



The Joint Audit Findings for Dorset Police

Year ended 31 March 2024

Police and Crime Commissioner and
Chief Constable for Dorset

12 February 2025





Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable

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12 February 2025

Private and Confidential

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Dear Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable

Joint Audit Findings for Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable for the year ended 31 March 2024

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 and confirmation of auditor independence, as required by International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260. Its contents have been discussed with management.

As auditor we are responsible for performing the audit, in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (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 for the preparation of the financial statements.

The contents of this report relate only to those matters which came to our attention during the conduct of our normal audit procedures which are designed for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements. Our audit is not designed to test all internal controls or identify all areas of control weakness. However, where, as part of our testing, we identify control weaknesses, we will report these to you. In consequence, our work cannot be relied upon to disclose all defalcations or other irregularities, or to include all possible improvements in internal control that a more extensive special examination might identify. 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.

We encourage you to read our transparency report which sets out how the firm complies with the requirements of the Audit Firm Governance Code and the steps we have taken to drive audit quality by reference to the Audit Quality Framework. The report includes information on the firm's processes and practices for quality control, for ensuring independence and objectivity, for partner remuneration, our governance, our international network arrangements and our core values, amongst other things. This report is available at [transparency-report-2023.pdf \(granthornton.co.uk\)](https://www.granthornton.co.uk/transparency-report-2023.pdf).

We would like to take this opportunity to record our appreciation for the kind assistance provided by the finance team and other staff during our audit.

Grace Hawkins

Director
For Grant Thornton UK LLP

Chartered Accountants

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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, the PCC and Chief Constable as those charged with governance, and the Independent Audit Committee.

Grace Hawkins

For Grant Thornton UK LLP

Date: 12 February 2025

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.

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1. Headlines

This table summarises the key findings and other matters arising from the statutory audit of Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner ('the PCC') and Dorset Chief Constable and the preparation of the PCC's and Chief Constable's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 for those charged with governance.

Financial Statements

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:

- give a true and fair view of the financial positions of the PCC and Chief Constable's income and expenditure for the year; and
- 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.

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

Our audit work was completed remotely during October 2024 – February 2025. Our findings are summarised on pages 7 to 21. We have identified no adjustments to the financial statements of the Chief Constable that result in a change to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet and Movement in Reserves Statement and one adjustment to the financial statements of the Police and Crime Commissioner Group that result in a change to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet and Movement in Reserves Statement. We have identified twelve other adjustments (PCC Group) and six other adjustments (CC) relating to the Notes to the Accounts and disclosures within the accounts. Audit adjustments are detailed in Appendix D and will highlight whether these relate to the Chief Constable, Police and Crime Commissioner Group or both sets of financial statements.

We have also raised recommendations for management as a result of our audit work. These are set out in Appendix E. Our follow up of recommendations from the prior year's audit are detailed in Appendix C.

Our work is substantially complete and there are no matters of which we are aware that would require modification of our audit opinion for the PCC's financial statements (including the financial statements which consolidate the financial activities of the Chief Constable) or the Chief Constable's financial statements Appendix I and Appendix J, subject to the following outstanding matters;

- final quality review of work performed
- receipt of management representation letters (see Appendix F and Appendix G); and
- review of the final sets of financial statements

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.

Our anticipated financial statements audit report opinions will be qualified, due to Pension Fund auditor assurances under AGN 07 not being made available for the 2022/23 financial statements audit, we were not able to satisfy ourselves by alternative means of the material accuracy of the opening balance of Local Government (Police Staff) pension scheme asset disclosures. Due to the limitation in scope of opening balances reflected in the 2023/24 financial statements, we were unable to determine whether any adjustment to this amount, or other amounts disclosed in the financial statements in respect of the share of assets and liabilities, were necessary at 31 March 2023, or whether there was any consequential effect on the remeasurement of these assets for the year ended 31 March 2024.

1. Headlines

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

Our work on the PCC and Chief Constable's value for money (VFM) arrangements was reported in our commentary on the PCC and Chief Constable's arrangements in our Auditor's Annual Report (AAR) at the Independent Audit Committee on 4 December 2024. We have been able to satisfy ourselves that the PCC and Chief Constable has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are satisfied that the PCC and Chief Constable have made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use of resources.

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 have completed the majority of work under the Code but will not be able to certify the completion of the audit until the NAO have finalised their Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) procedures for 2023/24. Please note that this applies to all Local Government bodies and is not specific to Dorset Police. Please see page 17 for further information in this area.

Significant matters

We did not encounter any significant difficulties or identify any significant matters arising during our audit.

We would like to record our thanks to the finance team who have responded to our audit queries promptly and appropriately throughout the audit period.

1. Headlines

National context – audit backlog

Government proposals around the backlog

On 30 July 2024, the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution, Jim McMahon, provided the following written statement to Parliament [Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#). This confirms the government's intention to introduce a backstop date for English local authority audits up to 2022/23 of 13 December 2024 and for 2023/24 audits of 28 February. We are pleased to confirm that we anticipate concluding your 2023/24 audit in advance of the backstop date, with the 2022/23 audit previously completed in early 2024.

We would like to thank everyone at the PCC and Chief Constable for their support in working with us to ensure information was provided in a timely manner to ensure we have not fallen behind our planned delivery timeline and this should enable us to issue a timely audit opinion.

New National Audit Office Code

As part of ongoing reforms to local audit, the National Audit Office released a new Code, which has been approved through Parliament. One of the objectives of the new Code is to ensure more timely reporting of audit work, including Value for Money. The Code requires that from 2025, auditors will issue their Annual Auditor's Report by November each year. We have already put resource plans in place to ensure we achieve this deadline across all audited bodies.

National context – level of borrowing

All PCCs and Chief Constables continue to operate in an increasingly challenging financial context. With inflationary pressures placing increasing demands on budgets, there are concerns as PCCs and Chief Constables look to alternative ways to generate income. The PCC Group has stable levels of borrowing and a steady minimum revenue provision. We are comfortable with the level of borrowing currently exhibited by the PCC group.

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 will be discussed with management, the PCC and Chief Constable as those charged with governance, and the Independent Audit Committee.

As auditor we are responsible for performing the 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 PCC and CC's business and is risk based, and in particular included:

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

Conclusion

We have substantially completed our audit of your financial statements and subject to outstanding queries being resolved, we anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion on the financial statements of both the PCC and the Chief Constable following Independent Audit Committee meeting on 19 February 2025, as detailed in Appendix H and Appendix I. These outstanding items include:

- final quality review of work performed
- receipt of management representation letters (see Appendix F and Appendix G)); and
- review of the final sets of financial statements

Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to record our appreciation for the assistance provided by the finance team and other staff.

During our audit procedures of Employee Benefit Expenditure, we had some difficulties in obtaining appropriate listings for employee Change in Circumstances to allow us to select an appropriate sample for testing back to HR records. This caused some delays in our procedures, but these were not significant. For the 2024/25 audit, we will work with finance officers to ensure this report is readily available early on in the audit cycle to avoid these delays.

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 have been updated since those reported in our audit plan dated 29 July 2024 and presented at Independent Audit Committee on 25 September 2024, due to revised calculations following the conclusion of the 2022/23 audit of the PCC and CC financial statements.

We set out in this table our determination of materiality for the PCC Group and Chief Constable

PCC Group and Chief Constable (£'000)

Materiality for the financial statements	4,800
Performance materiality	3,600
Trivial matters	240
Materiality for senior officers remuneration (per officer)	10

We have determined financial statement materiality based on the lowest gross expenditure figure of the group, the PCC and the Chief Constable for the financial year. The Chief Constable has the lowest figure therefore this has been used to determine our materiality. In the prior year we used the same benchmark, £4.8m (PY £4.4m), equates to 1.5% of the Chief Constable's draft accounts 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 Joint Audit Plan.

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Relates to	Commentary
<p>Management override of controls</p> <p>Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management override of controls is present in all entities.</p>	PCC / Chief Constable / Group	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluated the design and implementation of management controls over journals; analysed the journals listing and determined the criteria for selecting high risk unusual journals; identified unusual journals made during the year and the accounts production stage for further audit testing; gained an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied by management and considered their reasonableness; and evaluated the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions. <p>Our audit work has not identified any issues in respect of management override of controls.</p>
<p>Improper revenue recognition</p> <p>Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a rebuttable presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue.</p> <p>This presumption can be rebutted if the auditor concludes that there is no risk of material misstatement due to fraud relating to revenue recognition.</p> <p>In addition, Public Audit Forum Practice Note 10 states that auditors must also consider the risk that material misstatements in financial reporting may arise due to manipulation of expenditure recognition (for instance by deferring expenditure to a later period).</p> <p>As most public bodies are net spending bodies, then the risk of material misstatement due to fraud related to expenditure may be greater than the risk of material misstatements due to fraud related to revenue recognition.</p>	PCC / Chief Constable / Group	<p>As outlined in our audit plan, we considered the risk factors set out in ISA (UK) 240 and the nature of the revenue and expenditure streams of the PCC and the Chief Constable. We determined that the risk of fraud arising from revenue and expenditure recognition can be rebutted, because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is little incentive to manipulate revenue or expenditure recognition; opportunities to manipulate revenue and expenditure recognition are very limited; and the culture and ethical frameworks of public sector bodies, including PCC, Chief Constable or Group, means that all forms of fraud are seen as unacceptable. We have tested the significant expenditure streams in our work on employee costs and operating expenditure and have not found any material issues. <p>We consider our rebuttal to remain appropriate.</p>

2. Financial Statements: Significant risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Relates to	Commentary
<p>Closing Valuation of land and buildings</p> <p>The PCC group engaged an external valuer (Wilks Head & Eve) to fully revalue their portfolio of Land & Buildings as at 31 March 2024.</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 this estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of land and buildings as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	PCC / Group	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluated management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to valuation experts and the scope of their work; evaluated the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation expert; written to the valuer to confirm the basis on which the valuation was carried out; challenged the information and assumptions used by the valuer to assess completeness and consistency with our understanding, the PCC's valuer's report and the assumptions that underpin the valuation; engaged our own valuation expert to assess the instructions to PCC's valuers, the valuers report and the assumptions that underpin the valuation; and tested, on a sample basis, revaluations made during the year to see if they had been input correctly into the PCC (and group's) asset register; and Evaluated on a sample basis, the assumptions made by the valuer, and management, for those assets revalued at 31 March 2024. <p>Findings from this work are outlined below:</p> <p>No material issues have been noted within our work on Land & Buildings, however two recommendations have been raised in Appendix B which details best practice to be taken forward into future years.</p>

2. Financial Statements: Significant risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Relates to	Commentary
<p>Valuation of the net defined benefit liability (Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and Police Pension Scheme (PPS))</p> <p>The PCC's and Chief Constable's pension fund net liability as reflected in its balance sheet as the net defined benefit liability, represents a significant estimate in the financial statements and is made up of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and Police Pension Scheme (PPS).</p> <p>The pension fund net liability is considered a significant estimate due to the size of the numbers involved (£1.134bn in the PCC's and Chief Constable's balance sheet) and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>The actuarial assumptions used are the responsibility of the entities 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 liability. We have therefore concluded that there is a significant risk of material misstatement in the IAS 19 estimate due to the assumptions used in their calculation. With regard to these assumptions, we have therefore identified valuation of the Chief Constable and Group's pension fund net liability as a significant risk.</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>PCC / Chief Constable / Group</p>	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 evaluate the design of the associated controls; evaluated the instructions issued by management to their management expert (Barnett Waddingham "the actuary") for this estimate and the scope of the actuary's work; assessed the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuary who carried out the Group's pension fund valuation; assessed the accuracy and completeness of the information provided by the Group to the actuary to estimate the liability; tested the consistency of the pension fund asset (LGPS only) and liability and disclosures in the notes to the core financial statements with the actuarial reports; received assurances from the auditor of the Dorset County Pension Fund regarding 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 for the LGPS only (relating to 2023/24); and 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. <p>We note that this is the first instance in which the Force has had to present the impact of IFRIC 14 and the application of an asset ceiling informed by the actuary as at the year end 31 March 2024. We have satisfied ourselves that the actuary has given suitable consideration to this in their calculations and the outputs of which are in line with expectation. Some adjustments have been processed in the accounts of both the PCC group and Chief Constable to ensure suitable presentation in the final accounts, more details of which can be found in Appendix D of this report. As part of the 2022/23 audit, an assessment of the impact of IFRIC 14 was made and no impact was found on this financial period.</p> <p>Our audit work has not identified any issues in respect of valuation of the net pension fund liability as at 31 March 2024, however our audit opinion will be modified with respect to the limitation of scope on the opening balance relating to the LGPS scheme, due to the reasoning outlined on page 4.</p>

2. Financial Statements: new issues and areas of focus

This section provides commentary on new issues and areas of focus which were identified during the course of the audit that were not previously communicated in the Audit Plan.

Issue	Commentary	Auditor view
IFRS 16 implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following consultation and agreement by FRAB, the Code will provide for authorities to opt to apply IFRS 16 in advance of the revised implementation date of 1 April 2024. In advance of this standard coming into effect, we would expect audited bodies to disclose the title of the standard, the date of initial application and the nature of the changes in accounting policy for leases, along with the estimated impact of IFRS 16 on the accounts. 	<p>We have reviewed the PCC Group's IFRS 16 assessment working papers and disclosure notes in the draft accounts to ensure calculations and assumptions made are reasonable and in line with the standard, so this can be implemented from 1 April 2024.</p>	<p>We are satisfied that the PCC Group have assessed the impact of IFRS 16 suitably and have used assumptions that are appropriate in line with the standard. The entity have also added a disclosure in the CC accounts under Note 2 to highlight that the impact on the CC is unknown currently, which we deem appropriate and transparent for the reader.</p> <p>We will review the figures and calculations within the 2024/25 financial statements upon implementation of this standard within the 2024/25 audit to ensure the standard had been suitably adopted.</p>
Qualification of Audit Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following on from the qualification of the audit report in the 2022/23 period, this has meant that a limitation of scope is placed on the opening balances relating to Police Staff Scheme Assets in the 2023/24 period. 	<p>Management are aware that the qualification of the 2022/23 audit report would impact the audit report in 2023/24 and therefore this modification will remain within this audit report also, for the reasons outlined on page 4.</p>	<p>We have proposed a modified audit report for the 2023/24 audits of the PCC group and CC. We will continue to assess the impact of the 2022/23 audit opinion on future audit periods and will work on re-gaining sufficient assurance so that this modification does not continue indefinitely.</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 – £54.8mm	PCC / Group	<p>Other land and buildings comprises of one specialised asset (£16m) which is a Police Station and Custody Suite, which is 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 – these do include other Police Stations, however they are not deemed to be specialised in nature due to the facilities at each of these sites. This approach is consistent with previous valuations. The PCC and Chief Constable has engaged Wilks Head & Eve (WHE) to complete the valuation of properties as at 31 March 2024, a full valuation of properties was performed. This was the first financial year that WHE were the valuer of the PCC group's portfolio.</p> <p>Management included further detail in Note 11 of the PCC group draft accounts to explain reasons for changes in valuation arising from the change in external valuer, to ensure the reader is sighted on the reasons and factors resulting in these changes.</p>	<p>We have carried out the following work in relation to this estimate in line with the revised ISA540 requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment of management's expert to ensure suitably qualified and independent; • assessed the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate; • assessed the appropriateness of any alternative site assumptions; • assessed the consistency of estimate against market data; and • assessed the adequacy of disclosure of estimate in the financial statements. <p>Overall, we were satisfied with the material accuracy of the Land & Buildings valuations as at 31 March 2024, however one control recommendation has been raised – see Appendix B.</p>	Light Purple

Assessment

- [Dark Purple] We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- [Blue] We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- [Grey] We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- [Light Purple] We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

2. Financial Statements: key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate	Relates to	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment																								
LGPS Net pension liability-- £91k	PCC group / Chief Constable	<p>The Group and Chief Constable's Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) net pension liability at 31 March 2024 is £91k (PY £4.8m).</p> <p>The Chief Constable uses Barnett Waddingham to provide actuarial valuations of the 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">assessed management's expert to ensure they are suitably qualified and independent;assessed the actuary's approach to confirm reasonableness of approach;used an auditor's expert (PwC) to assess the methods and assumptions used by management's actuary (see table below for consideration of assumptions);gained assurance over the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate;Received assurances from the auditor of the Dorset County Pension Fund with respect to the year end valuation of the assets of the fund and benefit payments and contributions received in year relating to the audited body.assessed the impact of any changes to valuation method;assessed the reasonableness of decrease in estimate; andassessed the adequacy of disclosure of estimate in the financial statements – one disclosure change was processed in relation to the LGPS disclosure notes in both sets of accounts. See Appendix D for details – none of the LGPS adjustments impact the primary statements or financial position of the PCC Group or CC. <p>Aside from the disclosure amendment mentioned above, and the modification of the audit report with respect to lack of assurances over the opening balances, as noted on page 4 and page 12, there were no other issues noted from our review of the LGPS pension disclosures or actuarial valuation.</p> <table><tr><th>LGPS Assumptions Assumption</th><th>Actuary Value</th><th>PwC range</th><th>Assessment</th></tr><tr><td>Discount rate</td><td>4.95%</td><td>4.8-4.95%</td><td>●</td></tr><tr><td>Pension increase rate</td><td>2.90%</td><td>2.85-3.00%</td><td>●</td></tr><tr><td>Salary growth</td><td>3.90%</td><td>3.35-5.85%</td><td>●</td></tr><tr><td>Life expectancy – Males currently aged 45/65</td><td>23.1/21.8</td><td>20.6- 23.1/19.2- 21.8</td><td>●</td></tr><tr><td>Life expectancy – Females currently aged 45/65</td><td>25.4/23.9</td><td>24.1-25.7/22.6- 24.3</td><td>●</td></tr></table>	LGPS Assumptions Assumption	Actuary Value	PwC range	Assessment	Discount rate	4.95%	4.8-4.95%	●	Pension increase rate	2.90%	2.85-3.00%	●	Salary growth	3.90%	3.35-5.85%	●	Life expectancy – Males currently aged 45/65	23.1/21.8	20.6- 23.1/19.2- 21.8	●	Life expectancy – Females currently aged 45/65	25.4/23.9	24.1-25.7/22.6- 24.3	●	Light Purple
LGPS Assumptions Assumption	Actuary Value	PwC range	Assessment																									
Discount rate	4.95%	4.8-4.95%	●																									
Pension increase rate	2.90%	2.85-3.00%	●																									
Salary growth	3.90%	3.35-5.85%	●																									
Life expectancy – Males currently aged 45/65	23.1/21.8	20.6- 23.1/19.2- 21.8	●																									
Life expectancy – Females currently aged 45/65	25.4/23.9	24.1-25.7/22.6- 24.3	●																									

2. Financial Statements: key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate	Relates to	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment																														
Police Pension Scheme liability - £1.13bn	Chief Constable / PCC Group	<p>The Chief Constable's Police Pension Scheme liability at 31 March 2024 is £1.3n (PY £1.3bn). The Chief Constable operates three pension schemes for police officers, these are the 1987, 2006 and 2015 Police Pension Schemes.</p> <p>The Chief Constable uses Barnett Waddingham to provide actuarial valuations of their Police Pension Scheme liabilities. A full actuarial valuation is required every four years.</p> <p>Whilst the last full actuarial valuation was completed as at 31 March 2021, the estimate of the pension liability at 31 March 2024 is based on up-to-date membership data and assumptions.</p> <p>Given the significant value of the net pension fund liability (surplus), small changes in assumptions can result in significant valuation movements.</p>	<p>assessing the estimate, we have considered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assessed management's expert (Barnett Waddingham) to ensure they are suitably qualified and independent; assessed the actuary's approach to confirm reasonableness of approach; used an auditor's expert (PwC) to assess the methods and assumptions used by management's actuary (see table below for consideration of assumptions); gained assurance over the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate; assessed the impact of any changes to valuation method; assessed the reasonableness of decrease in estimate; and assessed the adequacy of disclosure of estimate in the financial statements. <p>No issues were noted from the work performed on the Police Pension Scheme disclosures or actuarial valuation calculations.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>LGPS Assumptions</th><th>Assumption</th><th>Actuary Value</th><th>PwC range</th><th>Assessment</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Discount rate</td><td></td><td>4.90%</td><td>4.8-4.95%</td><td>●</td></tr> <tr> <td>Pension increase rate</td><td></td><td>2.90%</td><td>2.85-3.00%</td><td>●</td></tr> <tr> <td>Salary growth</td><td></td><td>3.90%</td><td>3.35-3.85%</td><td>●</td></tr> <tr> <td>Life expectancy - Males currently aged 45/65</td><td></td><td>22.5/21.3</td><td>21.9-22.5/20.6-21.3</td><td>●</td></tr> <tr> <td>Life expectancy - Females currently aged 45/65</td><td></td><td>24.7/23.4</td><td>24.6-24.7/23.4-23.4</td><td>●</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	LGPS Assumptions	Assumption	Actuary Value	PwC range	Assessment	Discount rate		4.90%	4.8-4.95%	●	Pension increase rate		2.90%	2.85-3.00%	●	Salary growth		3.90%	3.35-3.85%	●	Life expectancy - Males currently aged 45/65		22.5/21.3	21.9-22.5/20.6-21.3	●	Life expectancy - Females currently aged 45/65		24.7/23.4	24.6-24.7/23.4-23.4	●	Light Purple
LGPS Assumptions	Assumption	Actuary Value	PwC range	Assessment																														
Discount rate		4.90%	4.8-4.95%	●																														
Pension increase rate		2.90%	2.85-3.00%	●																														
Salary growth		3.90%	3.35-3.85%	●																														
Life expectancy - Males currently aged 45/65		22.5/21.3	21.9-22.5/20.6-21.3	●																														
Life expectancy - Females currently aged 45/65		24.7/23.4	24.6-24.7/23.4-23.4	●																														

2. Financial Statements: Information Technology

This section provides an overview of results from our assessment of Information Technology (IT) environment and controls which included identifying risks from the use of IT related to business process controls relevant to the financial audit. This includes an overall IT General Control (ITGC) rating per IT system and details of the ratings assigned to individual control areas.

IT application	Level of assessment performed	Overall ITGC rating	ITGC control area rating			Related significant risks/other risks
			Security management	Technology acquisition, development and maintenance	Technology infrastructure	
Unit 4 (Business World)	ITGC assessment (design and implementation effectiveness only)	●	●	●	●	N/a
Active Directory	ITGC assessment (design, implementation and operating effectiveness)	●	●	●	●	N/a

The IT Audit team have taken a roll forward approach in 2023/24 confirmed that no deficiencies are present in the control environment, which is consistent with findings reported in 2022/23.

A full review of IT General Controls for the systems in scope (as above) will be performed as part of the 2024/25 audit.

Assessment

- Significant deficiencies identified in IT controls relevant to the audit of financial statements
- Non-significant deficiencies identified in IT controls relevant to the audit of financial statements/significant deficiencies identified but with sufficient mitigation of relevant risk
- IT controls relevant to the audit of financial statements judged to be effective at the level of testing in scope
- Not in scope for testing

2. Financial Statements: Digital Audit

We have invested significantly in our digital tools and our audit approach is underpinned by a suite of tools, enabling us to capture and analyse the detailed data contained within the general ledger. This supports more efficient and effective testing, with a focus on higher risk areas and unusual transactions. The ability to obtain full ledger data quickly and effectively is key to the progress of audit work, as is documentation of the PCC and Chief Constable's methodology for mapping code structures to the financial statements and use of off-ledger adjustments. Difficulties and delays in obtaining data adversely impact on the scheduling and delivery of the audit and it is important that management engage with the audit teams to understand the requirements for data transfer, providing a clearly documented understanding of how financial statement entries are produced from underlying ledger and a timetable for doing so.

We requested several reports/documents from the Council to aid with this and these are summarised in the table below along with comments on delivery.

Document requested	Date requested	Date received	Comments
Closing trial balance for 2022-23	17/10/2024	17/10/2024	
Opening trial balance for 2023-24	17/10/2024	17/10/2024	No delays were experienced in obtaining this report information from the entity that impacting our ability to deliver the work required. Usual audit queries around reconciling these reports to the accounts were discussed, but nothing above and beyond what we would expect of the usual audit process.
Closing trial balance for 2023-24	17/10/2024	17/10/2024	
All general ledger transactions during 2023-24	17/10/2024	17/10/2024	
Mapping between the trial balance and the financial statements for 2023-24	31/05/2024	18/09/2024	
Draft accounts for 2023-24	31/05/2024	18/09/2024	The draft financial statements were published on the PCC and CC's website in line with the statutory deadline of 31 st May 2024. The date received on our file sharing portal, Info. is shown (left), however these were available online to the audit team prior to this date.

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 Independent Audit Committee. We have not been made aware of any other 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	Letters of representation have been requested 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 bank and related investment and borrowing entities. This permission was granted and the requests were sent. We have received positive confirmations from all requests returned, however a small number of requests were not received so we undertook alternative procedures to verify the accuracy and existence of year end Investment and borrowings balances which involved tracing through original communications from these counterparties to the PCC which confirmed year end balances.
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, however please see Appendix D which details changes to policies made from the draft accounts and also information of immaterial policies that have been removed from the statements.
Audit evidence and explanations/ significant difficulties	All information and explanations requested from management were provided in a timely manner to allow us to conclude our work in line with expectation.

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"> 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 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. <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"> the nature of the PCC and Chief Constable and the environment in which they operate the PCC’s and Chief Constable’s financial reporting framework the PCC’s and Chief Constable’s system of internal control for identifying events or conditions relevant to going concern management’s going concern assessment. <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"> a material uncertainty related to going concern has not been identified for either the PCC or the Chief Constable management’s use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of both sets of financial statements is appropriate.

2. Financial Statements: other responsibilities under the Code

Issue	Commentary
Other information	<p>We are required to give an opinion on whether the other information published together with the audited financial statements (including the Annual Governance Statements and Narrative Reports), are materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.</p> <p>Some minor Inconsistencies have been identified but have been adequately rectified by management. We plan to issue an unmodified opinion in this respect – refer to Appendix H and Appendix I.</p>
Matters on which we report by exception	<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"> • if the Annual Governance Statements does not comply with disclosure requirements set out in CIPFA/SOLACE guidance or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit, • if we have applied any of our statutory powers or duties, • where we are not satisfied in respect of arrangements to secure value for money and have reported [a] significant weakness/es. <p>We have nothing to report on these matters.</p>
Specified procedures for Whole of Government Accounts	<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>No additional work is required as the PCC Group and CC do not exceed the reporting threshold.</p> <p>However, now that the reporting threshold has been raised to £2bn, the NAO are taking the option to ask additional questions for a sample of audits, after the opinions have been issued. The NAO have requested that auditors hold open certificates, even where the audit is below threshold or disclaimed, pending completion of their own work.</p>
Certification of the closure of the audit	<p>We will be unable to certify the closure of the 2023/24 audit, until the NAO have finalised their Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) procedures for 2023/24.</p>

3. Value for Money arrangements (VFM)

We have completed our VFM work and our detailed commentary is set out in the separate Joint Auditor's Annual Report, which was presented at the Independent Audit Committee on 4 December 2024.

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. Following our work, we are satisfied that the PCC and Chief Constable has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Approach to Value for Money work for 2023/24

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

4. Independence and ethics

Ethical Standards and ISA (UK) 260 require us to give you timely disclosure of all significant matters that may bear upon the integrity, objectivity and independence of the firm or covered persons (including its partners, senior managers, managers and network firms).
In this context, there are no independence matters that we would like to report to you.

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.

We confirm that we have implemented policies and procedures to meet the requirements of the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we 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.

Details of fees charged are in Appendix E.

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](#).

4. Independence and ethics

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
Contingent fees in relation to non-audit services	No contingent fee arrangements are in place for non-audit services provided
Gifts and hospitality	We have not identified any gifts or hospitality provided to, or received from, a member of the Group's board, senior management or staff.

Following this consideration, we can confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements. In making the above judgement, we have also been mindful of the quantum of non-audit fees compared to audit fees disclosed in the financial statements and estimated for the current year.

Audit and non-audit services

For the purposes of our audit we have made enquiries of all Grant Thornton UK LLP teams providing services to the PCC Group and Chief Constable. No non-audit services were identified which were charged from the beginning of the financial year to February 2025.

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. [Management Letter of Representation – PCC](#)
- G. [Management Letter of Representation – Chief Constable](#)
- H. [Audit opinion – PCC](#)
- I. [Audit opinion - Chief Constable](#)

Appendices

A. Communication of audit matters to those charged with governance

Our communication plan	Joint Audit Plan	Joint 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	•	•
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 3 recommendations for the PCC Group and Chief Constable as a result of issues identified during the course of our audit. We have agreed our recommendations with management and we will report on progress on these recommendations during the course of the 2024/25 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
Medium	On a number of occasions, the Estates team were unable to easily provide floor plans that can be reconciled back to the valuer's calculations to ensure that the auditors could verify the accuracy of these inputs efficiently. We were able to gain comfort over these inputs, however keeping clear records would be considered best practice for future audits and would limit any difficulties arising in this area of work.	<p>We recommend that Management advise Estates to revise the records they have with regard to Floor areas and ensure that these are consistent with those provided to the external valuer and used in their valuation calculations.</p> <p>Management response</p> <p>Estates have been advised of the recommendation and a meeting scheduled for the 24th February to discuss and agree next steps in readiness for the 2024/25 valuation.</p>
Medium	Through our reconciliation work ensuring that the Valuation Report is consistent with the Fixed Asset Register (FAR), we noted that assets group together as 'Weymouth PFI' within the FAR are valued separately by the Valuer and split into 4 separate sites. The risk associated with this is that valuation movements against these assets could, over time, lead to incorrect capital postings to the reserves and the I&E as components may be valued upwards and downwards separately, however the net impact of this would only be reflected against one asset in the FAR. As this is only the first year in which the valuations have been performed separately, the issue and risk is low in 2023/24, however in future years the risk could accumulate.	<p>We recommend that Management revise the FAR to ensure that it is reflective of the assets valued separately in the Valuation Report.</p> <p>Management response</p> <p>The Fixed Asset Register will be updated to show the four sites within the Weymouth PFI arrangement separately.</p>
Low	During testing of creditors and expenditure completeness, an audit sample item for a special expense claim took longer than expected to conclude on, as the evidence was not readily available. The individual themselves had to be contacted to provide the evidence needed to satisfy our test. There is a risk that if this individual could not be reached, that this evidence would not be available for audit to review.	<p>We recommend that Management review the process of storing and retaining evidence for special expense claims, so that a clear audit trail is visible and available for review.</p> <p>Management response</p> <p>A review of the process for storing and retaining evidence will be undertaken.</p>

Controls

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

C. Follow up of prior year recommendations

There were no prior year recommendations identified from the 2022/23 audit which required any follow up in the 2023/24 audit period.

D. Audit Adjustments- PCC Group

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

Impact of adjusted misstatements

All adjusted misstatements are set out in detail below along with the impact on the key statements and the reported net expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2024.

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £'000	Statement of Financial Position £' 000	Impact on total net expenditure £'000	Impact on Reserves £'000
A reclassification of £20,723k has been made between the Police Grant and Council Tax Support Grant lines within the Taxation and Non-Specific grant Income section of the CIES. There has been no change to the net value of Grants. This change has also been reflected in the prior period comparator – a movement of £20,652k equal and opposite between the two lines.	Cr Police Grant 20,723 Dr Council Tax Support Grants 20,723	Nil impact	Nil Impact	Nil Impact
Overall impact	£0	£0	£0	£0

D. Audit Adjustments- PCC Group

Misclassification and disclosure changes

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

Disclosure/issue/Omission	Adjusted?
Group Cash Flow Statement A PCC Column has been added to the Group Cash Flow Statements to ensure the Surplus/Deficit on Provision of Services (SDPS) flows through the accounts correctly – as the PCC and PCC group report a materially different SDPS. This change was processed in the 2022/23 accounts during the audit, however due to timing of the 2023/24 draft accounts publication, this is reported as a charge from draft to final accounts in 2023/24. This also impacts the Notes to the Cash flow Statement (Notes 20,21 and 22). This change does not impact the final cash position of the PCC group. Suitable explanation of the prior year restatement has been made within the accounts.	✓
Cash Flow Statement – Note 21 (Investing Activities) and Note 22 (Financial Activities) As per CIPFA Code para 3.4.2.77, the movement in both short term and long term Investments and Borrowings should be shown gross and not net in the Cash Flow Statement notes. The draft accounts disclosed these as net movements, and these have been amended to show gross movements. This has been updated in the prior period comparator also, with suitable disclosure made to explain this. These changes do not alter the net position of the Cash flows from Investing or Financing activities.	✓
Accounting Policies (Note 1) In line with CIPFA Code amendments to section 3.4, reflecting updates to IAS 1, which helps preparers of accounts provide more focused and proportionate information on accounting policies, the audit team challenged Management as to whether immaterial policies remained within the draft financial statements. Management agreed to remove policies for Expected Credit losses (10.4) and Intangible Assets (19) and the respective notes to the accounts have also been adjusted or removed (17.4.2 and 12). We continue to encourage Management to consider the removal of insignificant policies in future years.	✓
Note 4 – The Police and Crime Commissioner as an Accounting Entity The Intra-group Transaction noted in the draft accounts as 'Net Cost of Policing' totalling £146,798k has been re-presented to show £171,723k as 'Cost of Services' and (£25,925k) as 'Pensions Top Up Grant'. This enables the reader to easily trace these items through to the CIES. These have also been updated for the prior year comparatives, however as this is only a presentation adjustment, no prior period adjustment disclosures are required.	✓

D. Audit Adjustments- PCC Group continued

Disclosure/issue/Omission	Adjusted?
Note 6 – Assumptions Made about the Future and Other Major Source of Estimation and Uncertainty Note 6.2 has been removed from this note as it has been concluded that there is no known future estimation uncertainty relating to PPE Valuations and any estimation changes within the financial period have been captured and explained in Note 11.	✓
Note 7 – Expenditure and Funding Analysis Further detail has been added in the form of narrative [7.5] to explain the 'Reserve adjustments'.	✓
Note 11 – Property, Plant and Equipment The disclosure of reclassification and revaluation of the New A10 Building at Winfrith HO has been adjusted for within Note 11. There has been no change to the figures and this does not impact the PCC/Group Balance Sheet or CIES. The presentational change has been made to ensure that the measurement basis for the asset class is appropriate and this reflects the point in time that the building became operational and was subsequently revalued as at 31 March 2024. The Surplus/Deficit on the provision of services within the Cost or Valuation section has been credited by £8,694k to Land & Buildings – Operational and Non-Operational assets and debited the same to Land & Buildings – Assets Under Construction. The equal and opposite adjustment has been made to the Reclassification line, with no net impact on the Net balances reported in the note or primary statements.	✓
Note 14 – Cash and Cash Equivalents Adjustment to presentation of this note has been made for easier reconciliation of the Bank and current accounts to the Financial Instruments Note (Note 17). This does not change the totals within this note, just the presentation of the information.	✓
Note 23 – External Audit Costs Further detail was added to this note to ensure this could be easily reconciled to the External audit plan. The overall total fees disclosed have remained unchanged from draft to final accounts, however the presentation has been altered.	✓
Note 25 – Grant Income A reclassification of £20,723k has been made between the Police Grant and Council Tax Support Grant lines within the 'Credit to Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income' section of Note 25. There has been no change to the net value of Grants. This change has also been reflected in the prior period comparator and sufficient detail to explain this has been added to the note – a movement of £20,652k equal and opposite between the two lines.	✓

D. Audit Adjustments- PCC Group continued

Disclosure/issue/Omission	Adjusted?
Note 26 – Related Party Transactions, Commissioning, Partnerships and Collaborations Note 26.2.4 – Other Grants and funding – the figure presented as the total in the draft accounts did not add up to the totals shown in the table above. There has been no change to these figures, but the total now reads as £1,123,129 instead of £659,593, which is correct. Note 26.3 – The narrative within the disclosure has been updated to reflect the appropriate accounting treatment under IFRS 11. The content of the note remains unchanged.	✓
Note 31 – Defined Benefit Pension Schemes – Police Staff Scheme The presentation of Note 31.2.3 has been altered to separate out the Changes in effect of asset ceiling (£23.594k) from the Present value of the defined benefit obligation (£266.810k). These were aggregated in the draft accounts. This has impacted Note 32.2.4 (Reconciliation of present Value of Scheme Liabilities), which now reconciles back to £266.810k, which is appropriate. This change is also reflected in 31.2.11 which has been updated since the draft accounts also to ensure consistency with other disclosure notes.	✓

D. Audit Adjustments – PCC Group



Impact of unadjusted misstatements

There are no unadjusted misstatements found to be greater than our triviality threshold in the 2023/24 audit which have not been made within the final set of financial statements.

Impact of prior year unadjusted misstatements

There were no unadjusted misstatements which fell above the 2023/24 triviality level which had not been made within the final set of 2022/23 financial statements.

D. Audit Adjustments- Chief Constable

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

Impact of adjusted misstatements

There were no adjusted misstatements identified that impact the net expenditure reported for the year.

Misclassification and disclosure changes

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

Disclosure/issue/Omission	Adjusted?
Accounting Policies (Note 1) In line with CIPFA Code amendments to section 3.4, reflecting updates to IAS 1, which helps preparers of accounts provide more focused and proportionate information on accounting policies, the audit team challenged Management as to whether immaterial policies remained within the draft financial statements. Management agreed to remove the policy for Intangible Assets (12) and the respective notes to the accounts have also been adjusted or removed (19). We continue to encourage Management to consider the removal of insignificant policies in future years.	✓
Note 2 – Accounting Standards Issued, Not Adopted Following auditor challenge, Management have added in some detail surrounding the unknown impact that IFRS 16 will have on the Chief Constable – this disclosure is now deemed appropriate as adjusted.	✓
Note 4 – The Chief Constable as an Accounting Entity The Intra-group Transaction noted in the draft accounts as 'Net Cost of Policing' totalling £145,798k has been re-presented to show £171,723k as 'Cost of Services' and (£25,925k) as 'Pensions Top Up Grant'. This enables the reader to easily trace these items through to the CIES. These have also been updated for the prior year comparatives, however as this is only a presentation adjustment, no prior period adjustment disclosures are required.	✓
Note 14 – External Audit Costs Further detail was added to this note to ensure this could be easily reconciled to the External audit plan. The overall total fees disclosed have remained unchanged from draft to final accounts, however the presentation has been altered.	✓

D. Audit Adjustments- Chief Constable continued

Disclosure/issue/Omission	Adjusted?
Note 16 – Collaborations Note 26.3 - The narrative within the disclosure has been updated to reflect the appropriate accounting treatment under IFRS 11. The content of the note remains unchanged.	✓
Note 19 – Defined Benefit Pension Schemes - Police Staff Scheme The presentation of Note 19.2.3 has been altered to separate out the Changes in effect of asset ceiling (£23,594k) from the Present value of the defined benefit obligation (£266,810k). These were aggregated in the draft accounts. This has impacted Note 19.2.4 (Reconciliation of present Value of Scheme Liabilities), which now reconciles back to £266,810k, which is appropriate. This change is also reflected in 19.2.11 which has been updated since the draft accounts also to ensure consistency with other disclosure notes.	✓

D. Audit Adjustments – Chief Constable



Impact of unadjusted misstatements

There are no unadjusted misstatements found to be greater than our triviality threshold in the 2023/24 audit which have not been made within the final set of financial statements.

Impact of prior year unadjusted misstatements

There were no unadjusted misstatements which fell above the 2023/24 triviality level which had not been made within the final set of 2022/23 financial statements.

E. Fees and non-audit services

We confirm below our proposed fees charged for the 2023/24 audit. Please note, the fees aside from the Scale fee require PSAA approval before billing and payment. No non-audit or audited related services have been undertaken for the PCC group and Chief Constable

Audit fees	PCC	Chief Constable
Scale fee	£85,666	£47,191
ISA 315 consideration	£4,710	£4,710
Total audit fees (excluding VAT)	£90,376	£51,901

The fees reconcile to the financial statements within £1k rounding difference - Note 23 in the PCC Group accounts and Note 14 in the CC accounts. A change in presentation was made from the draft accounts to ensure this reconciliation was possible, with 3 lines now visible in each note, these being 'Standard fees payable to external auditors with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year' (this reconciles to the scale fee), 'Additional fees in relation to regulation changes and expert advice' (this line reconciles to the 'ISA 315 consideration' line) and 'Estimated fees payable to external auditors with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for prior years' (this line represents any additional fees charged in relation to previous year audits, to ensure transparency to the reader as these estimates are not always available at the time of publishing final accounts). We deem the disclosures reasonable and provide transparency for the reader.

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 directors and 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.

F. Management Letter of Representation - PCC

Included as separate agenda item

G. Management Letter of Representation – Chief Constable

Included as separate agenda item

H. Audit opinion- PCC

Included as separate agenda item. We anticipate we will provide the PCC with a modified audit report.

I. Audit opinion- Chief Constable

Included as separate agenda item. We anticipate we will provide the CC with a modified audit report.



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19 February 2025

Dear Grant Thornton UK LLP

**Chief Constable for Dorset
Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024**

This representation letter is provided in connection with the audit of the financial statements of the Chief Constable for Dorset (the "Chief Constable") for the year ended 31 March 2024 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the Chief Constable financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards, and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24 and applicable law.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

Financial Statements

- i. We have fulfilled our responsibilities for the preparation of the Chief Constable's financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24 ("the Code"); in particular the financial statements are fairly presented in accordance therewith.
- ii. We have complied with the requirements of all statutory directions affecting the Chief Constable and these matters have been appropriately reflected and disclosed in the financial statements.
- iii. The Chief Constable has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance. There has been no non-compliance with requirements of any regulatory authorities that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance.
- iv. We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud.



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- v. Significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable. Such accounting estimates include the IAS 19 net defined pensions liability valuation for the police pension scheme. We are satisfied that the material judgements used in the preparation of the financial statements are soundly based, in accordance with the Code and adequately disclosed in the financial statements. We understand our responsibilities includes identifying and considering alternative, methods, assumptions or source data that would be equally valid under the financial reporting framework, and why these alternatives were rejected in favour of the estimate used. We are satisfied that the methods, the data and the significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates and their related disclosures are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement or disclosure that is reasonable in accordance with the Code and adequately disclosed in the financial statements.
- vi. We confirm that we are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of pension scheme assets and liabilities for IAS19 Employee Benefits disclosures are consistent with our knowledge. We confirm that all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for. We also confirm that all significant post-employment benefits have been identified and properly accounted for.
- vii. Except as disclosed in the financial statements:
 - a. there are no unrecorded liabilities, actual or contingent
 - b. none of the assets of the Chief Constable have been assigned, pledged or mortgaged
 - c. there are no material prior year charges or credits, nor exceptional or non-recurring items requiring separate disclosure.
- viii. Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards and the Code.
- ix. All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which International Financial Reporting Standards and the Code require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.
- x. We have considered the adjusted misstatements, and misclassification and disclosures changes schedules included in your Audit Findings Report. The Chief Constable's financial statements have been amended for these misstatements, misclassifications and disclosure changes and are free of material misstatements, including omissions.
- xi. We have considered the unadjusted misstatements schedule included in your Audit Findings Report. We have not adjusted the financial statements for these misstatements brought to our attention as they are immaterial to the



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results of the Chief Constable and its financial position at the year-end. The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions.

- xii. Actual or possible litigation and claims have been accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards.
- xiii. We have no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements.
- xiv. We have updated our going concern assessment. We continue to believe that the Chief Constable's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis and have not identified any material uncertainties related to going concern on the grounds that:
 - a. the nature of the Chief Constable means that, notwithstanding any intention to cease its operations in their current form, it will continue to be appropriate to adopt the going concern basis of accounting because, in such an event, services it performs can be expected to continue to be delivered by related public authorities and preparing the financial statements on a going concern basis will still provide a faithful representation of the items in the financial statements
 - b. the financial reporting framework permits the entry to prepare its financial statements on the basis of the presumption set out under a) above; and
 - c. the Chief Constable's system of internal control has not identified any events or conditions relevant to going concern.
- xv. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the Chief Constable's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.
- xvi. The Chief Constable has complied with all aspects of ring-fenced grants that could have a material effect on the Chief Constable's financial statements in the event of non-compliance.

Information Provided

- xvii. We have provided you with:
 - a. access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the Chief Constable's financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
 - b. additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of your audit; and
 - c. access to persons within the Chief Constable via remote arrangements from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.



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- xviii. We have communicated to you all deficiencies in internal control of which management is aware.
- xix. All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.
- xx. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
- xxi. We have disclosed to you all information in relation to fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects the Chief Constable and involves:
 - a. management;
 - b. employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
 - c. others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.
- xxii. We have disclosed to you all information in relation to allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.
- xxiii. We have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements.
- xxiv. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Chief Constable's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware.
- xxv. We have disclosed to you all known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.
- xxvi. We are aware that pension fund assurances in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme that you have requested under AGN07 were not made available for the 2022/23 financial statements audit. We acknowledged the uncertainty over the timing of when the Dorset County Council pension fund audit was to be concluded and assurances provided to you, ultimately this concluded in a backstopped opinion being issued on these financial statements. In this circumstance, the only means for you to get assurance over the pension fund assets and liabilities disclosed in the 2022/23 accounts would be to audit the Pension Fund directly and undertake alternative procedures. We did not believe this would be in the interests of the public purse. We therefore acknowledge and consider it appropriate for management to limit the scope of your work to exclude the opening balances of the 2023/24 net defined pension fund liability as disclosed in the balance sheet and associated pension fund asset and liability disclosures in the financial statement, as required, from the Pension Fund. The limitation of scope is imposed in the interests of openness and transparency to publish signed accounts for stakeholders.



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Annual Governance Statement

- xxvii. We are satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) fairly reflects the Chief Constable's risk assurance and governance framework and we confirm that we are not aware of any significant risks that are not disclosed within the AGS.

Narrative Report

- xxviii. The disclosures within the Narrative Report fairly reflect our understanding of the Chief Constable's financial and operating performance over the period covered by the Chief Constable's financial statements.

Approval

The approval of this letter of representation was approved by myself as the Chief Constable for Dorset, and signed by myself as the Chief Financial Officer.

Yours faithfully

Name: Amanda Pearson
Position: Chief Constable, Dorset Police
Signature:

Date: 19 February 2025

Name: Neal Butterworth
Position: Chief Financial Officer, Dorset Police
Signature:

Date: 19 February 2025

Independent auditor's report to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Qualified opinion on financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset (the 'Police and Crime Commissioner') and its subsidiary the Chief Constable (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2024, which comprise the Group Movement in Reserves Statement, Police and Crime Commissioner Movement in Reserves Statement, the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, Police and Crime Commissioner Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Group and Police and Crime Commissioner Balance Sheet, the Group 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 Officers' Pension Fund Statement. 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 2023/24.

In our opinion, except for the possible effects of the matter described in the basis for qualified opinion section of our report, 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 2024 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 2023/24; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Basis for qualified opinion

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset and the Chief Constable are members of a multi-employer pension scheme and as at 31 March 2024 the Police and Crime Commissioner and group held a share of Dorset County Pension Fund's assets (£290,313,000) and liabilities (£266,810,000), with the net liability of £91,000 included in the Group Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024 once the impact of changes in effect of asset ceiling (£23,594,000) are taken into account.

Auditor Guidance Notes are prepared and published by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General who has power to issue guidance to auditors under Schedule 6 paragraph 9 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The NAO issued Auditor Guidance Note 07 (AGN 07) on 14 November 2024. Paragraph 33 of AGN 07 refers to the voluntary protocol that auditors have agreed with each other and the NAO in respect of the provision of assurances concerning defined benefit pension plans.

In our auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2023 we reported that the external audit of Dorset County Pension Fund was not concluded for 2022/23 and therefore that Pension Fund assurances under AGN 07 were not available as at 31 March 2023. As this impacts the balances for the financial year ended 31 March 2024, the only means for us to get sufficient assurance over the Pension Fund assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2023 disclosed in the financial statements would be to audit the Pension Fund financial statements directly and undertake alternative procedures. This would not be in the best interests of the public purse.

Management have stated that in the interests of openness and transparency they wish to publish signed accounts for stakeholders. To limit further delays, management have determined it appropriate to limit the scope of our work in respect of the defined benefit pension plan net liability as disclosed in the balance sheet and associated Pension Fund asset and liability disclosures in the financial statements.

Consequently, we have been unable to determine whether any adjustment to the Police and Crime Commissioner Group's share of Dorset Pension Fund's assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2023, or other amounts disclosed in the financial statements in respect of the share of assets and liabilities as at

31 March 2023 was necessary. In addition, were any adjustments to the defined benefit pension plan net liability to be required, the narrative report would also need amended.

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 (2024) ("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 qualified opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We are responsible for concluding on the appropriateness of the Chief Financial Officer'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 Chief Financial Officer'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 2023/24 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.

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

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 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.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the other information. 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.

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 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 themselves. 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.

As described in the basis for qualified opinion section of our report, we were unable to satisfy ourselves concerning the Police and Crime Commissioner and group's share of Dorset County's Pension Fund's assets as at 31 March 2023 (£256,238,000) and liabilities (£261,079,000) and the net liability of £4,841,000 which is included in the balance sheet at 31 March 2023, as well as other disclosures that are impacted by these balances. We have concluded that where the other information refers to the defined benefit pension plan net liability or related balances and disclosures, it may be materially misstated for the same reason.

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 November 2024 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 requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24 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.

Opinion on other matters 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, 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 Chief Finance Officer

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 Chief Finance Officer. The Chief Financial Officer 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 2023/24, for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Chief Finance Officer 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 Financial Officer 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. 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 (the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24, the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Government Act 2003, the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. We also identified several additional regulatory frameworks namely, the Police Pension Fund Regulations 2007 the Police Pensions Regulations 2015, the Police Pensions Regulations 2006 and the Public Service Pensions Act 2013.

We enquired of management 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 management, Internal Audit, In House Legal 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:
 - journal entries posted around the reporting date which had an impact on the Police and Crime Commissioner and Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, and
 - potential management bias in determining accounting estimates and judgements made in respect of the valuation of assets and liabilities in the Police and Crime Commissioner and Group Balance Sheet.
 - Our audit procedures involved:
 - evaluation of the design effectiveness of controls in place to prevent and detect fraud;
 - journal entry testing, with a focus on material journals posted after year end;
 - challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates in respect of the valuation of land and buildings and the valuation of the defined benefit pension plan net liability;
 - 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 the potential for management override of controls and the significant accounting estimates related to the valuation of land and buildings and the valuation of the defined benefit pension plan net liability. 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 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. 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 2024.

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.

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

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 November 2024. 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 Dorset for the year ended 31 March 2024 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 in relation to consolidation returns, including Whole of Government Accounts (WGA), and the National Audit Office has concluded their work in respect of WGA for the year ended 31 March 2024. We are satisfied that this work does not have a material effect on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

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 85 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:

Grace Hawkins, Key Audit Partner

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

Bristol

Date:

DRAFT

Independent auditor's report to the Chief Constable of Dorset

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Qualified opinion on financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of the Chief Constable for Dorset (the 'Chief Constable') for the year ended 31 March 2024, which comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, 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 Officers' Pension Fund Statement. 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 2023/24.

In our opinion, except for the possible effects of the matter described in the basis for qualified opinion section of our report, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Chief Constable as at 31 March 2024 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 2023/24; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Basis for qualified opinion

The Chief Constable for Dorset is a member of a multi-employer pension scheme and as at 31 March 2024, the Chief Constable held a share of Dorset County Pension Fund's assets (£284,330,000) and liabilities (£260,826,000), with the net asset of £396,000 included in the Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024, once the impact of the changes in effect of asset ceiling (£23,108,000) are taken into account.

Auditor Guidance Notes are prepared and published by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General who has power to issue guidance to auditors under Schedule 6 paragraph 9 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The NAO issued Auditor Guidance Note 07 (AGN 07) on 14 November 2024. Paragraph 33 of AGN 07 refers to the voluntary protocol that auditors have agreed with each other and the NAO in respect of the provision of assurances concerning defined benefit pension plans.

In our auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2023, we reported that the external audit of the Dorset County Pension Fund was not concluded for 2022/23, and therefore that Pension Fund assurances under AGN 07 were not available as at 31 March 2023. As this impacts the balances for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 the only means for us to get sufficient assurance over the Pension Fund assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2023 disclosed in the financial statements would be to audit the Pension Fund financial statements directly and undertake alternative procedures. This would not be in the best interests of the public purse.

Management have stated that in the interests of openness and transparency they wish to publish signed accounts for stakeholders. To limit further delays, management have determined it appropriate to limit the scope of our work in respect of the defined benefit pension plan net liability as disclosed in the balance sheet and associated Pension Fund asset and liability disclosures in the financial statements.

Consequently, we have been unable to determine whether any adjustment to the Chief Constable's share of Dorset County Pension Fund's assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2023, or other amounts disclosed in the financial statements in respect of the share of assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2023 was necessary. In addition, were any adjustment to the defined benefit pension plan net liability to be required, the narrative report would also need to be amended.

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 (2024) ("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 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 qualified opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We are responsible for concluding on the appropriateness of the Chief Financial Officer'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 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 Financial Officer'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 2023/24 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.

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

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.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the other information. 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.

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 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 themselves. 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.

As described in the basis for qualified opinion section of our report, we were unable to satisfy ourselves concerning the Chief Constable's share of Dorset County's Pension Fund's assets as at 31 March 2023 (£252,162,000) and liabilities (£256,927,000) and the net liability of £4,765,000 of which is included in the balance sheet at 31 March 2023, as well as other disclosures that are impacted by these balances.

We have concluded that where the other information refers to the defined benefit pension plan net liability or related balances and disclosures, it may be materially misstated for the same reason.

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 November 2024 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 requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24, 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.

Opinion on other matters 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, 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 Financial Officer

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 Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer 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 2023/24, for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Chief Financial Officer 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 Financial Officer 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. 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 (the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24, the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Government Act 2003, the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. We also identified several additional regulatory frameworks, namely the Police Pension Fund Regulations 2007, the Police Pensions Regulations 2015, the Police Pensions Regulations 2006 and the Public Service Pensions Act 2013.

We enquired of management 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 management, internal audit, In-House legal 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:
 - journal entries posted around the reporting date which had an impact on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, and
 - potential management bias in determining accounting estimates and judgements made in respect of the valuation of Police and Local Government Pension Scheme assets and liabilities in the Balance Sheet.
 - Our audit procedures involved:
 - evaluation of the design effectiveness of controls in place to prevent and detect fraud;
 - journal entry testing, with a focus on material journals posted after year end;
 - challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates in respect of the valuation of the defined benefit pension plan net liability;
 - 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 management override of controls and the significant accounting estimates related to

the valuation of the defined benefit pension plan net liability. 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. 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 2024.

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.

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

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 undertake our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2024. 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 for Dorset for the year ended 31 March 2024 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 in relation to consolidation returns, including Whole of Government Accounts (WGA), and the National Audit Office has concluded their work in respect of WGA for the year ended 31 March 2024. We are satisfied that this work does not have a material effect on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

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 85 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:

Grace Hawkins, Key Audit Partner

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

Bristol

Date: