

## SUFFOLK POLICE AUTHORITY

---

### ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2009

---

This Annual Governance Statement reflects the position as at 17 April 2009, including plans for the financial year 2009/10, when it was approved by the Monitoring and Audit Committee.

#### 1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Suffolk Police Authority ('the Authority') is responsible for ensuring its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Authority is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the exercise of its functions, which includes ensuring a sound system of internal control is maintained through the year and that arrangements are in place for the management of risk. In exercising this responsibility the Authority places reliance on the Chief Constable of the Suffolk Constabulary ('the Constabulary') to support the governance and risk management processes.

The Authority has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework: *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*. A copy is on our website at [www.suffolkpoliceauthority.org.uk](http://www.suffolkpoliceauthority.org.uk) or can be obtained from the Authority's offices at Police Headquarters, Martlesham Heath, Ipswich, IP5 3QS. This statement explains how the Authority has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of regulation 4(2) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006 in relation to the publication of a statement on internal control.

A more detailed Statement of Assurance for the Constabulary signed by the Chief Constable supports this overarching Governance Statement.

#### 2. THE PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values by which the Authority is directed and controlled and the activities through which it accounts to and engages with the community. It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services, including achieving value for money.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable and foreseeable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only

provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Authority's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, to manage them effectively, efficiently and economically.

The governance framework has been in place at the Authority for the year ended 31 March 2009 and will remain in place up to the date of approval of the annual report and statement of accounts.

### 3. **THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK - OUTLINE**

This section describes the key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the governance arrangements that have been put in place for the Authority and Constabulary. It explains the overarching structures that have been put in place in both Authority and Constabulary to deal with these systems and processes and how they are linked to each other. In producing this explanation steps have been taken to ensure that the actions identified in the Authority's Code of Corporate Governance are being addressed.

#### A. Identifying and Communication of the Authority's vision

This section describes how the Authority's vision for its purpose and the intended outcomes for citizens and service users are identified and communicated.

Historically, the vision for policing in Suffolk was set out in the Authority approved 'Statement of Aspirations' published in 1998 following extensive consultation with the local community. This statement identified five key strategic aims. They were incorporated into what was originally known as the Suffolk First aim and then became Suffolk First For You. Suffolk First For You was launched in 2005 and aimed to build on the level of achievement and performance which was required to meet the Suffolk First challenge of becoming the safest county in the country. This was achieved in March 2005. In order to maintain the momentum the new Suffolk First For You programme retained key aims of Suffolk First but also developed it further. The key aims and objectives of Suffolk First For You have, since 2005, been fully explained in the annually published Local Policing Plan and which have been available on the websites of both the Authority and Constabulary. The vision for the Authority's and Constabulary's purpose have, more pertinently, been communicated to the public of Suffolk by an Annual Report and Local Policing Plan Summary published in newspaper format and circulated widely in the county. In addition the Authority has published, and continues to publish, a Policing Summary which it is statutorily obliged to deliver to all households in the county. This Summary clearly sets out the Authority's and Constabulary's vision for their joint purpose and sets out what citizens and service users can expect from their local police service.

During 2007 the Authority and Constabulary developed a joint vision, mission and values which built upon the success of Suffolk First For You. This new mission, vision and values was developed by the Authority and Constabulary in consultation with staff and further, in consultation with 50 key partners including Members of Parliament, District Councils and representatives from the voluntary sector. The mission, vision and values was incorporated into and promoted through the Authority's Three Year Plan, which in 2008/09, replaced the Local Policing Plan. This Three Year Plan was agreed by the Authority, for the first time in February 2008 with a view to engaging with stakeholders and communities upon the strategy

and priorities for policing. In turn this helped demonstrate the accountabilities of the Authority. It was widely consulted upon during its production in the same way as the mission, vision and values. A further rolling Three Year Plan incorporating the mission, vision and values for the period 2009/12 was approved by the Authority in February 2009 following consultation with key stakeholders and communities. This consultation helped ensure that the work the Authority and Constabulary undertake together and with others is underpinned with a common vision of their work.

The Publication Development Working Group (a joint Authority/Constabulary forum) has supported the preparation and publication of the Three Year Plan with regard to formatting and content. In addition the Authority's Performance Working Group (as it was then) agreed the consultation arrangements for the Plan. The Plan itself has been prepared in order to ensure that it is consistent with the Assessment of Policing and Community Safety headings to provide uniformity and ease of reference between performance and planning information. The plan also refers to and supports the Home Office Green Paper "From the Neighbourhood to the National : Policing Our Communities Together", the Home Secretary's key Strategic Priorities for the Police Service for 2009/10, the Home Office Crime Strategy, Cutting Crime – A New Partnership 2008 to 2011, the Implementation of National Standards in the Protective Services, the Comprehensive Spending Review, Police and Justice Act 2006 and Enhanced Partnership Working between the Police, Crime and Disorder Partnerships and Partners and the Suffolk Community Strategy 2008 to 2028. In producing the Three Year Plan the Authority has had regard to all these sources and publications and has ensured it complies with all statutory obligations and guidance in its production. This Plan delivers a vision for the Authority's and Constabulary's purpose as well as intended outcomes for citizens and service-users. Notwithstanding the efforts to include reference to all these issues, steps have been actively taken to ensure that the plan is more succinct and user-friendly than in previous years.

The Mission, Vision and Values incorporated within the Three Year Plan are available to the public on both the Authority and Constabulary websites. This year, as in 2008, the Annual Report and Local Policing Plan Summary (newspaper) and Policing Summaries are combined into a document to be sent to every council tax payer in the county. Seven district-based versions are produced and will be posted during May/June 2009.

As well as the joint mission, vision and values, the Authority itself has a separate but complementary mission statement which is underpinned by a number of key principles. This vision and principles appear in the Authority's Corporate Business Plan 2008-2011 which was approved by the Authority in April 2008. This Plan, worked upon during 2007/08 by the Authority's Business Planning Working Group and wider membership, is aimed at improving those areas where the performance of the Authority can be further enhanced. It is publicised through the Police Authority's website.

The Authority and Constabulary have a joint Corporate Communication Strategy which guides how key messages relating to the above matters are effectively communicated.

An important vehicle for communications from the Authority is the Authority website. The Homepage is regularly updated with news upon Authority activity and issues related to the Constabulary. The Authority, with the Constabulary, ensures

that key messages are communicated to the communities and stakeholders of Suffolk through the Constabulary Press Office and Citizen Focus Departments.

B. Reviewing the Authority's vision

This section explains how the Authority's vision is reviewed.

The Three Year Plan referred to above is a three-year rolling plan. Each year, it is reviewed and reissued by the Authority. The Publications Development Working Group of the Authority is involved in undertaking work to continually develop the Plan and which is submitted to the Authority for eventual consideration. This necessarily involves review of the Mission, Vision and Values.

The Authority's Corporate Business Plan which describes the separate but complementary mission statement and principles of the Authority is subject to regular half-yearly review through the Strategy Committee.

The Strategy Committee and the Authority provide the vehicles for any impacts upon the governance arrangements of the Authority and Constabulary caused by pertinent changes to the Three Year Plan and the Corporate Business Plan to be considered.

C. Ensuring Delivery of Services and the Best Use of Resources

This section explains how the quality of policing services is measured and how the Authority ensures that they are delivered in accordance with its objectives. Further it explains how it is ensured that the services represent the best use of resources.

In the Three Year Plan for 2008/11 it was recognised that the Constabulary was focused on ensuring that the people of Suffolk received the highest possible quality of policing.

The performance of the Constabulary is monitored using a performance management framework which is used to compare the performance of the Constabulary with other similar forces. Each year the Authority agrees performance indicators for those priorities that are used to monitor the performance of the Constabulary during the following 12 month period. Performance targets are then identified by the Authority for the agreed indicators. Targets are only set for outcomes that can be directly influenced by the Constabulary and are usually focused on areas that are a priority and/or where there is recognised scope to improve performance. During 2008/09 the framework reflected the structure of the national Policing Performance Assessment Framework but also included a number of indicators for local priorities, determined either through consultation with communities or policing partners, identified within the Constabulary's "Strategic Assessment and Control Strategy" or seen as part of internal business processes to deliver improved efficiency or quality of service.

The Budget Strategy is based, amongst other things, on linking financial strategy to higher performance based on priorities and targets.

Having agreed the range of performance indicators to be monitored during 2008/09 and which would be used to assess performance of the Constabulary, the Authority was then able to monitor the performance of the Constabulary, utilising the Home Office web-based tool (iQuanta), which allows comparative performance data from similar forces to be assessed alongside the performance data of the Constabulary.

This was initially undertaken during 2008/09 by the Monitoring and Audit Committee. However during the year the Authority established a Performance Management Group of the Committee to facilitate the much closer scrutiny of Force performance.

For the period 2008/09 the Authority has agreed local performance indicators and associated targets which sit alongside statutory performance indicators. The statutory performance indicators support the priorities for policing contained within the National Community Safety Plan. Those indicators are published within the Assessment of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) performance framework, and which forms the basis of the Three Year Plan. Performance against the statutory performance indicators is reported to the Home Office but targets are not set.

For 2009/10 the Home Secretary has removed all top-down numerical targets for the police service. These will be replaced by a single top-down target based on the Public Services Agreement indicator to improve public confidence that the crime and anti-social behaviour issues that matter locally are being dealt with by the police and their partners. This new target is required to be aligned with targets on confidence contained in Local Area Agreements. The new target will be monitored by the performance monitoring mechanism set out above.

The performance of the Constabulary against the targets and performance indicators will be monitored by the Authority through the Performance Management Group at five meetings per year and overseen by the Monitoring and Audit Committee. Presentations to the full Authority on Constabulary performance are also arranged. As well as monitoring Constabulary performance against the indicators described above, the Authority will be monitoring performance in the Protective Services through the Performance Management Group. In undertaking this role the Authority will be guided by the recently published Association of Police Authorities' "Guidance for Police Authorities on Performance Monitoring and Scrutiny of Protective Services". The Authority also monitors Force performance in themed areas, such as Stop and Search, demonstrating that equality issues are of utmost importance in service delivery.

The Authority and Constabulary carry out a large number of internal inspections each year. These are undertaken by either the Constabulary's Policing Improvement Unit or the internal auditors. There are also a number of external inspections. The three most noteworthy are Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) Baseline Assessment Inspection, the Police Use of Resources Evaluation (PURE) and the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) "health check" inspections. The HMIC have undertaken a number of inspections in relation to service areas during 2008, for example on Major Crime, on Serious and Organised Crime, on Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing. These have all been considered by the full Authority. Indeed reports from the external inspectors are considered variously by the Authority and its Committees. Where actions are required the necessary improvements are monitored by the Authority and/or its Committees by consideration of progress against action plans.

The PURE assessment enables the external auditors to form judgements on the Authority's and Constabulary's arrangements to secure effective use of resources across the five themes of financial reporting, financial management, financial standing, internal control and value for money. The PURE assessment demonstrates how the Authority is involved in ensuring effective use of resources.

Where the external auditors identify areas for improvement these are considered through Monitoring and Audit Committee. In the latest PURE assessment (for Audit 2007/08) the Authority scored at level 3 in each of the five themes, meaning that it was “performing well” and “consistently above minimum requirements”.

For the audit period 2008/09 the approach has changed. It is structured into three themes that focus on the importance of sound and strategic financial management, strategic commissioning and good governance, and effective management of natural resources, assets and people. The key lines of enquiry associated with each theme focus more on value for money achievements than has hitherto been the case.

From April 2009 there will be two new inspections. Firstly the Authority and Constabulary will be subject to the Comprehensive Area Assessment. This will comprise two aspects; an area assessment that examines how well local public services are delivering better results for local people in local priorities; there will also be an organisational assessment of the individual public bodies within the area. In this latter regard this will involve the use of the PURE assessment.

Secondly, the Authority will be subject for the first time to a Police Authority Inspection undertaken by the HMIC and Audit Commission and which is likely to focus upon the themes of leadership and capacity, performance monitoring, achievements through partnership and use of resources.

Overall therefore there are robust and effective arrangements for ensuring that policing services are delivered in accordance with the Authority’s objectives and to a high standard and further for ensuring that they represent the best use of resources.

#### D. Roles and Responsibilities

This Section explains the definition and documentation of the roles and responsibilities of the Authority and Constabulary and the senior members and officers within each. Further it sets out the nature of the delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication and arrangements for challenging and scrutinising Constabulary activity.

As a statutory body the Authority performs a number of functions that are provided for in legislation. These statutory functions are listed in the Arrangements for Discharge of Functions (the Arrangements).

The functions and responsibilities of the Authority are discharged by the Authority itself except insofar as the performance of the functions is delegated either to a Committee, Panel or Officer.

The delegations to committees and panels are found in Part II of the Arrangements. The delegations to officers are found in Part III of the Arrangements and elsewhere throughout the documents providing for the corporate governance of the Authority.

The Chief Executive, Treasurer, Chief Constable and others as appropriate, are required to advise and support the Authority in meeting its responsibilities.

The Chief Executive (who is also the Authority’s Monitoring Officer) is statutorily responsible to the Authority for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and

for compliance with all applicable legislation and relevant statements of good practice.

The Treasurer is designated as the Authority's statutory chief financial officer and as such is responsible for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, for internal audit arrangements, and for maintaining an effective system of internal control. The role of the Treasurer is described in the Code of Practice on Financial Management published by the Home Office.

The Chief Executive and Treasurer continually consider the resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles.

All papers to be considered by members at formal meetings are scrutinised by the Chief Executive and/or Treasurer, as appropriate for compliance purposes.

The roles and responsibilities for all senior police officers are set out in common law, legislation and by the Authority in their job descriptions.

The Corporate Business Plan 2008-2011 provides for the revision of the Arrangements in order to update the list of all Authority functions and to enhance the presentation of the statement of officer delegations and functions. In particular this will address the statutory functions of officers which are found in statute and statutory guidance and which, for purposes of clarity, will be incorporated into the Arrangements. Notwithstanding the Plan the Chief Executive monitors the Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions on a continuous basis to ensure they are fit for purpose. When changes are necessary they are brought forward to the Authority for consideration.

The Arrangements are a key governance document for the Authority. They comprise five parts;

- the General Section, which most notably provides for an urgent decision-making mechanism;
- the Authority functions and Committee delegations;
- the Officer delegations;
- the Contract Regulations;
- the Financial Regulations.

The Arrangements essentially provide for how, in addition to operating within statutory parameters, the decisions of the Authority are made. All decisions made by the Authority and Committee are recorded in the minutes of meetings and all urgent decisions are noted on future agendas and recorded in the Authority's Decision Register.

The Chief Executive has also introduced a Chief Executive's Decision Register so that all significant decisions taken under his delegated authority may be recorded. Both the Authority's Decision Register and Chief Executive's Decision Register are available for inspection within the Police Authority's Office.

An examination of the Arrangements shows how Constabulary activity will be monitored. For example, delegation 13 of the Monitoring and Audit Committee's delegations provides:

*"to consider all matters relating to stop and search, including oversight of the Constabulary's effective implementation of the recording of stops".*

Further delegation 16 provides:

*"to consider the performance of the Constabulary against the performance indicators agreed by the Committee".*

The Arrangements clearly define the delegated authority of officers and the circumstances when members must be consulted. The provision relating to making urgent decisions found in Part I paragraph 9 of the Arrangements is a clear example of this.

The role of members of the Authority is provided for in a number of documents. Primarily, the Members Allowances Scheme, which is reviewed and renewed annually sets out an extensive list of the roles and responsibilities of members, the Chair of the Authority, the Vice-Chair, the Chairs of Committees/Panels/Groups, Lead Member role for Finance and Strategic Planning and Link Member role where serving on an Internal Group or Outside Body. These role descriptions are supplemented by other guidance applicable in specific areas, for example, see the Roles of the Police Authority and Members : Safer Neighbourhoods and the Link Member Policy.

The Authority recognises that communications are critical to the effective discharge of its function. One aspect of good governance comprises taking informed and transparent decisions. Decision-making in exercise of the governance function can be difficult and challenging. In order to make such decisions, those exercising the governance function must be well-informed. To facilitate well-informed decision-making the Authority requires good quality information. In order to ensure that the Authority, its Committees and Panels, are provided with reports that are fit for purpose and which enable it to reach robust and well-informed decisions, the Authority operates Guidelines for Authors of Police Authority Reports. Further the provision of good quality reports helps ensure that the Authority has the evidence for decisions. This is further enhanced by the provision of high quality minutes which provide and document the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based.

The Arrangements provide the Framework by which the Authority holds the Chief Constable to account for local policing. The Authority takes a vigorous approach to this aspect of its functions and makes regular use of Section 22 of the Police Act 1996 by which the Authority may request a report from the Chief Constable on issues relating to policing. Requests arise in a number of ways; they come directly from Authority and Committee business; they can arise from informal Authority meetings and from high level meetings between Authority members and officers and the Chief Constable. Whatever the source, the request for a report proceeds through the structure imposed and operated by the Chief Executive of the Authority and which comprises the submission of a Supplementary Information Proforma to the Chief Constable. The information is then incorporated onto the Schedule of Future Business which in conjunction with the Programme of Meetings sets out future Authority business.

Examples of where the Authority has challenged and scrutinised Force activity include the following. Firstly, in Spring 2007 a Service and Financial Planning Panel was established on a time limited basis to oversee the Constabulary in developing strategic options to meet the funding gaps identified in the following three year period. In this way the Authority was able to challenge and scrutinise the Constabulary's activity in this important area in detail. Secondly, the Authority has established a Scrutiny Panel to examine Neighbourhood Policing, one of the Government's major policing initiatives. The work of the Panel was undertaken during 2008 and provided a valuable opportunity to scrutinise this important area of Constabulary activity. Thirdly the Authority has developed an approach to the performance monitoring of the Constabulary in the Protective Services. This work which is informed by the recent publication of the Association of Police Authorities "Guidance for Police Authorities on the Performance Monitoring and Scrutiny of Protective Services" has been taken forward through the Performance Management Group which reports to Monitoring and Audit Committee.

#### E. Standards of Conduct

This Section explains the development, communication and embedding of codes of conduct and standards of behaviour for members, officers and staff.

In September 2007 the Authority adopted (with adaptation) the Model Code of Conduct found within the Schedule to the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007. The Authority also adopted General Principles found within the Schedule to the Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001. Together these provisions set out the standards of behaviour required of members of the Authority in the conduct of their business. The adoption of the Code in September superseded the previous code adopted in April 2002.

In addition in November 2008 the Authority adopted a formal procedure as required by the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008 relating to the local assessments of complaints. The Standards Committee has requested the Chief Executive to review the Authority's procedures for the handling of complaints and this is currently under way.

Members are subject to a national complaints process arising from the Local Government Act 2000 under which breaches of the Code are handled.

All members of the Authority, including the two independent members of the Standards Committee have been trained in the Code of Conduct. Officers of the Authority have also been trained. This helps ensure that members and officers undertake their roles in a climate of openness, support and respect. This has been achieved either by bespoke training delivered by the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, though Induction Training for new members comprising training upon the Code of Conduct as an essential element or by the delivery of training by the County or District Authorities of which the members of the Authority are also elected members. Training delivered by the Authority is recorded in the Authority's Training Register.

This training has been supplemented by the provision of Guidance issued by the Standards Board for England upon the Code of Conduct.

As part of the Corporate Business Plan 2008-2011 it is specifically provided that all new members and officers will be trained upon the Code of Conduct.

At each formal meeting of the Authority or its Committees members are reminded to declare any interests in relation to the business to be discussed and decisions to be taken.

As a necessary part of being a member all members are provided with a Members' Handbook. This contains a section which includes all the necessary elements to inform and enable compliance with the Code of Conduct.

During the autumn of 2007 guidance was developed and adopted entitled the Protocol for Potential Probity and/or Conduct Issues. The purpose of this protocol was to help ensure the effective discharge of the functions of the Authority, Standards Committee and Monitoring Officer, where there is a potential or possible issue relating to a member. The Protocol sets out the expectation that members will alert the Monitoring Officer to all potential or possible issues of concern and which may touch upon their probity and/or conduct as soon as is reasonably practicable.

The operation of the Code of Conduct is monitored by the Standards Committee which, amongst other things, receives an Annual Report upon the operation of the Code.

The Authority has a Register of Member Interests in which all recordable interests must be entered. Members are reminded on an annual basis of the need to enter their interests. Member gifts and hospitality must also be recorded in this Register.

The Authority has not adopted a code of conduct for those of its staff who are not under the direction or control of the Chief Constable. The Department of Communities and Local Government has been working on such a code for a number of years and this is still awaited. On 1 January 2006 Authority staff transferred from Suffolk County Council on TUPE transfer terms and as such are still subject to the rules of conduct applicable under their former contracts of employment with the County Council. The new staff of the Authority who have been employed since 1 January 2006 are subject to the rules of conduct applicable to Police Staff of the Constabulary. Accordingly there are codes of conduct defining the standards of behaviour of Authority staff.

In addition to these rules of conduct the Chief Executive as a solicitor, and the Treasurer as an accountant, are also subject to professional codes of conduct.

F. Standing Orders, Financial Instructions, Delegations, Contract Regulations and their Update

This Section explains the arrangements that apply for Standing Orders, Financial Instructions, Contract Regulations and supporting documentation. It further explains the arrangements for their review and how decisions are taken.

The Authority has adopted a set of Standing Orders which set out the formal mechanisms by which it regulates the conduct of its formal meetings. They are subject to regular review and updating by the Authority in response to the changing environment and the needs of the Authority. They were last amended in 2007 to reflect changes with regard to the appointment of chairmanships.

The Authority has also adopted a set of Financial Regulations. These are a major part of the overall governance arrangements for the Authority and help establish a sound internal control environment. The Regulations themselves ensure that the

financial dealings of the Authority and Constabulary are conducted within a framework which promotes good practice and provides adequate safeguards. They define the relationship between the Authority and its officers in respect of financial matters and further, define the financial responsibilities of the officers. The Financial Regulations were comprehensively reviewed and amended during 2007. In particular arrangements were added as a consequence of the Authority's experience with Operation Sumac to introduce provisions to apply in the case of major investigations and how they are provided for from a financial perspective. The Regulations were further reviewed during 2008 in order to ensure that they were compatible with the new financial system introduced within the Constabulary. Following the review no changes were considered necessary.

The delegations to Committees and officers have been explained in Section D. These delegations are in a continual state of review and change to reflect the changing environment and needs of the Authority. The Committee delegations were amended during 2007 and again during 2008. For example the discharge of responsibilities within the Authority to consider quarterly performance was returned from the Authority to the Monitoring and Audit Committee and the delegations to Standards Committee were amended to accommodate the new procedure on the local assessment of complaints.

The Authority has adopted a set of Contract Regulations which apply to the entering into of any commitment of a contractual nature for the purchase of goods, services or works. The Authority is required to demonstrate public accountability and impartiality in the contracting process and the Regulations are constructed with a view to ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and to ensure that there is transparency in the contracting process. The Contract Regulations were last extensively reviewed and amended in 2006 in order to accommodate arrangements for e-tendering. The Procurement Department of the Constabulary continually monitors the applicability and suitability of the Regulations with a view to recommending appropriate change where necessary.

In common with all decisions that concern the governance of the Authority, the Authority itself decides the exact nature of the governance issues and any changes thereto. By way of example the approval of Standing Orders and amendments thereto are considered by the Authority. With regard to Financial and Contract Regulations, whilst the Authority is ultimately the body that agrees the Regulations and the amendments, the Monitoring and Audit Committee first reviews and then make recommendations for change for consideration by the Authority.

All decisions to approve and amend these key documents must be taken in accordance with the statutory regime for the governance of Authority meetings, principally found in the Local Government Act 1972, as well as the Authority's internal governance regime found within the Arrangements and Standing Orders.

These key governance documents set out clearly how decisions covered by their scope need to be taken and the various mechanisms that must be complied with.

#### G. Risk Management

A fundamental aspect of decision-making within the Authority relates to risk management. In 2006 the Authority adopted a Risk Management Strategy which is encapsulated in the document Risk Management Strategy (incorporating the Statement of Responsibilities). The Authority seeks to identify, analyse and prioritise the risks it faces. It then seeks to manage and control the risks in order to

maximise the quality and efficiency of service provision. The Strategy recognises the importance of working closely with the Constabulary. The Strategy itself sets out clearly the responsibilities of the various individuals and groups in the risk management regime. The Chief Executive is overall responsible for overseeing the corporate approach to risk management and each year arranges for an audit of compliance with the Strategy. This is subsequently reported upon to the Monitoring and Audit Committee and Authority. Both the Authority and Constabulary maintain their own strategic risk registers which are in a constant state of review and adaptation, as anticipated in the Strategy, to reflect the changing nature of risks and the actions being taken to address such risks.

All reports to the Authority are required to address risk and this is specifically provided for in the Strategy and the Report Writing Guidelines. This approach ensures that risk management plays a major role in the key elements of the Authority's work relating to financial and budgetary management, service planning and performance management of the Constabulary.

A Risk Management Group comprising a link member for risk and senior officers of the Authority and Constabulary meets regularly to co-ordinate risk management across the Authority. Monitoring and Audit Committee also has responsibilities relating to the management of risk on behalf of the Authority.

The importance that the Authority ascribes to risk management is reflected in the fact that all Authority members and officers are required to be trained in the issues relating to it. This training is recorded in the Authority's Training Register.

The Authority's Risk Register, which identifies, profiles, controls and maintains all strategic risks, is regularly updated and circulated across the Authority and to the Constabulary and published upon the Authority's website at each review.

#### H. The Role and Functioning of the Monitoring and Audit Committee

The Monitoring and Audit Committee of the Authority discharges the functions of the Authority as required by the Practical Guidance for Local Authorities on Audit Committees published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. The Committee, which meets between six and seven times per year, helps improve the corporate focus on the core issues arising from internal control, reporting and management. Its functions are clearly defined and are found within the Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions. They go beyond the core functions set out above and include monitoring of complaints and monitoring the performance of the Constabulary (following in this latter case detailed monitoring by the Performance Management Group).

In respect of Internal Audit the Committee has a clear role which involves maintaining an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper internal audit practices. It should be noted that the Internal Audit service is provided through a contract between the Authority and Suffolk County Council. Each year the Committee agrees the Internal Audit Plan to ensure that it meets the Authority's strategic requirements. It approves the annual programme of audits with a view to ensuring that there is sufficient coverage of key areas. Progress against the Plan is monitored and at the year-end an annual report is received from the Treasurer to the Authority. This report advises on the work undertaken during the year subject to report and furnishes an overall view on the internal control environment for consideration by the Committee. All internal audit reports are reviewed and the

main issues arising are highlighted. The Committee seeks appropriate assurances that action has been taken where necessary.

The Committee also reviews the effectiveness of the system of internal audit on an annual basis.

As to external audit and inspections, the Committee has a role to receive and consider reports upon the work of the external auditor.

The Committee considers the external auditor's Annual Audit letter and gives preliminary consideration to a response to the letter on behalf of the Authority. The Committee considers responses to reports published by the external auditors and agrees action plans on behalf of the Authority to address areas requiring attention arising from the reports. These include responses to the Police Use of Resources Auditor Feedback Report and the Annual Governance Report. This former report considers a number of themes that are thus monitored by the Committee and which to date have comprised financial reporting, financial management, financial standing, internal control and value for money. The next audit of Police Use of Resources will be undertaken against three new themes.

Where inspection reports are actioned, the Committee monitors the Action Plans agreed in response.

Not only does the Committee consider inspection reports from the external auditors, it also considers issues raised by HMIC where the issues are not otherwise considered by the Authority.

The Committee's role extends to ensuring that there is effective working between all audit and inspection functions with a view to maximising the value of the review function to the Authority.

The Committee oversees the strategies in place to regulate the activity of the Authority and to control the actions of its employees, members and contractors. The Contract Regulations and Financial Regulations (referred to above) are periodically considered and recommendations for review made to the Authority. In respect of Risk Management the Committee has responsibility to consider arrangements for the identification, assessment and management of risk. Amongst other things it receives reports from the Risk Management Group and an annual assessment from the Chief Executive concerning compliance with the Risk Management Strategy.

The Committee oversees compliance with the Assurance Framework. Historically this has included the production of the Statement on Internal Control and which has now been superseded by the production of this Annual Governance Statement. The Committee has agreed its mode of production through to its ultimate inclusion in the Statement of Accounts. Overseeing the Code of Corporate Governance also falls to this Committee. In September 2008 the Authority, upon the recommendation of the Monitoring and Audit Committee, approved a new Code of Corporate Governance founded upon the six principles of good governance found within the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government".

The Authority is, with the Constabulary, developing an Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, which will formalise the existing working arrangements between Internal Audit and the Professional Standards Department of the Constabulary. The policy

will include a Fraud Response Plan with guidance on how to deal with fraud and corruption. It will also cover Authority and Constabulary policies and procedures, required levels of behaviour, the prevention, investigation and detection of fraud and corruption, awareness and training. The current working arrangements provide for these procedures. The Policy, which in due course will be considered by the Committee, will formalise them.

The Committee reviews the financial statements and which includes the suitability of accounting policies and treatments; changes in accounting policies and treatments, areas of major judgement and significant adjustments and material weaknesses in internal control reported by the external auditor. Finally the Committee approves the statement of accounts each year on behalf of the Authority.

Through the oversight of the activities described above, the Committee is able to monitor the action recorded by audits and inspections and agreed and implemented by officers to improve the workings of the Authority and Constabulary. The Committee is able to provide independent assurance to the Authority on the adequacy of the internal control environment, risk management framework and financial reporting systems.

#### I. Compliance with Law and Internal Policy and Procedure

This section addresses the arrangements that are in place to ensure that relevant law and regulation is complied with by the Authority and to ensure that internal policy and procedure is observed. In particular the arrangements to ensure that all expenditure by the Authority is lawful is described.

The Authority is responsible for securing an efficient and effective police service for the area, for observing the duties imposed upon it and exercising the powers conferred upon it by legislation. The Chief Executive, Treasurer and Chief Constable, and others as appropriate, are required to advise and support the Authority in meeting its responsibilities.

The Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Treasurer are all statutory officers. The Chief Executive is responsible for the effective and efficient administration of the Authority. Further as Monitoring Officer he is required to ensure that agreed procedures are followed and further that the Authority conducts its business lawfully and in accordance with all applicable statutes, regulations and other statutory instruments. Indeed if the Monitoring Officer becomes aware that, if the Authority or any Committee or officer on its behalf has or is about to embark upon an unlawful course then he has a duty to report the matter to the Authority. The precise scope of this duty is set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

The Treasurer, who has responsibilities relating to financial management and governance, is similarly required to report issues of a financial nature to the Authority where they may give rise to a breach of requirements, be they statutory or otherwise.

All papers to be considered by members at formal meetings are scrutinised by the statutory officers, or staff acting on their behalf, to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. This includes scrutiny by the Treasurer to ensure that all expenditure is lawful.

Whilst the Authority is reliant upon its statutory professional officers to scan and monitor the environment for potential legislative impacts upon it, it is also assisted by numerous professional networks. These include the Association of Police Authorities which disseminates advice to police authorities concerning the administration of authorities. This is supplemented by the Chief Executive and Treasurer being members of the Association of Police Authority Chief Executives and the Police Authority Treasurers' Society both of which provide a conduit for further professional advice. Further the Chief Executive and Treasurer attend regular meetings of their counterparts in the Eastern Region and sub-Region respectively. The Authority also receives technical support services of a financial nature in common with other police authorities from Somerset County Council.

The Authority has appointed a number of its members as Chairs of Committees or as Link/Lead Members. Amongst their responsibilities they are required to develop and maintain an up-to-date knowledge and specialist interest in the area for which they are responsible. In addition a number of these members are required under their role responsibilities as described in the Link Member Policy and Members' Allowances Scheme, to act as the conduit between the Association of Police Authorities and Authority in relation to issues arising from the Association's Policy Networks. These Networks and Groups are a further vehicle to enable Authorities to keep abreast of all developments affecting police authorities.

Each year the Monitoring and Audit Committee on behalf of the Authority agrees a programme of internal audits which are aimed at ensuring compliance with internal policies and procedures.

It is clear therefore that there are numerous mechanisms across the Authority by which steps are taken to ensure that the Authority complies with its obligations both external and internal.

#### J. Whistleblowing and Complaints

This section describes the processes for whistleblowing and explains the transparent and accessible arrangements for handling complaints.

The statutory provisions relating to whistleblowing apply to police officers and police staff alike. This means that such staff are able to make disclosures protected by the legislation and remaining protected from action by their employer. These statutory provisions are reflected in the policies that apply to staff of the Authority and the Constabulary and which explain the actions to be taken in cases of whistleblowing.

The handling of complaints relating to the police service is an intricate and complex combination of statutory and employment related provisions. It is further complicated by the varied status of those working for the police.

Firstly, there are uniformed police officers who are not employees as such but are officeholders under the Crown.

Secondly, there are police staff who, as a matter of technicality, are employed by the Authority but who fall under the direction and control of the Chief Constable. They are all employees.

Thirdly, there are police staff employees who work directly for the Authority and who fall under the direction and control of the Authority itself.

Finally, there are contracted staff who perform roles under contractual arrangements with the Authority, but who are not employees of the Authority.

Where complaints arise about these different categories of workers, different processes apply. The Statutory Guidance issued by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) and entitled “Making the new complaints system work better” is followed by both the Authority and the Constabulary. This explains how the police complaints system operates. Essentially for police officers a statutory system for the consideration of complaints applies. For police staff, including those under the direction and control of the Chief Constable and those falling directly under the control of the Authority, the contractual terms provide for how complaints against individual staff are to be handled. For those staff provided by Contractors then the contracts entered into between the Authority and the Contractors explain how complaints are to be handled.

For complaints about officers up to the most senior ranks, i.e. up to but not including the ranks of Chief Constable, Deputy Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constable, the Chief Constable is the appropriate authority by which the complaints system is operated, in conjunction, where appropriate with the IPCC. In the case of complaints against these senior ranks themselves, the Police Authority is the appropriate authority, with IPCC involvement where appropriate. The Chief Executive conducts the initial processes for the consideration of and sifting of such complaints. Where a complaint is suitable for recording it is referred to the Human Resources and Staff Liaison Committee of the Authority for consideration.

In some instances complaints about police officers do not relate to the personal conduct of officers but instead to matters of direction and control. This category of complaint includes issues relating to operational policing policy, organisational decisions, general policing standards and operational management decisions. Where a complaint amounts to an issue of direction and control it is passed to the Chief Constable to make response to the complainant.

The Authority by contrast handles individual complaints falling outside the statutory complaints system on an ad hoc basis. Although the number of complaints it receives are small it has identified, through its Corporate Business Plan, that an organisational complaints process needs to be developed and published.

The redress available where complaints are made against police officers is circumscribed by the statutory system. The Authority monitors the operation of the complaints system through the Monitoring and Audit Committee which has two meetings per year when it gives especial attention to complaints. The regional Commissioner for the IPCC attends these meetings.

Complaints may also be made about members of the Authority. Where complaints relate to a member breaching any part of the Authority’s Code of Conduct, then the handling of these complaints fall to be considered under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, Regulations made thereunder and guidance made by the Standards Board for England. These complaints can only relate to individual members and not the Authority as a whole or Authority employees. Complaints should be made to the Authority’s Monitoring Officer. This is clearly explained in the Homepage of the Authority’s website.

The Standards Committee of the Authority has responsibility to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the Authority members and accordingly oversees issues arising under the Code of Conduct on behalf of the Authority.

The Local Government Act 1974 introduced the concept of the ombudsman into local government. A Local Commissioner may investigate written complaints made by or on behalf of a member of the public who claims to have sustained injustice in consequence of maladministration in connection with action taken or default by the Authority. Maladministration includes bias, neglect, inattention, delay, incompetence, ineptitude, perversity, turpitude, and arbitrariness. There are a number of avenues of redress available involving consideration of a Local Commissioner's report by the Authority.

#### K. Development of Members and Senior Officers

Members of the Authority derive from two sources. Of the seventeen members, nine are County Councillors appointed by the Suffolk County Council, eight are independent members (one of whom must be a magistrate) appointed amongst other things, by reference to their skills and competences. Upon entry to the Authority, members are allocated to committee responsibilities and other roles within the Authority by reference to their skills. Comprehensive induction training is provided to members so as to familiarise them with the work of the Authority. This typically includes sessions on the powers and duties of the Authority, governance of the Authority, financial and budgetary affairs, the management of performance, the Code of Conduct, Risk Management and Diversity. Whilst this training is conducted with an Authority focus, induction into the activities of the Constabulary is also provided. Once in post the Authority holds regular briefing sessions on topical policing issues through a programme of informal Authority meetings.

The Authority has opened a Training Register to log training undertaken by members of the Authority. In Autumn 2007 most members (and all officers of the Authority) were trained on the new Code of Conduct for members and upon Risk Management. As new members join the Authority similar training is offered. Training new members in these two important fields as and when they are appointed is clearly recognised within the Corporate Business Plan. During Spring 2008 a training session for members was conducted upon Diversity; again this was identified in the Corporate Business Plan. Training was also offered to all members during 2008 upon the health and safety responsibilities of the Authority.

In some instances specific training is required to enable members to discharge discreet Authority roles. For example at present training opportunities are being sought upon the police discipline system and appeals process to facilitate the members discharge of their role when appointed to the Police Appeals Tribunal.

The Members' Allowance Scheme contains a Members' Allowance Review Process by which the Chair of the Authority reviews the contribution of each member towards the work of the Authority. This helps the Chair assess performance as well as the skills and training necessary to enable members to discharge their role. In respect of the Chair's performance this is monitored and reviewed annually by a small group of members who seek feedback from Authority members and key staff within the Authority and Constabulary. The purpose of these processes is to help improve the level of performance of all members and to maintain it at a high level. The Corporate Business Plan provides for an action to ensure that the member evaluation process and arrangements for member development are fit for purpose. It is intended that the outcome will be a clear

understanding of the development needs of the Authority membership together with a system for delivering documented outcomes. In addition the Plan also contains an action to produce a member recruitment plan so that it can be clear about the role and demands and required qualities of an Authority member. The Authority proposes, through the Plan, to develop a mentoring scheme for members and officers of the Authority alike.

The performance of and training needs of officers of the Authority are examined and actioned through Performance Development Review. Through this process steps are identified to enhance the transferable skills of officers as well as increase and maintain the knowledge and skills base in police and governance specific disciplines. In recent years two members of Police Authority staff have successfully completed MBA programmes and a third is currently undertaking a Diploma in Management Studies. Two members of staff are required to undertake continuing professional development in order to sustain professional qualifications.

Both members and officers regularly attend conferences and seminars upon issues of relevance to the delivery of policing and governance.

Regular briefings are prepared for members to facilitate their role. The Members Handbook contains a number of guides to the discharge of member responsibilities, for example in relation to the dip-sampling of complaints, the discharge of responsibilities relating to Safer Neighbourhoods and Risk Management.

#### L. Engagement with Communities and other stakeholders

This section describes how the Authority establishes clear channels of communication with all parts of the Suffolk community and other stakeholders, recognising that different sections of the Suffolk community have different priorities and how it ensures accountability and encourages open consultation.

One of the Authority's key functions is to make arrangements for obtaining the views of local people about the policing of their area. By gaining an understanding of what the public requires the Authority and Constabulary can deliver the services that are needed. In 2007 the Authority adopted the Suffolk Police Authority and Constabulary Community Engagement Strategy 2007-2010. The Authority and Constabulary undertake engagement activity to ensure local people receive the best possible service. The stated strategic aim is "To provide a responsive and accountable policing service, which identifies its priorities through effective and consistent engagement with our communities and partners – involving them, where appropriate, in jointly funding solutions to local problems". This helps to establish a process for strategic planning which better uses information gathered to make decisions.

The Authority has three objectives for community engagement. Firstly, to ensure that its statutory responsibility for engagement is fulfilled. Secondly to monitor and scrutinise the Constabulary's community engagement activities and thirdly to promote enhanced citizenship and community confidence in the activities of the Authority and Constabulary.

The Authority has overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy. To do this it has and will scrutinise and hold the Constabulary to account for its performance. The Policing Performance Assessment Framework and baseline assessment framework for HMIC provided

the Authority with an initial framework to measure, compare and assess Constabulary performance with reference to community engagement. Detailed actions and priority areas are set out in annual engagement programmes. Responsibility for the delivery of the programmes lies with the Citizen Focus Department and they are publicly scrutinised by the Authority's Engaging Communities Committee.

This regular monitoring takes place at Committee meetings on a quarterly basis. A nominated Authority member, namely the Chair of the Committee, serves as the link member for the Strategy and provides a key point of contact for the head of the Citizen Focus Department in delivering the Strategy.

The Consultation Working Group of the Engaging Communities Committee conducted an Audit of Consultation in 2008 to determine the level of consultation with a view to ascertaining whether that consultation is sufficient and effective. Flowing from this work and the Consultation Working Group's Action Plan the Authority has agreed its Corporate Business Plan 2008-2011 within which the Improvement Plan provides at Action 6.2 to review the effectiveness of the Engagement Strategy including strengthening the performance management of the Strategy to ensure it delivers appropriate consultation to all sections of the Community. This work is planned to be completed during 2009 and will be undertaken by the Consultation Working Group under the purview of the Engaging Communities Committee.

The Three Year Plan 2008-2011 agreed by the Authority in February 2008 explained some of the key activities to be undertaken to open up communication with the communities of the county with the ultimate aim of enhancing levels of confidence and satisfaction. Similarly the Three Year Plan 2009-2012 approved in February 2009 explains the development of these steps to continue to engage with the County's communities.

To enhance the Authority's and Constabulary's communications with communities and stakeholders the Improvement Plan of the Corporate Business Plan 2008-2011 provides at Action 6.1 that the Communications and Marketing Strategies for the Authority (to include the interface with public, partners and local stakeholders) will be reviewed and published by March 2009. The Marketing Strategy was agreed by the Authority in April 2008. Specifically the Marketing Strategy helps with the dissemination of information about the role and work of the Authority together with their accountability arrangements. With regard to the Communications Strategy this will be completed during 2009.

Specific examples of establishing clear channels of communications with the communities of Suffolk include the IAG. The terms of reference of the IAG, whose members are selected from the communities of Suffolk, include actioning and making recommendations to the Authority and Constabulary on improving the trust and confidence of Suffolk's diverse communities in their police service. Further, during 2007 the Authority, in partnership with the Suffolk Confederation of Small Businesses held a Business Forum to discuss the policing issues that affect small businesses.

It is through these arrangements that the Authority encourages individuals from all parts of the Suffolk community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the Authority.

## M. Partnerships

The Authority has a number of collaborative/partnership arrangements with members of the wider policing/local government family.

Both Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies are seeking to collaborate in a range of areas. This is known as the Preferred Partnership. At the point where collaborative opportunities are identified as able to deliver efficiencies or savings then the Authority is required to give its approval to collaborate. This is recognised by Norfolk and Suffolk Police Authorities alike. During 2008 business cases in a number of areas were submitted to the Authority for approval. In September 2008 Norfolk and Suffolk Police Authorities established the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint Statutory Committee to oversee the governance of the collaborative projects where agreements under Section 23 of the Police Act 1996 have been executed. This formal governance mechanism comprising four members from each Authority has an agreed constitution and delegations which will be continually reviewed by the Chief Executive of both Authorities.

The most long-standing collaborative project is the Police Investigation Centres Project which seeks ultimately to provide custody facilities across Norfolk and Suffolk under a private finance initiative. A legally binding Joint Working Agreement governs the relationship between Norfolk and Suffolk and makes provision for, amongst other things, project structure, decision-making and cost-sharing. This Agreement will be replaced, at the point of entering into a contract with a private sector provider with a Second Joint Working Agreement and which will govern relations over the period of the contract. This second agreement is expected to be executed during 2009. Formal governance of the contract with the private sector provider is planned to be undertaken on behalf of both Authorities by the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint Statutory Committee.

The Authority currently maintains oversight of the Project through the Strategy Committee which considers progress regularly at its meetings. Decision-making relating to specifically identified decisions requires Authority approval or in the case of urgency, approval by a nominated executive group of officers and members.

Across the Region the opportunities for collaboration are also being explored. A Regional Joint Statutory Committee has been established and agreed by all six regional authorities. Its constitutional arrangements and terms of reference together with delegations in respect of collaborative functions have been agreed by the Authority. The Committee, which comprises members from each Authority, will govern collaborative projects where authority approval has been given and where chief officers of police have entered into agreements pursuant to Section 23 of the Police Act 1996.

It is noteworthy that at this point neither Joint Statutory Committees have been vested with executive decision-making power to bind the Authority.

The minutes of both Joint Statutory Committees are circulated within the Authority so all Authority members may be kept up to date on developments.

Other historic collaborative ventures exist such as the Air Support Consortium and which are regulated by agreements entered into with the relevant police areas.

The Authority is also involved in partnerships outside the police family. The Authority is a party to the Suffolk Local Area Agreement 2

The Authority is also a member of the Community Safety Partnerships in the County which are funded through the Local Area Agreement and has member representatives on each. It is a role of the members of the Community Safety Partnerships to work together to develop and implement a strategy for reducing crime and disorder. The Partnerships each have agreed terms of reference which establish their roles and responsibilities. The strategic decision-making body of each Community Safety Partnership is the Responsible Authorities Group whose responsibility it is to oversee all aspects of the work of the Community Safety Partnerships, setting priorities, maintaining progress and funding. A guide has been produced to assist all members involved in this work.

The Authority is also represented on the Suffolk Strategic Partnership Board and three Delivery Partnerships. These all operate according to agreed constitutional arrangements. The Suffolk Strategic Partnership is a non-statutory body which governs through the Board, the development of the Suffolk Community Strategy for 20 years and the arrangements for delivering the statutory three year Local Area Agreement.

The Partnership Working Group of the Authority is currently concluding its review and evaluation of the Authority's partnership arrangements to ensure that the Authority and Constabulary work effectively to support policing in the County. Whilst this review does not cover collaboration per se it seeks, amongst other things, to identify all current significant partnership activities, clarify the legal status of partnerships, clarify the role requirements, develop guidance on roles and decision-making powers, develop the structural and reporting mechanisms for feeding back on partnership work, and consider the recommendations of the Audit Commission Governing Partnerships Strategic framework and the Internal Auditors' report on partnerships. This review is provided for in both the Engaging Communities Committee's Business Plan and the Corporate Business Plan.

#### **4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS**

The Authority has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the governance framework, including:

- the system of internal audit;
- the system of internal control.

Review of these systems has been informed by the work of internal auditors, and the officers within the Authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment. Comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies have also informed this review.

The Corporate Group comprising the Chief Executive, Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer with responsibility for drafting this Annual Governance Statement have considered the governance framework and the system of internal controls as a necessary and vital concomitants to producing such a statement. These officers collectively have involvement in and oversight of the processes involved in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance framework. In producing this statement full regard has been taken of the Authority's Risk Register. The maintenance and review of the effectiveness of the governance framework also extends to others within the Authority. The Authority itself maintains overall control of its governance framework and has been involved, for example, in amending as necessary the Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions, considering the Annual Report on Risk Management activities, as well

as challenging Constabulary performance. The Monitoring and Audit Committee has carried out extensive work in performing its terms of reference which are stated in the Arrangements for Discharge of Functions. This has included the consideration of external audit reports, e.g. on the Police Use of Resources Evaluation, reviewing the effectiveness of internal audit, considering the annual assessment from the Chief Executive on compliance with the Risk Management Strategy and challenging the Constabulary (latterly through the Performance Management Group) on performance against the performance indicators set by the Authority. The Standards Committee has undertaken a review of the Members' Allowance Scheme as well as developing a procedure for the assessment of Code of Conduct complaints concerning members. Internal Audit have carried out a programme of work at a level necessary to satisfy the legal and professional obligations of the Authority and Treasurer and also to allow a small contingency for specific projects.

During the last year the Authority approved a Corporate Business Plan with a view to improving and enhancing the performance of the Authority. That Corporate Business Plan contains an Improvement Plan which, having been approved by the Authority, sets out a number of actions and outcomes for a three-year period. The production of the Plan was informed by the draft Association of Police Authorities Self-Assessment Checklist. A number of actions required under the Plan relate to the further enhancement and development of the governance framework. The Plan's implementation is monitored by Strategy Committee and is continuously reviewed to ensure that it meets the development requirements of the Authority. The Partnership Working Group has been working to a Plan which forms part of the Engaging Communities Business Plan and which will address the governance of partnerships.

The Authority has a Risk Management Group comprising a member and senior officers of the Authority and Constabulary and whose primary role has been to consider the arrangements for the identification, assessment and management of risk. This Group plays a major part in the continuing development of the Authority's risk management framework.

The Monitoring and Audit Committee as a part of its regular business reviews the effectiveness of internal audit on an annual basis. As part of this review, the Committee placed reliance on the conclusion of the triennial review of internal audit arrangements undertaken by the Audit Commission in April 2008 that, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit has concluded that the opinion in the annual report on internal audit work can be relied upon as a key source of evidence. The effectiveness of the system of internal audit includes the effectiveness of the Monitoring and Audit Committee (to the extent that its work relates to internal audit) as well as the performance of internal audit.

Internal Audit provided an independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's system of financial control, including in particular the key controls operating within and around the core financial systems.

Deficiencies in internal control are reported by Internal Audit to management whose responsibility is to consider them and act appropriately. The result of the internal audit review on the effectiveness of the system of internal control were reported to the Monitoring and Audit Committee and plans, to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement, are in place.

The Authority continues to demonstrate adequate and effective controls. Whilst the programme of internal (and external) audit work has identified the need to make certain improvements, overall there are no adverse control issues arising for 2008/09. Officers remain vigilant about the need to continue to apply effective controls and Monitoring and Audit Committee members will continue to monitor performance on this. There are no significant audit issues in relation to the main financial systems and controls of the Authority.

In considering this Annual Governance Statement the Monitoring and Audit Committee have reviewed the effectiveness of the governance framework including the system of internal control. In carrying out the review the Committee has been advised by the Chief Executive and Treasurer and have noted in particular the Corporate Business Plan and its associated Improvement Plan where many of the actions contained therein relate to the further enhancement and development of the governance framework. The Committee has made arrangements to be advised of and to monitor the further development of the governance framework.

## 5. **SIGNIFICANT GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

The Authority proposes, over the coming year to take steps to address areas (as set out below) where its governance arrangements require development. The Authority is satisfied that these steps will address the need for developments that have been identified in the review of the Authority's effectiveness. The implementation of these steps will be monitored by the Monitoring and Audit Committee.

### Collaboration – Preferred Partnership

The Authority and Force are currently involved in the pursuit of collaboration opportunities with Norfolk Police Authority and Constabulary. Governance arrangements for collaboration in this Preferred Partnership have been agreed by the Authority at a strategic level through the formation of the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint Statutory Committee. Constitutional arrangements and delegations to this Committee have been agreed. Whilst executive decision-making power has not been vested in this Committee it will provide the primary governance function for the collaborative projects that have been approved by the Authority. Two projects have "gone live" from 1 April 2009 under arrangements set out in agreements under Section 23 of the Police Act 1996. The arrangements will be kept under review by the Chief Executive and Treasurer and who will play a full part in ensuring that they are fit for the Authority's governance needs.

### Police Investigation Centres Project

This is a joint project with Norfolk Police Authority and Constabulary which has financial risks in both the set up and running of the Project as well as operational risks in ensuring that the needs of the partners are fully met. The constitutional aspects of the project are currently provided for by a Joint Working Agreement which will see the Project through to entering into agreement with a contract provider. A further Joint Working Agreement will be needed to cover the 30 year life of the PFI Contract and which, amongst other things, will provide for governance of the project. The content of the Second Joint Working Agreement will need to be approved by the Project Board and by both Authorities. The Chief Executive and Treasurer will continue to monitor developments for the Authority.

### Collaboration – Regional

The Authority and Force are currently involved in the pursuit of collaborative opportunities across the Region. Governance arrangements for regional collaboration have been agreed by the formation of the Eastern Region Police Authorities Collaboration Joint Statutory Committee and constitutional arrangements and delegations to this Committee for the purpose of the collaboration have been provided for. These arrangements will be kept under review by the Chief Executive and Treasurer who will play a full part in ensuring that they are fit for the Authority's governance needs.

### Partnerships

The consideration of governance arrangements of partnerships that involve the Authority and which primarily include the Local Area Agreement 2 and its arrangements and the Community Safety Partnerships is a specific area of work that is currently in progress. It is provided for in both the Authority's Corporate Business Plan and the Engaging Communities Committee's Business Plan. The aim of this work, being taken forward by the Chief Executive, is to better understand and enhance the role of members of the Authority in these partnerships as well as securing that the governance arrangements are appropriate to the needs of the Authority.

### Members

During 2009 there will be local elections which may lead to a change in membership of the Authority. This, together with the conduct of planned recruitment processes to fill two independent vacancies arising during the course of the year means that there could be a significant turnover of membership. Steps will be taken to comprehensively induct the new members in order that they may gain a full understanding of the role of a member of the Authority as well as the issues faced by the Authority.

### Boundary Committee Review

The outcome of the Boundary Committee Review will become known during the course of the year. The Authority will need to be mindful of the impact that the Ministerial decision upon the future of local government in the County will have upon the delivery of the Authority's functions. The Chief Executive will monitor developments for the Authority.

Signed:

Gulshan Kayembe  
Chair of Suffolk Police Authority

Christopher Jackson  
Chief Executive of Suffolk Police Authority

17 April 2009