

**Joint Report of the Chief Executive and Chief Constable  
To the Chair and Members of the  
Audit and Internal Control Panel  
8<sup>th</sup> December 2011**

**Executive and Presenting Officer: Michael Porter, Treasurer  
Ann Hall ACO (F&C)**

**Report Author: Michael Porter  
Status: For Noting**

**Service Unit Assurance Questionnaire**

**1. Purpose of this Report**

- 1.1 This report is intended for the Audit and Internal Control Panel to review, comment and propose any amendments to the annual survey of Service Unit Managers, as part of the process of establishing the assurance framework in support of the Annual Governance Statement.

**2. Recommendations**

Members are asked to

- 2.1 Note this report, make comment as required and propose any amendments or areas for further questions to be added to the Service Unit Questionnaire that is attached at Appendix A.

**3. Reasons**

- 3.1 Members received an update on the progress of the items that were highlighted in the 2010-11 Statement as significant internal control and action points at their meeting in October.
- 3.2 Also at that meeting Members approved the timetable for production of the Statement for 2011/2012, this timetable required that the Service Unit Managers Questionnaire was presented to this meeting.

3.3 As part of the assurance framework in support of the Annual Governance Statement a questionnaire is sent to Service Unit Managers which results in a signed adequacy of controls statement and obtains assurance, or otherwise, on the effectiveness of key controls. This questionnaire is attached at Appendix B for Members information. Members will be aware that a sample of Service Unit returns for 2009-10 were reviewed as part of the Internal Audit programme with the focus on the responses previously received and the evidence that supports the answers.

3.4 The Audit & Internal Control Panel is asked for its input and comment on the questionnaire.

#### 4 **Implications**

##### 4.1 Finance

There are no specific monetary implications within the report.

##### 4.2 Sustainability

There are no Sustainability Act implications arising from this report

##### 4.3 Diversity and Equal Opportunities

There are no diversity or equal opportunity implications in this report.

##### 4.4 Human Rights Act

There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from this report

##### 4.5 Risk

Publication and approval of the Annual Governance Statement is a mandatory requirement. Failure to achieve this would undermine the Authority's progress in promoting corporate governance and driving up performance.

The Authority could also expose itself to risk to its reputation if the External Auditor concluded that proper practices were not being followed in preparing the AGS, and commented on this in a public report.

The service unit questionnaire is part of the arrangements to mitigate these risks.

## **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 The purpose of the Annual Governance Statement process is to provide a continuous review of the effectiveness of an organisation's governance arrangements including internal control and risk management systems. This is intended to give assurance on their effectiveness or otherwise leading to an action plan to address identified weaknesses. The Service Unit Managers Questionnaire is an important part of that process.

Jeremy Holderness  
Acting Chief Executive

Jacqui Cheer  
Temporary Chief Constable

