

DEVON ASSURANCE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

14 November 2024

Present:-

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| Councillor T Kerley | Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service |
| Councillor G Czaplewski | Mid Devon District Council |
| Councillor L Knight | Mid Devon District Council |
| Councillor C Norman | North Devon Council |
| Councillor L Gilmour (representing C Ney) | Plymouth City Council |
| Councillor S Allen | Plymouth City Council |
| Councillor M Brook | Torbay Council |
| Councillor G Dexter | West Devon Borough Council |

Apologies:-

Councillors R Scott and I Roome and C Ney

* **20** **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

It was the turn of Torridge District Council and Devon & Somerset fire & Rescue Service to hold the posts of Chair and Vice-Chair respectively for the year, however, as there was not a representative present from either of these organisations, it was agreed to elect a Chair for this meeting only and to defer the election of both posts until the next meeting.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Dexter, **SECONDED** by Councillor Brook and

RESOLVED that Councillor Norman (North Devon Council) be elected Chair for this meeting only.

* **21** **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest raised.

* **22** **Minutes**

The Head of Devon Assurance Partnership wished to record an error in the Partnership Budget Outturn 2023/24 report as presented to the 11 July 2024 meeting. On page 5, where the report noted the income figure of £2,014,729, it should instead have read £2,051,565: this did not affect the overall outturn position.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2024 be signed as a correct record, subject to noting the above amendment to the outturn report.

* **23** **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

* **24** **2024/25 Budget Update**

The Committee considered the Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value (DFP/24/116) on the Partnership Budget 2024/25, which provided the month 4 position and anticipated end of year position for 2024/25 for the delivery of services to its partners and external clients.

Points of highlight included:

- The pay award had been agreed and would be reflected in the November pay, with its impact already accounted for in the budget, however any potential increase in National Insurance contributions had yet to be incorporated.
- There had been fluctuations in external work, particularly with multi academy trusts.
- That income was £60,000 less than anticipated, but this was expected to change by year end as further work requests had been received.

* **25** **Partnership Update Report**

The Committee noted the report of the Director of Finance and Public Value (DFP/24/117), which summarised activity in the first six months of 2024/25 and provided progress and updates on New business and Staffing.

Highlighted points and discussion included:

- Delivery of the maintained schools audits had been revised to allow for better cross school comparison.
- The recruitment of new staff, including new Assurance officers and the use of apprenticeships to build the team.
- Changes in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards effective from April 2025 and the assessment against current standards to provide a baseline for future compliance.
- The importance of client feedback and plans to conduct an annual survey to gather broader user views.
- It was suggested that the reported current performance position be compared with year-to-date percentages instead of full-year targets, and the Head of DAP agreed to follow up on this, together with comparison at year-end of prior year customer feedback information.

* 26 **Devon & Torbay Combined County Authority (DTCCA)**

The Committee reviewed and endorsed the Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value (DFP/24/118), which set out the proposal for the Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (DTCCA) to join DAP as a non-voting Partner. The report included key sections covering:

- Service Requirements
- Staffing Considerations
- Impact on DAP
- Possible timeline
- Recommendation

It was emphasised that, as both Devon County Council and Torbay Council were DAP Partners and represented on both the DAP Management Board and DAP Committee, the DTCCA would join the partnership as a non-voting member.

The Head of DAP confirmed that the team had members with experience in setting up similar structures and could seek additional expertise from other audit professionals if required.

NOTES:

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

* **DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.35 am and finished at 11.15 am

