

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28 OCTOBER 2011

BEST VALUE AUDIT AND INSPECTION - STRATHCLYDE POLICE AND STRATHCLYDE POLICE AUTHORITY

Report by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To advise the Governance and Scrutiny Committee of the publication of Audit Scotland's Best Value Audit and Inspection report on Strathclyde Police and Strathclyde Police Authority.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** This report was published by Audit Scotland in July 2011. The key objective of this joint audit was to assess the extent to which Strathclyde Police Authority and Force are meeting their duties under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and complying with Scottish Government guidance.
- 2.2** The report also sought to agree planned improvements with Councils, the Force and Board, which would be reviewed by External Auditors and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMICS).

3. KEY MESSAGES

- 3.1** Overall, the report demonstrates that Strathclyde Police is performing well and that the Force demonstrates many of the elements of best value. The key messages from the report are summarised below:
- The Force executive demonstrates strong leadership and they have created a strong performance culture within the organisation. A significant change programme has commenced to prepare the Force for the challenges ahead.
 - The introduction of the Integrated Service Delivery Model has further strengthened the commitment to community policing by increasing the number of officers working directly with and within their local communities, addressing the issues most affecting their citizens.
 - Overall, crime rates are falling and detection rates have increased. This improvement includes positive progress on reducing anti-social behaviour, violent crimes, acquisitive crimes (e.g. fraud and theft) and vandalism.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The report contains 11 recommendations in total, 5 of which are aimed at Strathclyde Police Authority, 4 which are aimed at Strathclyde Police and 2 joint recommendations. These are set out below.

The Strathclyde Police Authority should:

- Adopt a more proactive approach to gathering performance and improvement information from the Force to enable it to more effectively exercise its oversight and scrutiny role.
- Identify opportunities for increased involvement in equality and diversity activity.
- Strengthen member training and development, with a focus on improving member understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Adopt a more robust approach to the monitoring of the authority's improvement agenda arising from the Chief Executive's review of authority governance.
- Establish arrangements for monitoring the cost and effectiveness of its support function to ensure that it is sufficiently adding value.

Strathclyde Police Force should:

- Further develop its strategic approach to change, ensuring that robust options appraisal, risk identification/mitigation and post-implementation evaluation measures are fully integrated into the change process and that an effective change communications strategy underpins this.
- Undertake a staff survey to provide their workforce with an opportunity to shape the future of policing in Strathclyde.
- Continue to develop its methodology to understand the cost of policing activity and its link to resource deployment.
- Review the process of recording complaints to ensure all relevant information is accurately recorded and effectively scrutinised.

Joint Improvements – the Authority and the Force should:

- Establish more effective joint working arrangements to allow them to better discharge their shared duty of Best Value.
- Work jointly to develop a shared vision for policing across Strathclyde.

5. FOLLOW UP ACTIVITY

5.1 The joint report contains an Improvement Agenda, the main points of which are covered in section 4 above. The Accounts Commission has requested a further

report in around 12 months time. This will enable the Commission to review the police authority's progress in fulfilling its role more effectively and in getting better value from the resources it has available to it.

6. FINANCIAL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct financial, legal or policy implications arising from this report.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that the Governance and Scrutiny Committee:

- (i) note the publication of Audit Scotland's Best Value Audit and Inspection Report on Strathclyde Police and Strathclyde Police Authority;
- (ii) consider the key messages of this report as summarised in section 3;
- (iii) note the recommendations made by as set out in section 4;
- (iv) otherwise note the contents of this report.

Alex McPhee
Executive Director of Finance & Corporate Support
19 October 2011

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. **Strathclyde Police and Strathclyde Police Authority – Best Value Audit and Inspection (July 2011).**

Any person wishing to inspect the above background paper or seeking further information should contact Gwen Barker, Community Planning and Partnership Manager, tel. : (01563 554602) or Robert Moore, Corporate Policy Officer tel.: (01563) 576110.