



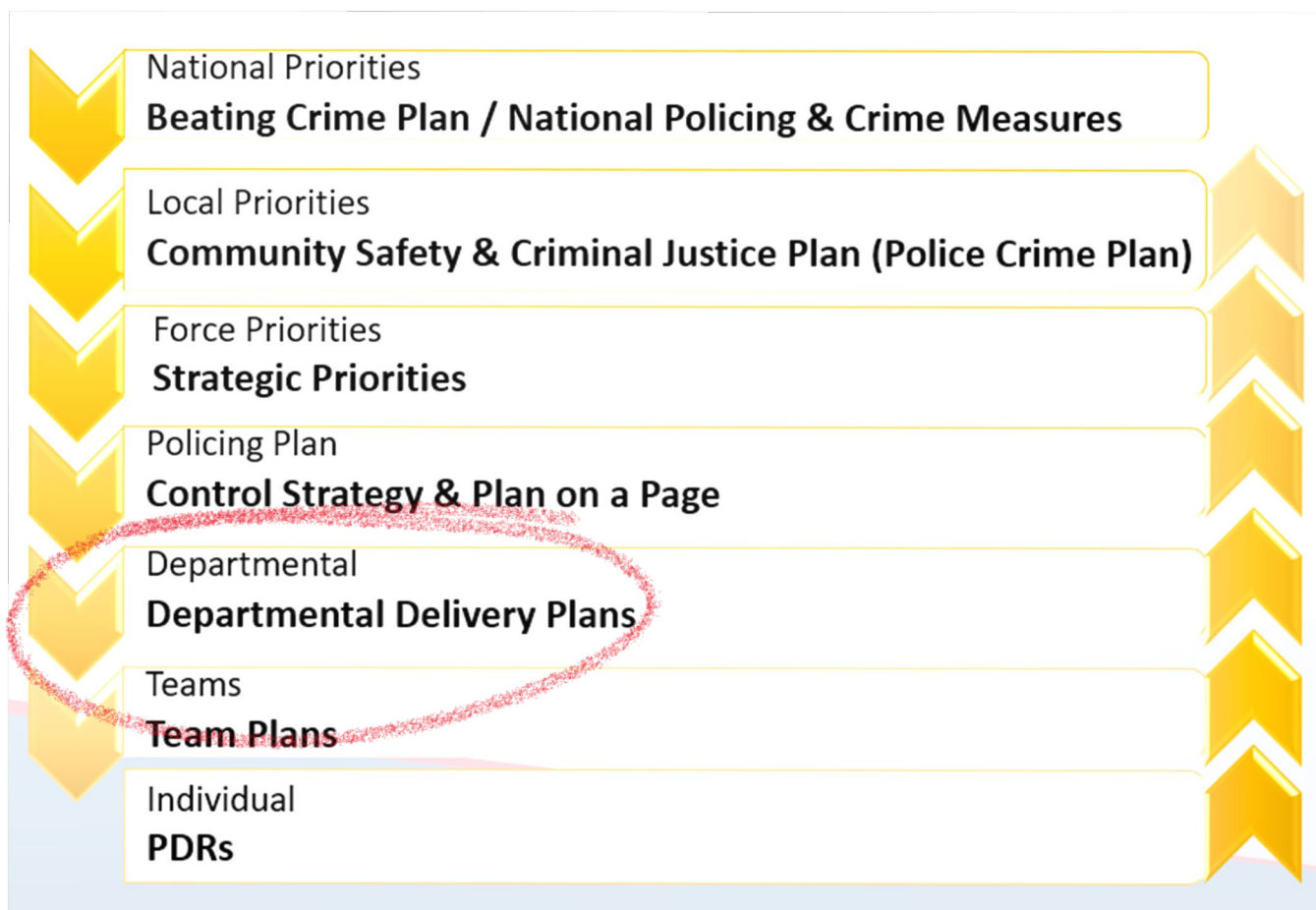
HERTFORDSHIRE

CONSTABULARY

Prevention First

Finance Departmental Plan

2024 – 2025



QUESTIONS YOUR PLAN NEEDS TO ANSWER

Vision

What is our vision for the future? What are we trying to achieve as a department in the next 12 months? Where do we want to be in 5 years?

Our Aims & Objectives

This plan should set out the drivers, aims and focus for your department for the coming year.

Strategic Priorities

What specifically are we going to focus on to improve the physical, psychological, financial, and emotional wellbeing of our workforce?

How does this align with Constabulary strategic priorities, which of the Prevention First Pillars are you meeting, Prevent Harm, Prevent Crime, Prevent Offending?

What does this mean for your team?

How will it translate into their PDR Objectives / My conversation for the coming year?

How will we measure our success?

What are the quantitative measures and qualitative measures that my team can collect to show progress.

PLAN on a PAGE



Strategic Priorities | 2022 - 2023

PEOPLE			
We embrace Diversity, Equality and Inclusion within our workforce and deliver against our Race Action Plan	We invest time and resource to retain and develop an (up)skilled, agile, adaptable workforce who will continually strive to improve upon our professional standards	Through investment and supportive leadership, we empower our people to make decisions, innovate, learn, explore and deliver our priorities within our governance framework	We focus on the wellbeing of our people including a spotlight on mental health, and work with partner agencies to prevent harm
COLLABORATION			
We remain invested in police to police collaboration to maximise benefits for the public, in particular our effective and efficient BCH collaboration	We generate efficiencies and provide a better service to the public, by working with emergency services across Hertfordshire	In line with our Prevention First approach, we are committed to multi agency problem solving through partnerships with the public, private and third sectors	By working with our partners in the criminal justice system, we endeavour to provide the best possible service for victims and bring offenders to justice
DELIVERY			
Prevention First is our overarching vision and operating model which helps us to deliver against the Police and Crime Plan as well as the Strategic Policing Requirement	We strive to continually improve public trust, confidence and victim satisfaction. Accountability is key to how we operate both internally and externally	We protect vulnerable people in our community through the use of NVAP, which includes a focus on Violence Against Women and Girls	We strive to deliver a good service to the public according to their individual, diverse needs by adhering to our values and the Code of Ethics
ENABLERS			
We strive to use multiple sources of data to better inform decision making and embed evidence based policing as a tool for both strategy development and operational delivery	We embrace digital solutions, technology and platforms that are effective, fit for purpose, and cutting edge to best serve public needs as well as drive efficiencies in time, cost and resources	We seek continuous improvement of our processes and systems to deliver efficiency and greater value for service users and the public	We continue to adopt a problem solving mindset across the Constabulary and share best practice and lessons learned

Departmental Delivery Plan 2024/25

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

During 2021 Financial Management within Hertfordshire Police was reviewed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (Cipfa). The review was undertaken as part of the Achieving Financial Excellence in Police Programme (AFEP). The AFEP programme supports achieving and sustaining financial excellence in policing by building on national capacity and providing local support and is recognised by the Treasury as setting out the fundamentals of best practice financial management within a public sector organisation. Cipfa's assessment was based on a mix of evidence obtained through an Electronic Survey, Interviews and Document Reviews across both the Constabulary and the OPCC.

Hertfordshire Police was rated as two stars within the five-star rating system. This score reflected that whilst Finance was deemed a good traditional function with strong controls and processes it is not seen as supporting transformation and thought to provide limited support to business decision making. There were also issues raised around the financial systems. Whilst the score of two out of five is disappointing for the department, it should be noted that the review looked at financial management across the whole organisation, not just within the finance department. In response to the review's findings steps have already been put in place to correct some of the areas of weakness and a business case constructed to address further areas – the implementation of which forms the basis of the Finance Department Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25.

Since the Cipfa review, the department has made significant progress in a range of areas of highlighted weakness. In particular:

- The MTFS is maintained as a live document, available to all Chief Officers, Budget Holders and all other members of the Finance Department Budget Manager's share point site. The MTFS is also integrated into the budget setting process including the formal budget setting paper.

- The establishment of a Finance Business Partner Team went live from April 2024 with a phased roll out to departments during the year. The introduction of this team will significantly change the way in which departments are supported by the Finance Department.
- Introduction of a revised and streamlined budget monitor process. This new approach will be based upon utilising a standardised Budget Monitor MS Forms to capture data and aims to enhance consistency of reporting, better align departmental response to corporate reporting requirements and automate data capture for consolidation.
- Development and Implementation of a BI based Budget Manager Portal providing the ability to self-serve both financial monitoring and ad-hoc enquiries with drill down to prime document images and payroll data.

Given the above, the Finance Department is on track to hit its overarching aim of scoring an AFEP review 4 by the end of the coming financial year.

OVERARCHING AIMS

To achieve an AFEP rating of 4 by the end of 2024/25, we will:

- Complete the implementation of the proposals set out in the Finance Proposed Change business case. This will include embedding the Finance Business Partner model and strengthening the Financial Accounting capability.
- Enhance Customer Relations by increasing visibility of the financial governance framework, seeking understanding from the users of our services on how we can better support them, and to objectively measure our own performance both internally (KPI's) and externally (benchmarking).
- Improve Transaction Services and Processes through the review and adaptation of current systems and processes.
- Ensure corporate budget setting is driven by the business planning cycle, working alongside the Strategic Hub and the Force Review Team, focusing on alignment with strategic objectives. This will be undertaken within the financial context of a shared and widely understood MTFS.
- Build upon our work to date to redefine budget monitoring and financial reporting to include access to self-service information for budget holders, data visualisation, productivity analysis and evidence-based reporting on VFM.
- Develop a soft close capability for the financial year end for both revenue and capital accounts. Maintain a focus on supporting professional development by building upon the success of our current student intakes and seeking external accreditation.

HOW WE ARE GOING TO ACHIEVE THIS

Customer Relations / Support

- Implementation of the Finance Business Partner Team and the phased roll out of associated new and improved financial support.
- Revised CC Scheme of Delegation backed by training for Finance staff and customers.
- SLA / Memorandum of Understanding / KPIs.
- External Insight Regime, for performance and best practice.
- Training of budget holders / managers

Transaction Services and Processes

- No PO No Pay policy.
- Direct receipt of all invoices by Finance.
- M365 Quick Wins on process automation
- Explore potential of M365 to fill gaps. Review user profiles to maximise hard stops on system.
- Implementation of punch out to a marketplace that can host catalogues etc.
- New Finance System Development / contract renewal

Financial Planning & Budget Setting

- BCH Revenue and Capital Four Year Programme
- PUP Allocation
- Integration of Medium-Term Business Planning to MTFS
- Supporting projects including Operation Phoenix

Monitoring & Reporting

- Use of M365 BI etc to reduce the burden of producing data and reports, and therefore enhance the capacity to support decision makers. In particular, integration of the BI Revenue Portal into the budget monitoring process.
- Evidenced based reporting on the achievement of efficiency savings and wider value for money.
- Data visualisation.
- Stakeholders to be able to easily access financial information.

Closedown / Statement of Accounts

- Draft SoA template with supporting briefing note on changes to requirements alongside an annual review of accounting policies by January preceding closedown.
- Trial run of Summary Statement of Accounts.
- Maximise automation through MS BI

Professional Development

- Student Training Programme
- Career Pathways

Finance management competency framework for finance staff and budget holders

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Customer Relations / Support

- Support Service Customer Satisfaction Surveys. *Score 3.5+*
- Cipfa Achieving Excellence in Police Finance score of 4.
- Annual Training of 50% of all budget managers and budget holders.

Transaction Services and Processes

- 90% invoice paid on time.
- 80% invoice have PuOs.
- 100% of relevant invoices for which no PO raised returned to suppliers.
- 100% of debtor invoices raised with 10 days of form receipt by accounts payable.
- 80% of debtor invoices paid on time.
- Less than 1% of debt written off.

Financial Planning & Budget Setting

- 100% Development / Annual Reissue of SOP for high level budget process
- 100% of key SOP dates achieved.
- 100% Range of budget scenarios developed and maintained.
- 100% Live MTFS document shared with stakeholders.

Monitoring & Reporting

- BI driven budget holder dashboard bringing together financial and performance data.
- Budget holders able to input own forecast.
- Budget holder able to access to live data.

- 95% of department monitors available by 10 working days.
- 100% of SEB and COT/SLT corporate monitor reports submitted on time.
- Less than 5% of net budget movement in variance from Q3 to outturn report.

Closedown / Statement of Accounts

- 100% unqualified Statement of Accounts from the 2024/25 SoA onwards
- 100% compliance with statutory deadlines
- Soft close capability
- Less than 5 significant corrected findings in Audit report
- 0% significant uncorrected findings in Audit report

Professional Development

- Multiyear Individual Training / Development Programmes for at least 50% of staff.
- Maintain a cohort of at least 3 student trainees (AAT & Cipfa)
- Maximise use of pre-paid training places.
- CPD requirements met by all staff where relevant.

GOVERNANCE

- Finance Board
- Department SMT

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

The Financial Management Review highlighted that “support to budget holders was currently inadequately resourced and lacks a professional skill base.” It is therefore a requirement for holders of the Business Partner roles to be CCAB qualified accountants.

The two accountancy qualifications required within the department are AAT and CCAB (preferably Cipfa). Attainment of these qualification is through two to three years of external study. The department currently has 3 AAT trainees and 1 Cipfa student. Plans are in place to recruit 2 graduate trainees to study for the Cipfa qualification.

Professionally qualified staff within the department are required to comply with the CPD requirements of their professional body. Typically, this will be through a combination of on-the-job development and training courses. The latter are predominantly accessed through prepaid training days provided with the Constabulary’s AFEP membership.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Next 12 months

Current budget adequate for proposed structure and to meet expected non-pay costs. Difficulties in recruiting to qualified account roles continues to hold the department back.

Next 3 years

Potential investment in financial systems development.

KEY DOCUMENTS (PLANS, STRATEGIES ETC.)