

JOINT AUDIT PANEL

Date: Friday 14th November 2025

Time: 13:45 – 15:45

Venue: Room 330, Third Floor, GMP Force Headquarters, Central Park, Northampton Road, Newton Heath, Manchester, M40 5BP

Peter Morris (Chair)
John Starkey (Panel member)
Foluke Fajumi (Panel member – item 5 onwards)
Ian Cayton (Panel member)
Joanne Downs (New panel member – Part A only)
Phillipa Nazari (New panel member – Part A only)

Chief Constable Stephen Watson (GMP)
Chief Resources Officer (CRO) Lee Rawlinson (GMP) (online)
Chief Finance Officer (CFO) Ian Cosh (GMP)
Lindsey Ashworth (GMP - Assistant Director of Finance)
Alex Wilson (GMP - Assistant Director of IT and Digital - Security and Risk (items 7 – 9))
Hannah Gamage (GMP – Strategic Planning, Policy and Governance)

Steve Wilson (GMCA – Treasurer – Part A only)
David Welsh (GMCA - Head of Oversight and Performance)

Sarah Horseman (Deputy Director, Governance, Risk and Assurance)
Cath Folan (Head of Internal Audit – Police & Crime)

Karen Murray (Forvis Mazars - Director (Public and Social Sector))

Apologies Kate Green (Deputy Mayor for Safer and Stronger Communities)
Neil Evans (GMCA - Director Safer and Stronger Communities)
Claire Postlethwaite (GMCA – Director of Operational Finance)
Jerry Faulkner (GMP - Assistant Director of Finance)
Gemma Shephard-Etchells (New panel member – Part A only)

M452/JAP Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed the attendees to the meeting.

M453/JAP Urgent Business (if any) at the discretion of the Chair

None raised.

M454/JAP Declarations of Interest

None raised.

M455/JAP Approval of September 2025 minutes and actions

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Hannah Gamage raised an email which had been sent through by Joanne Downs with the following requests:

- M444/JAP Current GMP issues RMS – if an action was taken to bring the implementation plan to the Panel?
- An explanation of the acronym VPFC.
- Could Internal Audit clarify whether there is enough time remaining in the financial year to undertake and report on all remaining planned reviews expected for 2025/26?

CFO Cosh stated that the plans and updates regarding the RMS would be updated in the meeting and future meetings.

Hannah explained that VCPF is Victims and Communities Performance Framework Meeting. There are two meetings a month, both focus on performance aspects, one operational and the other organisational.

Cath Folan mentioned she would cover the Internal Audit point in her update.

The following updates were provided regarding actions:

- A072/JAP – Panel members stated they had emailed in items and this action could be closed.
- A075/JAP – Sarah Horseman confirmed the ToR has been updated and the action can be closed.
- A076/JAP – Action closed.
- A077/JAP - The item was delivered at the September meeting, action closed.

M456/JAP Chief Constable's Update

The Chief Constable (CC) and CRO Rawlinson acknowledged that for four of the Panel members, the meeting was their last in role. The members were thanked for their services provided to the Force.

The CC noted the performance of the Force continues to improve, with the number of arrests having doubled from the previous year and a 70% increase in outcomes. It was noted that one in nine people arrested in Great Britain are arrested in Greater Manchester. Crime across the Force has fallen, burglary reduced by 11%, neighbourhood crime was down by 26%, leading to increase public confidence in GMP. There has been a drive in interventions, leading to an increase in vehicle seizures and stop and search occurrences. The improvements have been sustained, and crimes are being recorded accurately.

The organisational strength is reflected through investments made, for example in the executive team. This has made provided more capacity and capability.

The Force responded effectively to the recent attack at the Heaton Park Synagogue (Operation Hutton). The learnings and recommendations made from the report published following the attack at the Manchester Arena, have been incorporated into process. This assisted with the response and the call handling, Plato, FDO, tactical firearms and multiagency coordination all following the JESSIP principles and worked well. Officers took seven minutes from the initial call to neutralise the threat. Following the incident, reassurance has been provided to communities. This work has been costly, which has not been factored into the budget, however a claim for support will be made to the Home Office.

Operation Rydal work continues to cover deficits, make sure structural deficits are addressed and to reduce staff numbers. Over two years, a significant number of staff posts have been removed, which has been undertaken whilst sustaining outcomes and output, proving efficiency and productivity through new ways of working.

In regards to the productivity of the Force, the CC highlighted the following:

- GMP has agreed to be included in a pilot for the College of Policing on benefits realisation.
- The Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) approach continues, working with partners. There are now 115 less incidents per day for GMP.

The resources of the Force is constrained and is likely to be challenging in the future. Therefore, GMP will have to:

- Continue to double down on demand. The expansion of neighbourhood officers will assist with this.
- Become more efficient through reviewing systems and processes, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) / robotics automation processes and greater scrutiny for officers and staff with poor performance or productivity (through improving policies).
- Income generation.

The contract for the new record management system (RMS) has been signed with Mark43 and will aim to be delivered for spring 2027.

There is also an ambitious estates strategy in place, which involves work with partners across Greater Manchester.

When asked by the Panel about the increase in arrests and the facilities available, the CC explained that a refurbished Longsight custody suite will be opened in February, which will include 78 cells. Other additional custody suites have also been opened, as investment has been made in that area. The increase in arrests does also place an increased pressures on the criminal justice system, however, there are two new magistrates courts, more CPS prosecutors and eight new high court judges.

When asked about the financial challenges and how the Force was planning for this, it was explained that:

- There is a close link with the National Police Chiefs' Council and the information they can provide forces.
- A model has been completed for the comprehensive spending review, which outlines the best- and worst-case scenarios.
- Operational Rydal is now business as usual, with star chambers initiating budget discussions.
- Work is underway with the GMCA to balance the budget.
- A letter is being sent to the Home Secretary requesting assistance for the cost of Operation Hutton.
- A request was made for a similar approach to that of the Metropolitan Police and the City of London Police known as the NICC grant be provided to GMP.

The CC acknowledged the recent news of the abolition in the PCCs, and noted GMP already adopts a mayoral model, so will not be impacted. This decision may unlock police reform wide, permit merger forces to progress, with pressure to collaborate. GMP intends to provide a training centre for other forces.

The Panel asked about the new guidance regarding failure to prevent fraud, published in September, as part of the Section 199 – 206 of the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023. CRO Rawlinson explained that the guidance was not applicable to forces and emailed information to the relevant Panel members. ACO Cosh explained that there are processes in place with the Professional Standards Directorate (PSD) to manage fraud matters internally.

CRO Rawlinson provided further explanation for the following:

- There is a VCPF Meeting in place now for the organisational side of the Force as these were areas where performance wasn't formally measured. All areas of the Force now have key performance indicators (KPI) and individual performance review meetings (PRM).
- The Risk and Assurance Board measures Internal Audit actions, linking to the Organisational VCPF meeting.
- Each site also now has a single point of contact (SPOC) in place who oversees security matters.
- There are plans in place to revisit old Internal Audit actions to ensure processes are occurring and working as they should be.

Steve Wilson outlined the cycle is underway for budget setting for the year 2026/27. A paper will be taken to the next Police, Fire and Crime Panel with proposals for precept.

M457/JAP External Audit Progress Update

Karen Murray noted that the audit work is close to finishing, the team have all the information required and the report will be made by the end of the following week.

The team are working to sign the accounts off by the end of November, and it was requested that an extraordinary meeting is created for the Panel before the end of the month, to review the accounts.

ACTION - Hannah Gamage to arrange an extraordinary meeting for the Panel before the end of November to review the statement of accounts.

M458/JAP Internal Audit Progress Report

Cath Folan introduced the item, to inform members of the progress made against the Internal Audit Plan.

One report has been published since the last meeting, this was Security at Police Stations – Limited Assurance. Management has agreed to take the appropriate action, with a new governance process in place, including a meeting with single points of contact (SPOC) and random checks.

There have been no changes made to the plan. The plan at the start of the year set out the "Long list" of internal audits for 2025/26. Based on the level of Internal Audit resource at that time would allow for approximately 14 audits to be delivered and we are on track to achieve this. The audits that will not be delivered in 2025/26 will be reported in the Internal Audit Progress Report at the January meeting. These will be considered during the planning process for 2026/27 and beyond.

When asked by the Panel, Cath explained Internal Audit were open with the Panel at the start of the year regarding expectations of workloads, explaining work is prioritised and a sufficient amount will be completed to provide an annual opinion. The approach taken to arrive at the plan is outlined in the Internal Audit Plan paper.

Hannah Gamage stated she would share with the Panel members the link to the Force website where the published Panel agenda packs are stored, so they can read the current and past Internal Audit plans.

Hannah also asked the new members if they would like to expand their training session in January meeting to cover a range of information inputs, including Internal Audit.

ACTION – Cath Folan to provide an update the Panel at the January 2026 meeting on the audits will not be delivered in 2025/26.

ACTION - Hannah Gamage to send to the new Panel members the link for the Panel agendas which are published on the Force website.

ACTION - Hannah Gamage to extend the January training session to two hours.

PART B

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in paragraph 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

M459/JAP Action Tracker Updates

CRO Rawlinson delivered the paper to the Panel, as an update of the current Force position.

The Panel noted the paper.

M460/JAP Cyber Security and Business Continuity

Alex Wilson attended to present this item to the Panel, with the assistance of CRO Rawlinson and the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) Ian Cosh.

The Panel noted the paper.