit teams consider the nature of the risk, the potential magnitude of misstatement, and its likelihood. Significant risks are those risks that have a higher risk of material misstatement.

This section provides commentary on the significant audit risks communicated in the Audit Plan.

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Relates to	Commentary
<b>Management override of controls</b> Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management over-ride of controls is present in all entities.	Group, PCC and Chief Constable	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluated the design effectiveness of management controls over journals;</li> <li>analysed the journals listing and determined the criteria for selecting high risk unusual journals;</li> <li>identified and tested unusual journals made during the year and the accounts production stage for appropriateness and corroboration;</li> <li>gained an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied by management and considered their reasonableness; and</li> <li>evaluated the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions.</li> </ul> <p>Our work on journals is complete. We have not identified any indication of management override of controls from the journals testing performed.</p> <p>More detail on key estimates can be found on pages 11 to 14.</p>



## 2. Financial Statements: Significant risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Relates to	Commentary
<p><b>Valuation of land and buildings</b></p> <p>The PCC (and group) revalue land and buildings on an annual basis to ensure that the carrying value is not materially different from their current value (or fair value for surplus assets) at the financial statements date, via full valuations or on a desktop basis, with a full valuation undertaken at least once every five years in accordance with the CIPFA Code requirements.</p> <p>This valuation represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved and the sensitivity of the estimates to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of land and buildings as a significant risk.</p>	Group and PCC	<p>We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluated management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to the valuation experts and the scope of their work;</li> <li>evaluated the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation expert;</li> <li>discussed with the valuer the basis on which the valuations were carried out to ensure that the requirements of the Code were met;</li> <li>challenged the information and assumptions used by the valuer to assess completeness and consistency with our understanding;</li> <li>tested, on a sample basis, revaluations made during the year to ensure they were based on accurate underlying data (such as build rates used as the basis of the valuation) and were input correctly into the PCC (and group's) asset register; and</li> <li>evaluated the assumptions made by management for any assets not revalued during the year and how management satisfied themselves that these were not materially different to current value.</li> </ul> <p>Our work on this area is substantially complete, pending the resolution of outstanding queries as detailed on page 4. We have not identified any issues from the testing that we have completed to date.</p>

## 2. Financial Statements - Significant risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Relates to	Commentary
<p><b>Valuation of the net defined benefit pension liability</b></p> <p>The Group's net defined benefit pension liability as reflected in its balance sheet represents a significant estimate in the financial statements.</p> <p>It is considered significant estimates due to the size of the numbers involved and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>The methods applied in the calculation of the IAS 19 estimates are routine and commonly applied by all actuarial firms in line with the requirements set out in the Code of practice for local government accounting (the applicable financial reporting framework). We have therefore concluded that there is not a significant risk of material misstatement in the IAS 19 estimate due to the methods and models used in their calculation.</p> <p>The source data used by the actuaries to produce the IAS 19 estimates is provided by administering authorities and employers. We do not consider this to be a significant risk as this is easily verifiable.</p> <p>The actuarial assumptions used are the responsibility of the entity but should be set on the advice given by the actuary. A small change in the key assumptions (discount rate, inflation rate, salary increase and life expectancy) can have a significant impact on the estimated IAS 19 net liability. We have therefore concluded that there is a significant risk of material misstatement in the IAS 19 estimates due to the assumptions used in their calculation.</p> <p>With regard to these assumptions we have therefore identified valuation of the Group's pension fund net liability as a significant risk. This covers both the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and Police Pension Schemes.</p>	Group and CC	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• updated our understanding of the processes and controls put in place by management to ensure that the Group's pension fund net liability is not materially misstated and evaluated the design of the associated controls;</li> <li>• evaluated the instructions issued by management to their management experts (actuaries) for this estimate and the scope of their work;</li> <li>• assessed the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuaries who carried out the Group's pension fund valuation;</li> <li>• assessed the accuracy and completeness of the information provided by the Group to the actuaries to estimate the liabilities;</li> <li>• tested the consistency of the pension fund asset and liability and disclosures in the notes to the core financial statements with the actuarial reports; and</li> <li>• undertaken procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made by reviewing the report of the consulting actuary (as auditor's expert) and performing any additional procedures suggested within the report.</li> <li>• obtained assurances from the auditor of Worcestershire Pension Fund as to the controls surrounding the validity and accuracy of membership data, contributions data and benefits data sent to the actuary by the pension fund and the fund assets valuation in the pension fund financial statements (LGPS only).</li> <li>• obtained assurances from GAD, auditor of the Police Pension Scheme as to the controls surrounding the validity and accuracy of data sent to the actuary by the pension scheme and the valuation in the financial statements (PPS only).</li> </ul> <p>Our work in this area is substantially complete pending resolution of final outstanding queries as detailed on page 4.</p> <p>An updated actuarial report was requested from GAD for the Police Pension Schemes (PPS) in order to take into account part year inflation, a universal issue across police clients flagged by PwC as our auditor expert. This has resulted in an adjustment to the net liabilities disclosed for the PPS in the Balance Sheet, increasing the liability by £38.7m. Please see further detail on page 26 in Appendix D.</p> <p>We are satisfied that disclosures are reasonable and do not result in a risk of material misstatement.</p>

# 2. Financial Statements - Other risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Commentary
<p><b>Completeness, existence and accuracy of cash and cash equivalents</b></p> <p>The receipt and payment of cash represents a significant class of transactions occurring throughout the year, culminating in the year end balance for cash and cash equivalents reported on the statement of financial position.</p> <p>Due to the significance of cash transactions, we identified the completeness, existence and accuracy of cash and cash equivalents as an ‘other’ risk.</p>	<p>To address this risk we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• agreed all period end bank balances to the general ledger and cash book;</li><li>• agreed cash and cash equivalents to the bank reconciliation;</li><li>• agreed all material reconciling items to sufficient and appropriate corroborative audit evidence;</li><li>• wrote to the bank to obtain a bank balance confirmation; and</li><li>• agreed the aggregate cash balance to the relevant financial statement disclosures.</li></ul> <p><b>Findings</b></p> <p>Our work in this area is substantially complete, pending resolution of outstanding queries detailed on page 4. We have not noted any other issues that might result in a material misstatement to the cash balance.</p>

## 2. Financial Statements – key judgements and estimates

This section provides commentary on key estimates and judgements in line with the enhanced requirements for auditors.

Significant judgement or estimate	Relates to	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
Land and Building valuations – £64.782m	Group and PCC	<p>Land and buildings comprises of specialised assets such as the main regional police centres, which are required to be valued at depreciated replacement cost (DRC) at year end reflecting the cost of a modern equivalent asset necessary to deliver the same service provision. The remainder of other land and buildings are not specialised in nature and are required to be valued at existing use in value (EUV) at year end.</p> <p>The PCC and Chief Constable has engaged with their internal valuation team to complete the valuation of properties as at 31 March 2023, with the full portfolio valued on a cyclical basis. 100% of land and building assets (by value) were revalued during 2022/23, a decision taken in reaction to audit adjustments proposed in previous years.</p> <p>Management have considered the year end value of non-valued properties and the potential valuation change in the assets revalued at 31 March 2023. Management have concluded that there has not been a material movement in the value of these properties. This is due to there not being a significant amount of time passing since the items were last revalued, and is based upon the experience of the valuer and the fact that the use of the assets remains the same.</p> <p>The total year end valuation of land and buildings was £64.782m, a net increase of £2.557m from 2021/22 (£62.227m).</p>	<p>We have reviewed the detail of your assessment of the estimate, considering the revised requirements of ISA 540. Our work included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an assessment of the management's expert, who we found to have relevant experience and professional qualifications;</li> <li>review of the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate, including the re-calculation of valuation figures using national indices to determine specific asset valuations that warrant further review;</li> <li>review and challenge of the inputs and assumptions applied in the valuation to ensure that these appeared to be reasonable and appropriate based upon source data or other corroborative evidence;</li> <li>assessing the impact of any changes to valuation method; and</li> <li>an assessment of the adequacy of disclosure of estimate in the financial statement.</li> </ul> <p>Our work on this area is substantially complete, pending outstanding queries detailed on page 4. We have not identified any issues from the testing that we have completed to date.</p>	Work is ongoing

## 2. Financial Statements - key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate	Relates to	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
<p>Net pension liability (LGPS) – liability of £1.209m</p> <p><i>Consisting:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief Constable LGPS: Liability of £1.234m</li> <li>Police and Crime Commissioner LGPS: Surplus of £0.025m</li> </ul>	Group, PCC and CC	<p>The PCC and Chief Constable's total net pension liability in respect of the LGPS at 31 March 2023 is a liability of 1.209m (PY £209m) comprising the Worcestershire Pension Fund Local Government Pension Scheme obligations. The PCC and Chief Constable use Mercer to provide actuarial valuations of the PCC's and Chief Constable's assets and liabilities derived from this scheme. A full actuarial valuation is required every three years.</p> <p>The latest full actuarial valuation was completed in 2022. Given the significant value of the net pension fund liability, small changes in assumptions can result in significant valuation movements.</p>	<p>In assessing the estimate we have considered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the actuary's experience, competence and professional qualifications;</li> <li>the actuary's approach, through the use of PwC as an auditor's expert, used to assess the methods and assumptions used;</li> <li>the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate by comparing it to source records and other data provided through the audit;</li> <li>assurances from the auditor of Worcestershire Pension Fund as to the controls surrounding the validity and accuracy of membership data; contributions data and benefits data sent to the actuary by the pension fund and the fund assets valuation in the pension fund financial statements;</li> <li>the impact of any changes to valuation method (none were noted); and</li> <li>the adequacy of disclosures of estimates in the financial statements.</li> </ul> <p>Our work on this area is substantially complete, pending outstanding queries detailed on page 4. We have not identified any issues from the testing that we have completed to date.</p>	Work is in progress

## 2. Financial Statements - key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate	Relates to	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
Net pension liability (Police Pension Schemes) - £1,983.96m	Group and CC	<p>The Chief Constable's total net pension liability in respect of the Police Pension Scheme at 31 March 2023 is £1,983m (PY £2,697m). As unfunded schemes, the Police Pension Schemes do not have any assets, and in-year, any shortfall in the Police Officer Pension Fund is balanced by a grant from the Home Office.</p> <p>The Group and Chief Constable use GAD to provide actuarial valuations of the liabilities derived from this scheme.</p>	<p>In assessing the estimate, we have considered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the actuary's experience, competence and professional qualifications;</li> <li>the actuary's approach, through the use of PwC as an auditor's expert, used to assess the methods and assumptions used;</li> <li>the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate by comparing it to source records and other data provided through the audit;</li> <li>the impact of any changes to valuation method (none were noted); and</li> <li>the adequacy of disclosures of estimates in the financial statements.</li> </ul> <p>Our work in this area is complete. An updated actuarial report was requested from GAD for the Police Pension Schemes (PPS) in order to take into account part year inflation, a universal issue across police clients flagged by PwC as our auditor expert. This has resulted in an adjustment to the net liabilities disclosed for the PPS in the Balance Sheet, increasing the liability by £38.7m. Please see further detail on page 26 in Appendix D. No further issues were noted.</p>	Work is in complete

## 2. Financial Statements - key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate	Relates to	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
Minimum Revenue Provision - £4m	Group and PCC	<p>The PCC is responsible on an annual basis for determining the amount charged for the repayment of debt known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The basis for the charge is set out in regulations and statutory guidance.</p> <p>We consider that management's MRP policy is in line with statutory guidance. MRP on assets is charged based upon the life of the asset and respective unfinanced element of that asset. We confirmed that none of the assets had a life higher than 50 years, which is the top end of useful life as set out in the statutory guidance.</p> <p>Management's approach is set out in the Annual Treasury Strategy.</p> <p>The year end MRP charge was £4m, a net increase of £0.5m from 2021/22.</p>	<p>We consider that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the MRP has been calculated in line with the PCC's policy on MRP and this is in line with the statutory guidance; and</li> <li>the increase in the MRP charge is reasonable.</li> </ul> <p>Government have consulted on changes to the regulations that underpin MRP, to clarify that capital receipts may not be used in place of a prudent MRP and that MRP should be applied to all unfinanced capital expenditure and that certain assets should not be omitted. The consultation highlighted that the intention is not to change policy, but to clearly set out in legislation, the practices that authorities should already be following. Government will issue a full response to the consultation in due course.</p>	We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

## 2. Financial Statements: other communication requirements

We set out below details of other matters which we, as auditors, are required by auditing standards and the Code to communicate to those charged with governance.

Issue	Commentary
Matters in relation to fraud	We have previously discussed the risk of fraud with the Joint Audit and Standards Committee. We have not been made aware of any incidents in the period and no other issues have been identified during the course of our audit procedures.
Matters in relation to related parties	We are not aware of any related parties or related party transactions which have not been disclosed.
Matters in relation to laws and regulations	You have not made us aware of any significant incidences of non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations and we have not identified any incidences from our audit work.
Written representations	We will request letters of representation from both the PCC and the Chief Constable.
Confirmation requests from third parties	We requested from management permission to send confirmation requests to the PCC's bankers and other institutions which it invests and borrows from. This permission was granted and the requests were sent. All of these requests were returned with positive confirmation.
Accounting practices	We have evaluated the appropriateness of the PCC's and Chief Constable's accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures. Our review found no material omissions in the financial statements
Audit evidence and explanations/ significant difficulties	All information and explanations requested from management have been provided in a timely manner, noting that our work continues in certain areas.



# 2. Financial Statements: other communication requirements



## Our responsibility

As auditors, we are required to “obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence about the appropriateness of management’s use of the going concern assumption in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and to conclude whether there is a material uncertainty about the entity’s ability to continue as a going concern” (ISA (UK) 570).

Issue	Commentary
Going concern	<p>In performing our work on going concern, we have had reference to Statement of Recommended Practice – Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statements of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom (Revised 2020). The Financial Reporting Council recognises that for particular sectors, it may be necessary to clarify how auditing standards are applied to an entity in a manner that is relevant and provides useful information to the users of financial statements in that sector. Practice Note 10 provides that clarification for audits of public sector bodies.</p> <p>Practice Note 10 sets out the following key principles for the consideration of going concern for public sector entities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the use of the going concern basis of accounting is not a matter of significant focus of the auditor’s time and resources because the applicable financial reporting frameworks envisage that the going concern basis for accounting will apply where the entity’s services will continue to be delivered by the public sector. In such cases, a material uncertainty related to going concern is unlikely to exist, and so a straightforward and standardised approach for the consideration of going concern will often be appropriate for public sector entities</li> <li>for many public sector entities, the financial sustainability of the reporting entity and the services it provides is more likely to be of significant public interest than the application of the going concern basis of accounting. Our consideration of the PCC’s and Chief Constable’s financial sustainability is addressed by our value for money work, which is covered elsewhere in this report.</li> </ul> <p>Practice Note 10 states that if the financial reporting framework provides for the adoption of the going concern basis of accounting on the basis of the anticipated continuation of the provision of a service in the future, the auditor applies the continued provision of service approach set out in Practice Note 10. The financial reporting framework adopted by the PCC and Chief Constable meets this criteria, and so we have applied the continued provision of service approach. In doing so, we have considered and evaluated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the nature of the PCC and Chief Constable and the environment in which they operate;</li> <li>the PCC’s and Chief Constable’s financial reporting framework;</li> <li>the PCC’s and Chief Constable’s system of internal control for identifying events or conditions relevant to going concern; and</li> <li>management’s going concern assessment.</li> </ul> <p>On the basis of this work, we have obtained sufficient appropriate audit evidence to enable us to conclude that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a material uncertainty related to going concern has not been identified for either the PCC or the Chief Constable; and</li> <li>management’s use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of both sets of financial statements is appropriate.</li> </ul>

## 2. Financial Statements: other responsibilities under the Code

Issue	Commentary
<b>Other information</b>	<p>We are required to give an opinion on whether the other information published together with the audited financial statements (including the Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Report), is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.</p> <p>No inconsistencies have been identified. We plan to issue an unmodified opinion in this respect, please refer to Appendix G and Appendix H.</p>
<b>Matters on which we report by exception</b>	<p>We are required to report on a number of matters by exception in a number of areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if the Annual Governance Statements do not comply with disclosure requirements set out in CIPFA/SOLACE guidance or are misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audits;</li> <li>• if we have applied any of our statutory powers or duties; and/or</li> <li>• where we are not satisfied in respect of arrangements to secure value for money and have reported [a] significant weakness/es.</li> </ul> <p>We have nothing to report on these matters.</p>
<b>Specified procedures for Whole of Government Accounts</b>	<p>We are required to carry out specified procedures (on behalf of the NAO) on the Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) consolidation pack under WGA group audit instructions.</p> <p>Work is not required as the entity does not exceed the threshold of £2bn. We will submit our return in line with official guidance.</p>
<b>Certification of the closure of the audit</b>	<p>We intend to delay the certification of the closure of the 2022/23 audits of West Mercia PCC and Chief Constable in the audit reports, as detailed in Appendix G and H, as we are still required to submit the WGA return in line with guidance.</p>

# 3. Value for Money arrangements (VFM)

## Approach to Value for Money work for 2022/23

The National Audit Office issued its guidance for auditors in April 2020. The Code requires auditors to consider whether the body has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

When reporting on these arrangements, the Code requires auditors to structure their commentary on arrangements under the three specified reporting criteria.



### Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

Arrangements for improving the way the body delivers its services. This includes arrangements for understanding costs and delivering efficiencies and improving outcomes for service users.



### Financial Sustainability

Arrangements for ensuring the body can continue to deliver services. This includes planning resources to ensure adequate finances and maintain sustainable levels of spending over the medium term (3–5 years)



### Governance

Arrangements for ensuring that the body makes appropriate decisions in the right way. This includes arrangements for budget setting and management, risk management, and ensuring the body makes decisions based on appropriate information

## Potential types of recommendations

A range of different recommendations could be made following the completion of work on the body's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, which are as follows:



### Statutory recommendation

Written recommendations to the body under Section 24 (Schedule 7) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. A recommendation under schedule 7 requires the body to discuss and respond publicly to the report.



### Key recommendation

The Code of Audit Practice requires that where auditors identify significant weaknesses in arrangements to secure value for money they should make recommendations setting out the actions that should be taken by the body. We have defined these recommendations as 'key recommendations'.



### Improvement recommendation

These recommendations, if implemented should improve the arrangements in place at the body, but are not made as a result of identifying significant weaknesses in the body's arrangements

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## 3. VFM: our procedures and conclusions

We have completed our VFM work and our detailed commentary is set out in the separate Auditor's Annual Report, which is presented alongside this report.

As part of our work, we considered whether there were any risks of significant weakness in the PCC and Chief Constable's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use of resources. We did not identify any risks of significant weakness. We are satisfied that the PCC and Chief Constable have made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use of resources.

# 4. Independence and ethics

We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention and consider that an objective reasonable and informed third party would take the same view. We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and confirm that we, as a firm, and each covered person, are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

Further, we have complied with the requirements of the National Audit Office's Auditor Guidance Note 01 issued in May 2020 which sets out supplementary guidance on ethical requirements for auditors of local public bodies.

As part of our assessment of our independence we note the following matters:

Matter	Conclusion
Relationships with Grant Thornton	We are not aware of any relationships between Grant Thornton and the Group that may reasonably be thought to bear on our integrity, independence and objectivity.
Relationships and Investments held by individuals	We have not identified any potential issues in respect of personal relationships with the Group or investments in the Group held by individuals.
Employment of Grant Thornton staff	We are not aware of any former Grant Thornton partners or staff being employed, or holding discussions in respect of employment, by the Group as a director or in a senior management role covering financial, accounting or control related areas.
Business relationships	We have not identified any business relationships between Grant Thornton and the Group.
Gifts and hospitality	We have not identified any gifts or hospitality provided to or received from senior management or staff.

We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention and consider that an objective reasonable and informed third party would take the same view. The firm and each covered person have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

## Audit and non-audit services

Details of fees charged are in Appendix E.

For the purposes of our audit we have made enquiries of all Grant Thornton UK LLP teams providing services to the group. No non-audit services were identified.

## Transparency

Grant Thornton publishes an annual Transparency Report, which sets out details of the action we have taken over the past year to improve audit quality as well as the results of internal and external quality inspections. For more details see [Grant Thornton International Transparency report 2023](#).

# Appendices

- A. Communication of audit matters to those charged with governance
- B. Action plan – Audit of Financial Statements
- C. Follow up of prior year recommendations
- D. Audit Adjustments
- E. Fees and non-audit services
- F. Auditing developments
- G. Audit opinion – PCC
- H. Audit opinion - Chief Constable

# A. Communication of audit matters to those charged with governance

Our communication plan	Audit Plan	Audit Findings
Respective responsibilities of auditor and management/those charged with governance	•	
Overview of the planned scope and timing of the audit, form, timing and expected general content of communications including significant risks	•	
Confirmation of independence and objectivity	•	•
A statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence. Relationships and other matters which might be thought to bear on independence. Details of non-audit work performed by Grant Thornton UK LLP and network firms, together with fees charged. Details of safeguards applied to threats to independence	•	•
Matters in relation to the group audit, including: Scope of work on components, involvement of group auditors in component audits, concerns over quality of component auditors' work, limitations of scope on the group audit, fraud or suspected fraud.	•	•
Views about the qualitative aspects of the Group's accounting and financial reporting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures		•
Significant findings from the audit		•
Significant matters and issue arising during the audit and written representations that have been sought		•
Significant difficulties encountered during the audit		•
Significant deficiencies in internal control identified during the audit		•
Significant matters arising in connection with related parties		•
Identification or suspicion of fraud involving management and/or which results in material misstatement of the financial statements		•
Non-compliance with laws and regulations		•
Unadjusted misstatements and material disclosure omissions		•
Expected modifications to the auditor's report, or emphasis of matter		•

ISA (UK) 260, as well as other ISAs (UK), prescribe matters which we are required to communicate with those charged with governance, and which we set out in the table here.

This document, the Audit Findings, outlines those key issues, findings and other matters arising from the audit, which we consider should be communicated in writing rather than orally, together with an explanation as to how these have been resolved.

## Respective responsibilities

As auditor we are responsible for performing the audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), which is directed towards forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance.

The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or those charged with governance of their responsibilities.

## Distribution of this Audit Findings report

Whilst we seek to ensure our audit findings are distributed to those individuals charged with governance, we are also required to distribute our findings to those members of senior management with significant operational and strategic responsibilities. We are grateful for your specific consideration and onward distribution of our report to all those charged with governance.

# B. Action Plan– Audit of Financial Statements

We have identified one recommendation for the PCC and Chief Constable as a result of issues identified during the course of our audit. The matters reported here are limited to those deficiencies that we have identified during the course of our audit and that we have concluded are of sufficient importance to merit being reported to you in accordance with auditing standards.

Assessment	Issue and risk	Recommendations
<div><div>●</div><div>Medium</div></div>	<p><b>Payroll testing - Leavers</b></p> <p>We identified an individual who had been included in the payroll for an additional four months post departure from their role. Due to this individual being a Special, there was nil expense for this period so this has not had a financial impact. The issue arose as HR had not received a copy of the resignation letter and only realised once a leaver report was run.</p>	<p>We would recommend that regular leaver’s reports are run in order to pick up on any discrepancies.</p> <p><b>Management response</b></p> <p>Management concur with the comment above.</p>

**Controls**

- High – Significant effect on financial statements
- Medium – Limited Effect on financial statements
- Low – Best practice



# C. Follow up of prior year recommendations

We identified the following issues in the audit of West Mercia PCC and Chief Constable's 2021/22 financial statements, which resulted in 2 recommendations being reported in our 2021/22 Audit Findings report. Please see details of our follow up actions below.

Assessment	Issue and risk previously communicated	Update on actions taken to address the issue
X	<p><b>Going Concern Assessment</b></p> <p>Management do not prepare a formally documented going concern assessment each year as part of the financial statements process. Although we gained sufficient assurance over the use of the going concern basis of accounting, compliance with best practice would mean completion of an annual assessment for each organization.</p> <p>We recommended that management prepare an annual going concern assessment to support their use of the going concern assumption.</p>	<p>We understand this is still the case in 2022/23, and therefore we retain this recommendation. We do however accept that while nothing has changed between years, the budget report does set out future financial viability and in reference to Practice Note 10, currently the public sector is dependent on service continuation rather than monthly cashflow.</p>
X	<p><b>Asset Register</b></p> <p>This recommendation was made in 2019/20 and noted as not yet addressed in 2021/22.</p> <p>Our audit work has identified that the PCC does not hold a register of all its Plant, Furniture &amp; Equipment assets.</p> <p>Although we are satisfied that this does not give rise to a risk of material misstatement in the financial statements, we consider this a fundamental gap in management's record keeping.</p> <p>There is a risk that there are assets in the financial statements that no longer belong to the PCC, or that useful economic lives assigned to these assets are not appropriate, but management do not have the information available to assess this.</p>	<p>We understand this is still the case in 2022/23, and therefore we retain this recommendation.</p>

## Assessment

- ✓ Action completed
- X Not yet addressed

# D. Audit Adjustments

## Impact of adjusted misstatements

The table below provides details of adjustments identified during the 2022/23 audit which have been made within the final set of financial statements. The PCC and Chief Constable are required to approve management's proposed treatment of all items recorded within the table below.

We are required to report all non-trivial misstatements to those charged with governance, whether or not the accounts have been adjusted by management.

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	Statement of Financial Position	Total
<b>Police Pension Scheme</b> A new actuary report was provided by GAD taking into account part year inflation in their calculations, as flagged by PwC as an auditor expert. This is a universal issue noted across a number of police pension schemes. This has increased the net liability disclosed in the Balance Sheet by £38.7m, from £1,945.2m to £1,983.9m.	Dr Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability £38.7m	Cr Defined Benefit Obligation (£38.7m)	Nil
<b>Overall impact</b>	Dr £38.7m	Cr (£38.7m)	

## Impact of unadjusted misstatements

The table below provides details of adjustments identified during the 2022/23 audit which have not been made within the final set of financial statements. The PCC and Chief Constable are required to approve management's proposed treatment of all items recorded within the table below.

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	Statement of Financial Position	Impact on total net expenditure	Reason for not adjusting
Our review identified that within the PCC accounts, the Short Term Debtors balance (£20m) and inventories (£0.785m) have been included together in the balance sheet, and inventories have been recognised within prepayments in the accompanying note. In our view we would expect inventory to be disclosed as a separate line item on the balance sheet in accordance with the CIPFA Code.	Nil	Cr Short Term Debtors £785k  Dr Inventories £785k	Nil	Materiality
<b>Overall impact</b>	Nil	Nil	Nil	

# D. Audit Adjustments

## Misclassification and disclosure changes

The table below provides details of misclassification and disclosure changes identified during the course of the audit which have been made in the final sets of financial statements.

Disclosure/issue/Omission	Group, PCC or Chief Constable?	Adjusted?
The Audit fees disclosed in Note 17 don't agree to the values disclosed in the Audit plans. This was due to the preparation of the accounts occurring prior to receipt of final fee figures.	All	✓
The updated actuary report from GAD in relation to the Police Pension Scheme has also affected the pensions disclosure notes. These have been updated in line with recalculated figures from the actuary.	All	✓
As part of our Depreciation testing, we noted that a number of vehicles had useful economic lives outside of the stated accounting policy (3 to 7 years). This is due to the nature of certain vehicles. As a result the depreciation policy has been amended to 2-10 years to better reflect the vehicle portfolio.	All	✓
The Chief Constable accounts include a typo in the Balance Sheet for Short Term Creditors – this shows a balance of (£17,234k) when it should show (£17,374k). The total below is correct and it is only the individual line in the Balance Sheet that needs to be amended. Two additional typos were noted in the CC accounts Note 15 line "Other receivables" that should show £15,937k as well as CC Note 16 "Group Creditors" which should disclose (£17,374k).	CC	✓
The PCC accounts Note 28 line "Less Chief Constable Credits" should be displayed as a debit instead of credit. The total of Note 28 also includes a typo requiring an amendment from (£23,273k) to (£23,723k). The PCC Balance sheet included the correct figure and not the typo from Note 28, therefore this is exclusively a disclosure amendment.	PCC	✓
Note 12 Taxation and Non-Specific grant income line "Local Council Tax Support Grant" was incorrectly entered as (£9,119k) rather than (£9,199k). The total of the note is correct with just the individual line requiring amendment.	All	✓
We noted a number of spelling, referencing, dating and presentational improvements identified as part of the director, manager and central team's reviews of the accounts.	All	✓

# E. Fees and non-audit services

We confirm below our final fees charged for the audit and confirm there were no fees for the provision of non-audit services.

Audit fees	PCC	Chief Constable	Total
Scale fee published by PSAA	£30,587	£17,732	£48,319
Additional work on Value for Money (VfM) under new NAO Code	£7,000	£2,000	£9,000
Increased audit requirements of revised ISAs 540 / 240 / 700	£1,200	£600	£1,800
Enhanced audit procedures on journals testing	£2,000	£1,000	£3,000
Impact of revisions to ISA 240 and ISA 315 applicable to the period under audit	£2,500	£2,500	£5,000
Response to quality reviews – testing of payroll changes	£0	£500	£500
<b>Total audit fees (excluding VAT)</b>	<b>£43,287</b>	<b>£24,332</b>	<b>£67,619</b>

None of the above services were provided on a contingent fee basis.

This covers all services provided by us and our network to the group, its senior management and its affiliates, and other services provided to other known connected parties that may reasonably be thought to bear on our integrity, objectivity or independence. (The FRC Ethical Standard (ES 1.69))

We noted initially there was a small discrepancy between the fees disclosed per the accounts and those in the audit plan, this has been documented as part of our disclosure amendments in Appendix D. The accounts have been amended for this discrepancy and the fees reconcile to the financial statements.

# F. Auditing developments

## Revised ISAs

There are changes to the following ISA (UK):

- ISA (UK) 315 (Revised July 2020) 'Identifying and Assessing the Risks of Material Misstatement'

This impacts audits of financial statement for periods commencing on or after 15 December 2021.

- ISA (UK) 220 (Revised July 2021) 'Quality Management for an Audit of Financial Statements'; and
- ISA (UK) 240 (Revised May 2021) 'The Auditor's Responsibilities Relating to Fraud in an Audit of Financial Statements'

These changes will impact audit for audits of financial statement for periods commencing on or after 15 December 2022.

A summary of the impact of the key changes on various aspects of the audit is included below:

Area of change	Impact of changes
Risk assessment	<p>The nature, timing and extent of audit procedures performed in support of the audit opinion may change due to clarification of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the risk assessment process, which provides the basis for the assessment of the risks of material misstatement and the design of audit procedures</li> <li>• the identification and extent of work effort needed for indirect and direct controls in the system of internal control</li> <li>• the controls for which design and implementation needs to be assess and how that impacts sampling</li> <li>• the considerations for using automated tools and techniques.</li> </ul>
Direction, supervision and review of the engagement	<p>Greater responsibilities, audit procedures and actions are assigned directly to the engagement partner, resulting in increased involvement in the performance and review of audit procedures.</p>
Professional scepticism	<p>The design, nature, timing and extent of audit procedures performed in support of the audit opinion may change due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased emphasis on the exercise of professional judgement and professional scepticism</li> <li>• an equal focus on both corroborative and contradictory information obtained and used in generating audit evidence</li> <li>• increased guidance on management and auditor bias</li> <li>• additional focus on the authenticity of information used as audit evidence</li> <li>• a focus on response to inquiries that appear implausible</li> </ul>
Definition of engagement team	<p>The definition of engagement team when applied in a group audit, will include both the group auditors and the component auditors. The implications of this will become clearer when the auditing standard governing special considerations for group audits is finalised. In the interim, the expectation is that this will extend a number of requirements in the standard directed at the 'engagement team' to component auditors in addition to the group auditor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration is also being given to the potential impacts on confidentiality and independence.</li> </ul>
Fraud	<p>The design, nature timing and extent of audit procedures performed in support of the audit opinion may change due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarification of the requirements relating to understanding fraud risk factors</li> <li>• additional communications with management or those charged with governance</li> </ul>
Documentation	<p>The amendments to these auditing standards will also result in additional documentation requirements to demonstrate how these requirements have been addressed.</p>

# G. Audit opinion – Group and PCC

Our audit opinion is included below.

We anticipate we will provide the Group and PCC with an unmodified audit report.

## **DRAFT Independent auditor's report to the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia**

### **Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements**

#### **Opinion on financial statements**

We have audited the financial statements of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia (the 'Police and Crime Commissioner') and its subsidiary the Chief Constable (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) for the Group, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) for the PCC, the Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS) for the Group, the Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS) for the PCC, the Balance Sheets for the Group and the PCC, the Cash Flow Statements for the Group and the PCC and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and include the police pension fund financial statements comprising the Police Pension Fund Account and Notes to the Police Pension Fund Account. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the group and of the Police and Crime Commissioner as at 31 March 2023 and of the group's expenditure and income and the Police and Crime Commissioner's expenditure and income for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

#### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law, as required by the Code of Audit Practice (2020) ("the Code of Audit Practice") approved by the Comptroller and Auditor General. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report. We are independent of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

# G. Audit opinion – Group and PCC

## Conclusions relating to going concern

We are responsible for concluding on the appropriateness of the Treasurer to the Commissioner's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Police and Crime Commissioner and group's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify the auditor's opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Police and Crime Commissioner and the group to cease to continue as a going concern.

In our evaluation of the Treasurer to the Commissioner's conclusions, and in accordance with the expectation set out within the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 that the Police and Crime Commissioner and group's financial statements shall be prepared on a going concern basis, we considered the inherent risks associated with the continuation of services provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the group. In doing so we had regard to the guidance provided in Practice Note 10 Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom (Revised 2022) on the application of ISA (UK) 570 Going Concern to public sector entities. We assessed the reasonableness of the basis of preparation used by the Police and Crime Commissioner and group and the Police and Crime Commissioner and group's disclosures over the going concern period.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Police and Crime Commissioner's and the group's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Treasurer to the Commissioner's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

The responsibilities of the Treasurer to the Commissioner with respect to going concern are described in the 'Responsibilities of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Treasurer to the Commissioner for the financial statements' section of this report.

## Other information

The Treasurer to the Commissioner is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the Police and Crime Commissioner and group financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the group obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Other information we are required to report on by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

Under the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office in April 2020 on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (the Code of Audit Practice) we are required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with the 'delivering good governance in Local Government Framework 2016 Edition' published by CIPFA and SOLACE or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit. We are not required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement addresses all risks and controls or that risks are satisfactorily



# G. Audit opinion – Group and PCC

addressed by internal controls.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinion on other matter required by the Code of Audit Practice

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit of the financial statements and our knowledge of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the other information published together with the financial statements in the Statement of Accounts, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make a written recommendation to the Police and Crime Commissioner under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matters.

## Responsibilities of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Treasurer

## to the Commissioner for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities, the Police and Crime Commissioner is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. That officer is the Treasurer to the Commissioner. The Treasurer to the Commissioner is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Treasurer to the Commissioner determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Treasurer to the Commissioner is responsible for assessing the Police and Crime Commissioner's and the group's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless they have been informed by the relevant national body of the intention to dissolve the Police and Crime Commissioner and the group without the transfer of its services to another public sector entity.

## Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.



# G. Audit opinion – Group and PCC

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Police and Crime Commissioner and the group and determined that the most significant, which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements, are those related to the reporting frameworks (international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Government Act 2003 and the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011). We also identified the following additional regulatory frameworks in respect of the police pension fund; the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, The Police Pension Fund Regulations 2007, The Police Pensions Regulations 2006 and the Police Pensions Regulations 2015.

We enquired of senior officers and the Police and Crime Commissioner, concerning the Police and Crime Commissioner and group's policies and procedures relating to:

- the identification, evaluation and compliance with laws and regulations;
- the detection and response to the risks of fraud; and
- the establishment of internal controls to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations

We enquired of senior officers and the Police and Crime Commissioner, whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations or whether they had any knowledge of actual, suspected or alleged fraud.

We assessed the susceptibility of the Police and Crime Commissioner and group's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur, by evaluating officers' incentives and opportunities for manipulation of the financial statements. This included the evaluation of the risk of management override of controls. We determined that the principal risks were in relation to:

- large and unusual journal entries posted during the year and post year end; and
- the significant accounting estimates in the financial statements, including those related to the valuation of property, plant and equipment, and the net pensions liability.

Our audit procedures involved:

- evaluation of the design effectiveness of controls that the Treasurer to the Commissioner has in place to prevent and detect fraud;
- journal entry testing, with a focus on large and unusual journal entries posted during the year and post year end;
- challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates in respect of land and building valuations and the net defined benefit pension liability valuation; and
- assessing the extent of compliance with the relevant laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statement item.

These audit procedures were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from fraud or error. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error and detecting irregularities that result from fraud is inherently more difficult than detecting those that result from error, as fraud may involve collusion, deliberate concealment, forgery or intentional misrepresentations. Also, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it.

We communicated relevant laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members, including fraud in revenue and expenditure recognition, and the significant accounting estimates related to land and building valuations, the net defined pension liability valuation and expenditure accruals.

# G. Audit opinion – Group and PCC

We remained alert to any indications of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, throughout the audit.

Our assessment of the appropriateness of the collective competence and capabilities of the Police and Crime Commissioner and group's engagement team included consideration of the engagement team's:

- understanding of, and practical experience with audit engagements of a similar nature and complexity through appropriate training and participation
- knowledge of the police sector
- understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements specific to the Police and Crime Commissioner and group including:
  - the provisions of the applicable legislation
  - guidance issued by CIPFA, LASAAC and SOLACE
  - the applicable statutory provisions.

In assessing the potential risks of material misstatement, we obtained an understanding of:

- the Police and Crime Commissioner and group's operations, including the nature of its income and expenditure and its services and of its objectives and strategies to understand the classes of transactions, account balances, expected financial statement disclosures and business risks that may result in risks of material misstatement.
- the Police and Crime Commissioner and group's control environment, including the policies and procedures implemented by the Police and Crime Commissioner and group to ensure compliance with the requirements of the financial reporting framework.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Report on other legal and regulatory requirements - the Police and Crime Commissioner's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**

**Matter on which we are required to report by exception – the Police and Crime Commissioner's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if, in our opinion, we have not been able to satisfy ourselves that the Police and Crime Commissioner has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2023.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matter.

## **Responsibilities of the Police and Crime Commissioner**

The Police and Crime Commissioner is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the review of the Police and Crime Commissioner's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**

# G. Audit opinion – Group and PCC

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to be satisfied that the Police and Crime Commissioner has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Police and Crime Commissioner's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We undertake our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in January 2023. This guidance sets out the arrangements that fall within the scope of 'proper arrangements'. When reporting on these arrangements, the Code of Audit Practice requires auditors to structure their commentary on arrangements under three specified reporting criteria:

- Financial sustainability: how the Police and Crime Commissioner plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;
- Governance: how the Police and Crime Commissioner ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks; and
- Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the Police and Crime Commissioner uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.

We document our understanding of the arrangements the Police and Crime Commissioner has in place for each of these three specified reporting criteria, gathering sufficient evidence to support our risk assessment and commentary in our Auditor's Annual Report. In undertaking our work, we consider whether there is evidence to suggest that there are significant weaknesses in arrangements.

## Report on other legal and regulatory requirements - Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire for the year ended 31 March 2023 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and

Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice until we have completed:

- the work necessary to issue our Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) Component Assurance statement for the Police and Crime Commissioner for the year ended 31 March 2023.

We are satisfied that this work does not have a material effect on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

## Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Police and Crime Commissioner, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Police and Crime Commissioner those matters we are required to state to the Police and Crime Commissioner in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Police and Crime Commissioner as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

## Signature:

Jackson Murray, Director

for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Local Auditor

Bristol

## Date:

# H. Audit opinion – Chief Constable

Our audit opinion is included below.

We anticipate we will provide the Chief Constable with an unmodified audit report.

## DRAFT Independent auditor's report to the Chief Constable for West Mercia

### Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

#### Opinion on financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of the Chief Constable for West Mercia (the 'Chief Constable') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES), the Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS), the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and include the police pension fund financial statements comprising the Police Pension Fund Account and notes to the Police Pension Fund Account. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Chief Constable as at 31 March 2023 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23; and

- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law, as required by the Code of Audit Practice (2020) ("the Code of Audit Practice") approved by the Comptroller and Auditor General. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report. We are independent of the Chief Constable in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

We are responsible for concluding on the appropriateness of the Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Chief Constable's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our report to the related disclosures in the financial statements

# H. Audit opinion – Chief Constable

or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify the auditor's opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Chief Constable to cease to continue as a going concern.

In our evaluation of the Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable's conclusions, and in accordance with the expectation set out within the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 that the Chief Constable's financial statements shall be prepared on a going concern basis, we considered the inherent risks associated with the continuation of services provided by the Chief Constable. In doing so we had regard to the guidance provided in Practice Note 10 Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom (Revised 2022) on the application of ISA (UK) 570 Going Concern to public sector entities. We assessed the reasonableness of the basis of preparation used by the Chief Constable and the Chief Constable's disclosures over the going concern period.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Chief Constable's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

The responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable with respect to going concern are described in the 'Responsibilities of the Chief Constable and the Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable for the financial statements' section of this report.

## Other information

The Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge of the Chief Constable obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Other information we are required to report on by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

Under the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office in April 2020 on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (the Code of Audit Practice) we are required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with the 'delivering good governance in Local Government Framework 2016 Edition' published by CIPFA and SOLACE or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit. We are not required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement addresses all risks and controls or that risks are satisfactorily addressed by internal controls.

We have nothing to report in this regard.



# H. Audit opinion – Chief Constable

## Opinion on other matter required by the Code of Audit Practice

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit of the financial statements and our knowledge of the Chief Constable, the other information published together with the financial statements in the Statement of Accounts for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make a written recommendation to the Chief Constable under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matters.

## Responsibilities of the Chief Constable and the Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities, the Chief Constable is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. That officer is the Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable. The Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable is responsible for assessing the Chief Constable's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless they have been informed by the relevant national body of the intention to dissolve the Chief Constable without the transfer of its services to another public sector entity.

## Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

# H. Audit opinion – Chief Constable

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Chief Constable and determined that the most significant, which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements, are those related to the reporting frameworks (international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Government Act 2003 and the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. We also identified the following additional regulatory frameworks in respect of the police pension fund; the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, The Police Pension Fund Regulations 2007, The Police Pensions Regulations 2006 and the Police Pensions Regulations 2015.

We enquired of senior officers and the Chief Constable, concerning the Chief Constable's policies and procedures relating to:

- the identification, evaluation and compliance with laws and regulations;
- the detection and response to the risks of fraud; and
- the establishment of internal controls to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations

We enquired of senior officers and the Chief Constable, whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations or whether they had any knowledge of actual, suspected or alleged fraud.

We assessed the susceptibility of the Chief Constable's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur, by evaluating officers' incentives and opportunities for manipulation of the financial statements.

This included the evaluation of the risk of management override of controls. We determined that the principal risks were in relation to:

- large and unusual journal entries posted during the year and post year end; and
- the significant accounting estimates in the financial statements, including those related to the valuation of the net pension defined benefit pension liability.
- Our audit procedures involved:
  - evaluation of the design effectiveness of controls that the Chief Finance Officer to the Chief Constable has in place to prevent and detect fraud;
  - journal entry testing, with a focus on large and unusual journal entries posted during the year and post year end;
  - challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates in respect of the valuation of the net defined benefit pension; and
  - assessing the extent of compliance with the relevant laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statement item.

These audit procedures were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from fraud or error. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error and detecting irregularities that result from fraud is inherently more difficult than detecting those that result from error, as fraud may involve collusion, deliberate concealment, forgery or intentional misrepresentations. Also, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it.

# H. Audit opinion – Chief Constable

We communicated relevant laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members, including fraud in revenue and expenditure recognition, and the significant accounting estimates related to land and building valuations, the net defined pension liability valuation and expenditure accruals. We remained alert to any indications of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, throughout the audit.

Our assessment of the appropriateness of the collective competence and capabilities of the engagement team included consideration of the engagement team's:

- understanding of, and practical experience with audit engagements of a similar nature and complexity through appropriate training and participation
- knowledge of the police sector
- understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements specific to the Chief Constable including:
  - the provisions of the applicable legislation
  - guidance issued by CIPFA, LASAAC and SOLACE
  - the applicable statutory provisions.

In assessing the potential risks of material misstatement, we obtained an understanding of:

- the Chief Constable's operations, including the nature of its income and expenditure and its services and of its objectives and strategies to understand the classes of transactions, account balances, expected financial statement disclosures and business risks that may result in risks of material misstatement.
- the Chief Constable's control environment, including the policies and procedures implemented by the Chief Constable to ensure compliance with the requirements of the financial reporting framework.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report

**Report on other legal and regulatory requirements - the Chief Constable's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**

**Matter on which we are required to report by exception – the Chief Constable's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if, in our opinion, we have not been able to satisfy ourselves that the Chief Constable has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2023.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matter.

**Responsibilities of the Chief Constable**

The Chief Constable is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the review of the Chief Constable's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**



# H. Audit opinion – Chief Constable

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to be satisfied that the Chief Constable has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Chief Constable's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in January 2023. This guidance sets out the arrangements that fall within the scope of 'proper arrangements'. When reporting on these arrangements, the Code of Audit Practice requires auditors to structure their commentary on arrangements under three specified reporting criteria:

- Financial sustainability: how the Chief Constable plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;
- Governance: how the Chief Constable ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks; and
- Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the Chief Constable uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.

We document our understanding of the arrangements the Chief Constable has in place for each of these three specified reporting criteria, gathering sufficient evidence to support our risk assessment and commentary in our Auditor's Annual Report. In undertaking our work, we consider whether there is evidence to suggest that there are significant weaknesses in arrangements

## Report on other legal and regulatory requirements - Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate for the Chief Constable of Warwickshire for the year ended 31 March 2023 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act

2014 and the Code of Audit Practice until we have completed:

- the work necessary to issue our Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) Component Assurance statement for the Police and Crime Commissioner for the year ended 31 March 2023.

We are satisfied that this work does not have a material effect on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

## Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Chief Constable, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Chief Constable those matters we are required to state to the Chief Constable in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Chief Constable as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

## Signature:

Jackson Murray, Director

for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Local Auditor

Bristol

## Date:

