

DYFED-POWYS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
16TH NOVEMBER 2017

JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE

Recommendations / key decisions required:

1. To note the report and make recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner as to the conduct of Joint Audit Committee meetings.
2. To determine whether to continue to send observers to these meetings

Reasons:

At its meeting in July 2017 the Panel accepted an invitation from the Commissioner to send observers to a future meeting of the Committee.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DYFED – POWYS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

16TH NOVEMBER 2017

JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Joint Audit Committee is a quarterly public forum at which independent advice and recommendations are provided to both the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable regarding matters relating to internal controls, finance, governance and risk management. A copy of the Committee's Terms of Reference are annexed to this report. On the 31st October 2017 Cllr William Powell attended a meeting of the Committee and observed its proceedings. The following points were noted;

1. The Committee members acted in a thorough and diligent manner
2. There could have been greater challenge by the committee of the information placed before it. (This is a point that has also been raised by other Police and Crime Panels elsewhere)
3. No members of the public or press were present
4. A number of agenda items on the agenda published online had no supporting documents attached and no summary of what the particular agenda item was about. This made it difficult to really understand in advance what was going to be discussed.
5. Some agenda items were marked as '(Exempt)' without any explanation as to why and what this meant.

Whilst the Committee should be commended for holding these meetings publically, more could be done to promote openness and transparency in the work of the Committee to facilitate public interest and scrutiny. It is therefore suggested that the Panel make the following recommendations to the Commissioner;

1. That if there are agenda items in respect of which no report is being publish the agenda should include a summary of the key facts or issues being discussed, so that the public can better understand what is to be considered and be able to make a more informed decision as to whether or not to attend.
2. That where a particular agenda item is to be treated as exempt from publication the reasons for non-publication should be set out in the agenda with reference to a published set of criteria (such as that contained in the Local government Act 1972) together with an explanation as to what this means in terms of the conduct of the meeting. This will reassure the public that information is being withheld for proper reasons and only where it is in the public interest to do so.

If the Panel is to send observers in the future, it is suggested they receive specialist financial training

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Host Authority File	LS-0511/19	County Hall, Carmarthen