HMICS

Assurance validation of Police Scotland transformation benefits 2019-20

April 2021

Improving Policing Across Scotland

Key findings

- HMICS has been provided with sufficient evidence to validate the benefits management and realisation approach adopted by the majority of Police Scotland projects claiming to have delivered benefits for the transformation portfolio in 2019-20.

- HMICS recognises Police Scotland has made significant improvements in benefit management and reporting from 2020-21 onward.

- Police Scotland is making good use of independent external assurance from the Scottish Government Gateway Review process and Technical Assurance Framework reviews.

- HMICS acknowledges that Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Police Scotland governance arrangements have matured significantly in terms of governance over the transformation process.

- HMICS has validated the benefits for 2019-20 for the Mobile Working project which it considers to represent good practice in the majority of aspects of benefits management. HMICS commends Police Scotland for this achievement and considers that there is an opportunity to extend this good practice to other projects.

- HMICS concurs with the key findings and recommendations within the recent Internal Audit report[1] on Benefits Realisation and validates the approach and processes set out in the Police Scotland Benefits Management Strategy and Performance Framework.

- HMICS considers there remain concerns regarding the veracity of benefit projections, the implications of realising 'hard cash' savings at a time of increasing demand and a lack of full maturity in benefits realisation processes in some projects.

- HMICS found inconsistencies in project adherence to good practice in benefit management and the guidance set out within Police Scotland's overarching strategies and frameworks.

- HMICS has found that it is currently not clear how a pipeline of benefits (or other direct measures) will meet the future requirements set out in the Strategic Workforce Plan and other strategies (including Cyber Strategy, ICT, Estate and Fleet strategies). The work of the new governance fora recently established must include a more rigorous approach to this process alongside the financial planning approach.

- Police Scotland requires to address the issue that expressing any benefit in terms of officer or staff FTE prompts perceptions that actual officer numbers may be threatened on the basis of fractional gains being aggregated and extrapolated across wider force numbers.

HMICS has not made any formal recommendations as part of this assurance work, but does expect that the SPA and Police Scotland will consider its findings as part of scrutiny and improvement planning.

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[1] Benefits Realisation and Efficiency Targets Internal Audit Report – SPA Audit Risk and Risk Committee 28 January 2021 (Item 3a)

Background

1. In June 2017, the former Cabinet Secretary for Justice announced the launch of Police Scotland's 'Serving a Changing Scotland' Strategy. He committed to initially maintain officer numbers at 17234 and said that any reduction in this number (through a reduced level of recruitment) must be agreed in advance and would be in response to evidenced increases in operational policing capacity.

2. HMICS was asked to work with the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Police Scotland to develop a robust methodology to supply evidence that additional capacity (primarily created through benefits from programmes and projects across the policing transformation portfolio) was being developed and realised.

3. Having agreed a methodology, HMICS undertook workforce assurance activity between April 2018 and December 2019, producing seven briefings which were provided to the SPA, the Chief Constable and Scottish Government (SG). These briefings commented on:

    ■ Police Scotland's quarterly force strength numbers;
    ■ Progress on the delivery of critical governance structures and frameworks in both Police Scotland and the SPA;
    ■ The establishment of Police Scotland internal assurance and demand and productivity functions;
    ■ Progress in delivering individual transformation portfolio programmes and projects; and
    ■ The realisation of benefits in capacity and productivity delivered through the transformation portfolio.

4. In 2019 HMICS paused its assurance activity to review our approach to the process reflecting a lack of progress in addressing a number of key risk areas and thereafter proposed a revised approach. Further assurance work was then delayed by the imperatives of the COVID-19 lockdown. During this period HMICS has reflected on feedback provided and adapted the original assurance process in order to better reflect both the aspirations of the SPA and Police Scotland and the organisational learning from Operation Talla in developing a revised policing model.

5. HMICS recommended its regular engagement with key stakeholders, and evaluation of Police Scotland's public and internal governance procedures in May 2020 and this is reflected in our Scrutiny Plan 2020-21 which was published on 3 August 2020[2]. The Plan indicates that HMICS will continue to monitor the progress, delivery and operational impact of Police Scotland's transformation portfolio, including workforce assurance.

6. HMICS has selected a limited number of focused 'topic' areas for assurance review over the next 18-24 months to provide assurance in respect of direction of travel, key risks and level of maturity. The first area which we are considering currently is Demand Analysis and Management[3]. This will result in a separate public report with formal recommendations.

7. In December 2020 HMICS and Police Scotland also agreed that HMICS should continue to validate the approach to the identification and delivery of capacity and productivity benefit gains realised by projects across the policing transformation portfolio.

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[2] HMICS Scrutiny Plan 2020-21 August 2020
[3] HMICS Demand Analysis and Management - Terms of Reference December 2020

8.　Police Scotland has developed strong internal governance arrangements around the transformation portfolio. Those arrangements have evolved and improved over the past few years. Police Scotland has a Portfolio Management Group overseeing the detailed delivery of transformation portfolio activity and reporting on a monthly basis to Police Scotland's Change Board. The Change Board provides internal scrutiny of the portfolio and is a gateway for reports and transformation proposals intended for SPA approval and oversight.

9.　HMICS observes the Change Board, the SPA Board and its various committees to keep abreast of issues and observe the effectiveness of scrutiny processes. HMICS is content with the way in which both organisations manage those governance arrangements and acknowledges that they continue to mature.

Financial position

10.　In 2019-20 Police Scotland raised concerns about their financial sustainability. At the SPA Board in September 2019 they noted that financial stability, in the form of a balanced budget, was contingent on a structural correction to revenue funding of £70m, in addition to their working assumption of a £20m uplift for real terms protection and annual increases thereafter indexed to wage growth.

11.　Police Scotland were able to demonstrate that without corrective action the deficit would grow significantly over five years, with a forecast deficit of £66m in 2020-21. Following the Scottish Government revenue funding settlement for Police Scotland, which at £50m year-on-year growth was £30m higher than modelled, a revised deficit of £36m was proposed for 2020-21.

12.　The tight financial constraints under which Police Scotland was operating meant the delivery of real cash saving benefits through the transformation portfolio became increasingly important. A significant contributor to the initial benefits was Police Scotland's Commercial Excellence programme. This programme, along with the development and deployment of various ICT and digital solutions (including the NEDIP and NatNet programmes) allowed Police Scotland to estimate a five-year forecast of £15.4m as achievable cashable benefits from the transformation portfolio. The latest progress report from March 2021, shows that £3.1m cashable benefits (against an estimate of £3.4m for that time period) have been realised.

13.　As recognised by both Audit Scotland and internal auditors, the approach and processes that support Police Scotland's financial management have improved considerably. Better, and sustained, engagement with business areas; the quality and depth of information available for control and planning have all helped manage Police Scotland's tight financial position.

14.　A key lever for Police Scotland to manage the deficit budget toward a more balanced state would be the strict control and gradual reduction of officer and staff numbers. Given the backdrop of transformation activity and the significant known operational impacts of Brexit, COP26 and a potential Independence Referendum those staff and officer reductions would not have been realistic.

15.　HMICS considers that the transformation portfolio articulating productivity and capacity gains in terms of officer and staff FTE gains can appear at odds with the recognition that officer numbers need to be maintained at a specific level and that staff numbers need to be maintained to manage and embed the transformational changes to corporate and functional support services.

16. Moving forward to 2021-22, the Scottish Government draft budget confirmed an additional £60m of core funding for Police Scotland to eliminate the structural deficit of previous years and to fund a pay award, in line with draft public sector pay policy (PSPP), of around 1%[4]. Additional one-off funding of £15m would be provided to support the in-year impact of COVID-19. Together, this funding has allowed the SPA to set a balanced budget with no operating deficit.

17. This balanced budget supports the maintenance of 17234 officer FTEs and gives Police Scotland a platform to focus more effectively on demand management and benefits realisation as their primary tactics moving forward to a sustainable Target Operating Model.

18. Police Scotland is implementing systems and analytical approaches to better understand its operational demands but it recognises that the quality and integrity of its data also needs to be addressed in order to ensure their evidence-led approach is sound. As noted at paragraph 6, HMIC is currently reviewing the approach to demand analysis and management.

19. The latest version of Police Scotland's Strategic Workforce Plan (January 2021)[5] shows significant resourcing gaps in both officer and staff FTEs at both national and local policing levels (694 officer FTE, 671 staff FTE). It explicitly states that Local Policing ACCs have indicated that their work will allow the release of sufficient officers to meet the gap set out in their areas (614.55 officer FTE and 249 staff FTE). This leaves a gap (79.45 officer FTE and 422 staff FTE) still to be met from capacity and productivity benefits if Police Scotland is to remain within a sustainable budget position.

20. At its outset the transformation portfolio planned to deliver 1377 officer FTE benefits. As of March 2021 it claims to have delivered 1291 (this includes unplanned gains of 273 officer FTE and additional FTE benefits through the Mobile Working project (135 FTE) and Custody Re-modelling (71 FTE). If the other transformation portfolio projects can deliver their planned benefits then a further 565 officer FTE gains could be achieved and redeployed through transformation, addressing 80% of the resourcing gap identified in the SWP.

21. The transformation portfolio also originally planned to deliver 238 staff FTE efficiencies. As of March 2021 only 23 staff FTE efficiencies have been claimed. If the transformation portfolio projects can deliver their planned benefits then a further 215 staff FTE efficiencies could be achieved and redeployed, addressing 30% of the resourcing gap identified in the SWP.

22. HMICS will continue to monitor alignment with the SWP in terms of benefits realisation and overall workforce profile.

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[4] Discussions are ongoing with Scottish Government to secure additional funding to support the revised provisions of PSPP.
[5] SPA Board Meeting – 22 January 2021 (Item 7) Police Scotland Strategic Workforce Plan

Validation of benefits

Validation for 2018-19

23. As part of our previous assurance work HMICS was able to independently validate that Police Scotland had 174.95 FTE productivity gains by the end of financial year 2018-19. It should be noted that subsequent references to a figure of 750 FTE overall capacity gains was based on Police Scotland internal assurance processes and had not been independently validated.

24. HMICS has noted that the terms 'validation' and 'verification' have been used interchangeably in terms of the assurance which has been provided to date. HMICS considers its role to lie in validating the overall benefits approach and subsequently assessing the veracity of any benefits claimed.

25. In validating benefits which have been delivered in past years, HMICS has considered the portfolio, programme and project standards and approaches which were in place at the time of inception and delivery, as well as those which are currently in place. HMICS recognises that previous documentation has been superseded, but has deemed it relevant to assess compliance over the full lifecycle of the benefits process.

26. HMICS also notes that for a number of projects a benefit map and benefit realisation plan are not available due to the Police Scotland decision to not implement these retrospectively for projects which had commenced when these were not a mandatory requirement.

Scope and approach

27. This benefit validation assurance process focused on the strategies and frameworks Police Scotland deploys to achieve the intended benefits from the transformation portfolio, and individual programmes and projects. HMICS aims to ensure those strategies and frameworks follow good practice and that individual projects adhere to the principles and processes that support them. This review has been undertaken remotely with evidence and supporting documentation made available to HMICS via electronic means.

28. HMICS has reviewed the over-arching documentation that applied to all programmes and projects within the portfolio during 2018-19. This includes Police Scotland's Benefits Management Strategy (BMS); Performance Framework; Project Management Handbook (PMH); Standard Weights and Measures document; benefit tracking and reporting documents. HMICS recognises that some of this documentation has subsequently been superseded.

29. HMICS reviewed project specific documentation and processes which would be expected in compliance with good practice and acknowledged standards in benefits management and realisation. This included Benefit Maps; Benefit Profiles; Benefit Realisation Plans; Benefit tracking and reporting; and Benefit Owner Agreements.

30. HMICS reviewed the use of Police Scotland's internal Project Assurance Healthcheck (PAH) process which is supported and delivered by the Portfolio Assurance function. HMICS also considered the engagement transformation portfolio programmes and projects had with the Scottish Government independent Gateway and Technical Assurance Framework (TAF) reviews.

31. HMICS reviewed the arrangements SPA have in place to support and scrutinise the delivery of the transformation portfolio, including the use of the Internal Audit function to explore individual themes or projects. Appendix 1 provides a narrative on our findings.

32. HMICS validation activity does not aim to verify the realisation of specific numeric gains claimed by individual projects within the transformation portfolio.

Benefit definition

33. Police Scotland reports on the following elements of benefits realisation for the transformation portfolio:

   ■ Cashable Benefits;
   ■ Officer FTE Non-Cashable Efficiencies; and
   ■ Staff FTE Non-Cashable Efficiencies.

34. Police Scotland categorises Non-Cashable Efficiencies as capacity gains (recorded where a whole FTE is realised and able to be deployed or re-allocated) or productivity gains (representing an aggregation of disparate time savings, not so easily realised).

35. The projects under review for 2019-20 all delivered productivity gains. There were no capacity gains achieved through the transformation portfolio for that fiscal year.

36. The metrics and approach used to determine productivity gains are contained within Police Scotland's Standard Weights and Measures document. HMICS recognises that the approach to productivity gains has been challenged by some staff representative bodies. There have been genuine concerns expressed that the aggregated productivity gains being claimed do not match experience in frontline policing.

37. HMICS are satisfied that Police Scotland is applying a consistent approach to the calculation and representation of productivity gains. However, it requires to address the issue that expressing these in the terms of an officer FTE, can result in the perception that actual officer numbers may be threatened on the basis of fractional gains being aggregated and extrapolated across the wider force. HMICS is aware that Police Scotland has engaged directly with staff representative bodies to further explore the understanding and expression of benefits.

Validation of 2019-20 projects

38. HMICS has reviewed all transformation portfolio projects which delivered gains in 2019-20. The projects and the benefits they aimed to deliver are listed in Table 1 for information. The review considered the projects against the benefits management and oversight environment in place throughout 2019-20. HMICS recognises Police Scotland has made significant improvements in benefit management and reporting from 2020-21 onward.

39. HMICS did not review the projects that planned to deliver benefit in 2019-20 but failed to make any contribution (ANPR[6]; COS[7] Productions; Productions Remodelling).

40. Table 1 demonstrates the benefits set out in the approved Full Business Case (FBC), those planned to be gained within the fiscal year 2019-20 and those which were actually claimed. It can be observed that there is a consistent reduction in the figures across the

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[6] Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system
[7] Core Operational Solutions (COS) – Full Business Case – SPA Resources Committee 13 November 2018 (Private Item 16.1)

listed projects. A more detailed narrative for each project is contained in the attached Appendices (2 - 5). Police Scotland state that overall benefit numbers have been or are still expected to be achieved with the exception of COS Missing Persons and COS RTC as these projects have now closed.

Table 1 – Police Scotland transformation portfolio Benefits 2019-20

Project	Appx Ref	FBC – Total FTE Benefit expected		2019-20 In-Year FTE Benefit Planned		2019-20 In-Year FTE Benefit Claimed	
		Officer	Staff	Officer	Staff	Officer	Staff
CAM[8]	2	599	0	275	0	**184**	0
COS Missing Persons	3	20	5	15	2	**10**	**4**
COS RTC	3	4	9	2	4	**1**	**1**
Custody Remodelling[9]	4	193	0	165	0	**138**	0
Mobile Working	5	416	61	78	0	**144**	0
Totals		1381	269	568	7	**477**	**5**

41. HMICS reviewed the available benefits documentation which supports the management of the projects and found inconsistencies in each project's adherence to good practice in benefit management and the guidance set out within Police Scotland's overarching strategies and frameworks.

42. HMICS were advised that projects may not have some of the good practice project and benefit management documentation currently expected in Police Scotland's BMS as it was not part of the governance requirements at the time the projects commenced. HMICS acknowledges that the approach has matured considerably since the origin of a number of the projects we considered.

43. HMICS considered the 2019-20 assurance reports from Police Scotland's PAH process and the SG Gateway Review process. Both processes identified issues with the consistent application of Police Scotland project management and benefits management procedures, as they applied at that time.

44. The November 2019 PAH report identified that there were gaps in the Contact Assessment Model (CAM) project essential documentation required to support the delivery of the Full Business Case (e.g. a project schedule, product description, benefit profiles etc). This followed a similar PAH from June 2019, which found that the project did have a comprehensive benefits matrix for Phase 1 but needed to do more work to ensure the robust measurement and evidencing of benefits throughout that and future phases.

45. The March 2019 independent SG Gateway Review of the Digitally Enabled Policing (DEP) programme (covering both Mobile Working and COS) recommended that Police Scotland ensures that for each delivery project there is an associated Benefits Realisation Plan (BRP) which secures ownership and accountability for the realisation of benefits. Mobile Working is the only transformation portfolio project delivering benefit in 2019-20 that has a BRP.

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[8] Police Scotland are still validating numbers for the CAM project, this work was paused due to COVID-19.

[9] It should be noted that Custody Remodelling has already delivered more than the planned amount (this is a timing issue and due to when PS validated the numbers internally).

Realisation of benefits

46. The primary routes for benefits realisation remain as those specified within the 'Serving a Changing Scotland' Strategy:

    ■ Retaining the productivity gains (to maintain officer numbers and meet the anticipated demand from known events);
    ■ Accept the productivity gains and use as savings (reducing officer numbers to help balance the budget);
    ■ Accept the productivity gains and redeploy benefits (ensuring that operational capability and capacity are not compromised).

47. HMICS recognises there may be competing viewpoints regarding how productivity benefits will be realised and the subsequent impact on a sustainable policing model – both financially and operationally. This validation process for benefits cannot therefore recommend the optimum realisation route, but can only provide confirmation of the veracity of actual benefits which have been reported.

48. HMICS recognises that Police Scotland is seeking to further develop its approach to the realisation of the benefits with the introduction of a new Demand, Design and Resources Board (DDRB) chaired by the Chief Constable. This board is being developed to enable strategic decision making and oversight of the re-investment of productivity and capacity gains against operational and organisational risks and priorities, aligned to the delivery of Police Scotland's strategic priorities and the workforce plan.

49. Taking this into account, the responsibility for ensuring accuracy and completeness of benefits information, and its impact on operational delivery, clearly lies with Police Scotland and the SPA. HMICS will monitor the development of the DDRB and its supporting governance mechanisms to further assess the effectiveness of benefits realisation processes and report in future briefings.

Demand narrative

50. As noted at paragraph 6, HMICS is currently reviewing Demand Analysis and Management. This work will also consider how demand information is used to verify productivity gains. Any reduction in demand for policing services must be considered in terms of how any newly 'available' resources will be used. Similarly increases in demand must be fully evidenced in order to effectively plan future workforce and other resource requirements.

51. HMICS has found that it is currently not clear how a pipeline of benefits (or other direct measures) will meet the future requirements set out in the Strategic Workforce Plan and other strategies (including Cyber Strategy, ICT, Estate and Fleet strategies). The work of the new governance fora recently established must include a more rigorous approach to this process alongside the financial planning approach.

Conclusion

52. HMICS has received sufficient evidence to support the validation of the Mobile Working project's approach to benefits management and realisation. In reaching this conclusion HMICS has also taken assurance from project engagement with internal auditors, the independent SG Gateway and TAF review processes.

53. HMICS acknowledges that the COS Missing Persons and RTC projects are now closed. We found that some key benefits documentation recommended by an independent assurance review was not completed at the time which limits our ability to fully validate the benefits reported. However we recognise that there will be limited value in further pursuing the creation of such documentation after the fact and therefore confirm validation of the benefits with these reservations noted.

54. HMICS recognises that the new contact and assessment model has and will continue to deliver benefits. HMICS has not been provided with all available evidence at this stage to fully validate 2019-20 benefits but expects to be able to do so in our next report.

55. HMICS has considred the significant benefits claimed by the Custody Remodelling project. Although HMICS were not offered evidence of benefit mapping and planning at this stage to support the validation process, we have recognised the development of robust benefit tracking processes, Benefit Profiles and associated internal project validation and therefore are able to confirm validation for 2019-20.

56. At this time, HMICS has been provided with sufficient evidence to validate the benefits management and realisation approach adopted by the majority of Police Scotland projects claiming to have delivered benefits for the transformation portfolio in 2019-20. HMICS recognises that work is still ongoing to quantify and assure benefits in some areas and therefore notes that when Police Scotland supply further documentation (as set out in Appendices 2-5) these will be considered at the next six monthly validation process.

57. HMICS will proceed to validate claimed benefits for the year 2020-21 in our next assurance report.

Appendix 1 – SPA Oversight

SPA Board and Committees

The SPA Board met regularly throughout 2019-20. It established a number of Oversight Groups to help it provide scrutiny on certain key issues. One of those Oversight Groups followed the changes associated with the introduction of Police Scotland's new Contact Assessment Model, (CAM).

The SPA Resources Committee is the main forum through which the SPA oversee Police Scotland's delivery of the transformation portfolio. The Committee met regularly throughout 2019-20, reviewing and commenting on proposals and updates in advance of them being submitted to the SPA Board for further consideration and approval.

Over the course of 2019-20 the Resources Committee reiterated its concerns about Police Scotland's benefit management and realisation processes and reporting. While not a summary - the Committee's note of meeting on 17 March 2020 covers the key themes in relation to benefit management and realisation that were touched on throughout the course of the year:

- The internal tension generated by the existing Police Scotland culture with regard to being able to describe benefit and understand the need to reallocate resources along with a concern that benefit realisation would lead to a reduction in officer numbers.
- A frustration at the lack of a consistent reporting mechanism and the ability to describe benefits against the original business case assumptions on which investment spend was approved.
- A question over how Police Scotland could claim benefits delivered were in-line with forecast without providing a supporting evidence base of actuals delivered to date.
- Benefits described were not referenced in the original business case and the Committee was not provided the opportunity to review significant changes in the benefit realisation profile after formal approval.
- There was urgent need to improve benefits reporting.

Police Scotland responded to the above and over the course of 2020-21 made significant improvements to its data gathering and benefit reporting mechanisms. A comprehensive benefit management pack is considered at each Police Scotland Change Board and this pack is then used to brief the Resources Committee. More recent 2021 meetings of the Committee have commented positively on the benefit reporting now presented to them.

SPA Internal Audit

In October 2020 SPA's internal auditors published their report on Benefits Realisation and Efficiency Targets. The audit was conducted over a 3-month period in the summer of 2020 and considered the operation and processes in place for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. The same timeframe as considered in this HMICS validation report.

The audit considered highlight reports for a sample of four projects that reported realised benefits in 2019-20: Mobile Working, Missing Persons, ANPR and the Interim Payroll Project.

The audit report notes the current good practice within Police Scotland and makes specific reference to the BMS and the Portfolio Management Framework. The audit does not specifically reference historic project and benefits management documentation which were valid as at 2019-20.

The audit found gaps in Police Scotland's documentation and management of projects and in the management of benefits. The Internal Audit report made recommendations in the following areas, all of which Police Scotland is addressing:

■ Project Managers to keep highlight reporting up-to-date and Project Boards to ensure they meet in accordance with established schedules.
■ Programme Management Office (PMO) to document the process for carrying out validation on benefit measurement data.
■ Explore approaches to the direct measurement of officer time or its application to validate the quantity of productivity gains measured through analytic approaches.
■ Convert realised FTE benefits into a clearly articulated performance impact expressed in terms of operational performance metrics.
■ Approvals within benefit profiles need to be clearer.
■ Ensure sufficient data is captured to support capacity and efficiency gains.
■ Articulate how benefit measurement methodologies should be documented and approved.
■ Implement an appropriate governance structure to support the reinvestment of benefits.
■ Performance Reporting to be revised to reflect realised benefits.

Conclusion

HMICS are satisfied that the SPA Board and Resources Committee continue to provide good support and challenge for the Police Scotland transformation portfolio.

HMICS concurs with the key findings and recommendations within the recent Internal Audit report and validates the approach and processes set out in Police Scotland's BMS and Performance Framework.

Appendix 2 – Contact Assessment Model

Background

The CAM project aims to deliver benefits in the following areas:

■ Improved Service Delivery to the Public
■ Significant Improvement of THRIVE[10] at first point of contact
■ Improved management of demand
■ An empowered and enabled workforce at first point of contact
■ Increased productivity.

SPA Oversight

The SPA Board has received regular reports from its CAM Oversight Group (OG). The OG's main focus was the operational impact of CAM and the service delivered to the public. However, the Chair of the OG did express concerns in relation to benefit realisation, in particular the risk that benefits associated with CAM were being claimed elsewhere and there was the potential for double-counting. This concern led to a CAM benefits workshop being held in January 2020.

In April 2019 the Resources Committee heard about the phased approach planned for the delivery of CAM modules/projects. Committee Members and HMICS expressed concerns about the delivery the timeframe for Phase 1 leading into Phase 2. Members sought assurance that the pace of delivery could be flexed to ensure lessons from Phase 1 (Proof of Concept) could be captured and used in the planning and implementation of Phase 2. HMICS had similar concerns and suggested that there would be benefit in an HMICS evaluation of CAM in early 2020 to look at its implementation and impact on wider police business. This review has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly an independent review to be commissioned by Police Scotland has not yet been progressed.

In our October 2019 HMICS Review of the early implementation of Police Scotland's Contact Assessment Model[11] it was noted that a key aim of CAM is to improve the management of demand, alongside delivery of resulting productivity gains. We warned against the new approach being used as a means to reduce police resources stating that consideration should first be given to reinvesting any gains in improving the quality of the policing service.

There have been no SPA Internal Audits of the CAM programme and its projects to date.

Programme / Project Assurance

A Police Scotland internal PAH was conducted by staff from Police Scotland's Portfolio Management Office (PMO) in May 2019. A recommendation from the report in relation to benefit management was that the project ensure robust measurement and evidencing of benefit realisation throughout Phase 1 of implementation.

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[10] THRIVE (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement) is a risk management tool which considers six elements to assist in identifying the appropriate response grade based on the needs of the caller and the circumstances of the incident.
[11] HMICS Review of the early implementation of Police Scotland's Contact Assessment Model October 2019

A further internal PAH was conducted in November 2019, the recommendation in relation to benefit management was that a benefit verification process be undertaken to assure the values of expected benefits of CAM and provide a level of confidence and accuracy.

Terms of reference were drawn up for a Police Scotland internal Benefits Verification Review of CAM, led by the PMO, but the review did not take place due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

HMICS has not seen evidence that the intended review has been rescheduled.

In March 2020 an independent SG Gateway Review (Gate 4 - Readiness for Service) was conducted on the CAM project, the recommendations in relation to benefit management were:

- The project team should not change the baseline for benefits measurement but must capture and report actual performance.
- The SRO should resolve how benefits are defined and utilised.
- The project team should establish and maintain a benefits management plan.
- The project team should ensure a project document set is established that supports project delivery and that documentation is maintained to reflect current information.

Benefit Management and Realisation

HMICS found that comprehensive benefit profiles and agreement forms now exist for each of the benefit areas set out in the CAM FBC. A Benefit Map and Benefit Realisation Plan (BRP) have not been created for the project. In line with the most recent version of Police Scotland's BMS, Benefit Handover Contracts have been created and are aligned with the Benefit Profiles.

HMICS was provided with evidence that benefit tracking is conducted at Police Scotland PMO level to inform the transformation portfolio benefit reporting. A simple process of comparing demand data from 2018-19 with similar data from 2019-20 is used to calculate the potential productivity gain.

Conclusion

There is a general recognition that the new contact and assessment approach Police Scotland is introducing via the CAM project has and will continue to deliver benefits. However, all independent reviews have raised concerns about the confidence and accuracy of the claimed benefits as articulated in FTE productivity gains. There are also concerns about the way in which benefits have been defined and their realisation planned. A key concern for HMICS remains the lack of a current BRP that conforms to Police Scotland's current BMS. HMICS does recognise there was agreement not to complete BRPs retrospectively, but recommends that one is developed for this high profile project.

Police Scotland's previous project management standards (valid at the time of inception) make specific reference to the need for benefit maps and benefit plans but no evidence has been offered by the CAM project to give confidence that these were created.

The project claims to have delivered 184 FTE efficiencies in 2019-20. The plan, pre-COVID-19, was to deliver 275 FTE efficiencies in 2019-20 and a further 324 FTE efficiencies in 2020-21. Given the significant benefits yet to be delivered or validated there are risks (articulated in the assurance reports) in continuing or closing the project in the absence of the structures set out in Police Scotland's current BMS.

HMICS has not been provided with sufficient evidence at this stage to support the validation of the CAM project's approach to benefits management and realisation or the specific 184

officer FTE equivalent claimed. We recognise that recent CAM benefits calculations documentation has been received by the PMO and HMICS will consider this in due course.

Appendix 3 – COS Missing Persons & Road Traffic Collisions

Background

Missing Persons and RTC[12], along with a range of other projects, are being delivered as modules in the COS (Core Operating Solution) sub-programme that sits within the DEP (Digitally Enabled Policing) programme. COS modules will be delivered in 3 Phases, the modules for Missing Persons and RTC are included in Phase 1.

Missing Persons expects savings to be achieved through the better governance, re-use and accessibility of existing data.

RTC expects to deliver savings through the introduction of a national collision management solution that supports Police Scotland in the recovery of fees associated with the disclosure of information relating to road crashes. Cashable savings equivalent to 8.9 staff FTE are also expected.

SPA Oversight

The SPA Board did not receive any significant reports or establish any additional scrutiny arrangements in respect of the COS project. In July 2019 the SPA Resources Committee noted that Phase 1 of COS was progressing and that Phase 2 was developing.

There was no specific SPA internal Audit of the COS RTC project, however the recent internal audit of Benefits Reporting included some consideration of the COS Missing Persons project.

Programme / Project Assurance

Whilst there has been no specific internal assurance or independent assurance of the COS Missing Persons and RTC projects, an Independent SG Gateway Review was conducted on the overarching DEP programme in March 2019. It looked specifically at the COS sub-programme and the Mobile Working project.

The Gateway Review Team found that the DEP Programme and its supporting projects faced challenges in determining the approach to the management of benefits realisation. The Review Team considered there to be a clear risk, unless appropriate actions were taken, that the programme and its projects could repeat the issues that have prevailed in similar initiatives. The Review Team noted that where Benefits Realisation Planning (BRP) has not become an inherent capability, generally this results in a failure to effectively track, report upon and evidence benefit realisation.

The Review Team recommended that for each Police Scotland delivery project there is an associated Benefits Realisation Plan which secures ownership and accountability for the realisation of benefits. The arrangements should also secure programme controls with regard to tracking, reporting and change control and thereby provide validation of the originally defined benefit and evidence realisation or the reasons for any deviation.

HMICS has not been provided with evidence that Police Scotland acted on this recommendation at the time with regard to the COS Missing Persons and RTC projects. HMICS recognises that Police Scotland decided not to implement retrospective BRPs and that these projects are now closed, but considers that this recommendation should have been implemented at the time.

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[12] Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) System

In our recent HMICS Crime Audit 2020[13] we identified a need for the COS programme to review its approach to business change as part of the implementation of the new single national crime recording system, taking the opportunity to standardise and streamline business, audit and quality assurance processes in order to optimise benefits from the programme.

Benefit Management and Realisation

HMICS are advised that a benefit map and benefit realisation plan for the COS Missing Persons and RTC projects are not available. Benefit Owner Contracts, although a recent enhancement in Police Scotland BMS, have not been developed retrospectively for the projects.

HMICS found that comprehensive benefit profiles exist for the Missing Persons and RTC projects that provide detail of how officer and staff efficiencies will be measured and achieved.

HMICS were provided with evidence of benefit tracking within the Missing Persons and RTC projects that demonstrated how information was gathered from Divisional level and subsequently relayed to the Police Scotland change function to monitor benefit delivery across the transformation portfolio.

Conclusion

The SG independent review of the DEP Programme recommended that for each Police Scotland delivery project there is an associated Benefits Realisation Plan. This key document does not exist for either the Missing Persons project or the RTC project as Police Scotland decided not to implement these retrospectively.

Benefits Realisation Plans for these two projects, and supporting documentation, did not require to be overly detailed or complex. But their absence presented an unnecessary risk to each project's benefits management and realisation.

Both projects contribute low numbers to the overall transformation portfolio productivity gains but neither delivered the officer FTE gains planned for 2019-20.

HMICS recognises that the COS Missing Persons and RTC projects are now closed and that benefit calculations have been made available. HMICS found that some key benefits documentation recommended by an independent assurance review was not completed at the time which limits our ability to fully validate the benefits reported. However we recognise that there will be limited value in further pursuing the creation of such documentation after the fact and therefore confirm validation of the benefits with these reservations noted.

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[13] HMICS Crime Audit 2020 March 2020 – Recommendation 5

Appendix 4 – Custody Remodelling

Background

In 2017 Police Scotland identified the opportunity to bring innovation to the custody environment in order to improve operational efficiency and staff and prisoner welfare. The Custody Remodelling project would:

- Improve operational efficiency by streamlining processes and introducing technology to improve decision making.
- Reduce operational risk by improving risk assessment and the collecting of prisoner data by the introduction of technology and a reduction in the level of 'double-keying'.

In 2018 the above had evolved into a Full Business Case that recommended the introduction of new Criminal Justice Hubs. Alongside the introduction of new Hubs Police Scotland would also reinstate, and further develop the role of the Police Custody Support Officer (PCSO) to minimise the requirement for police officers to be used in the custody support environment.

SPA Oversight

During the 2019-20 delivery year the SPA Board and Resources Committee did not receive any significant reports or establish any additional scrutiny arrangements in respect of the Custody Remodelling project. There were no SPA Internal Audits of the project.

Programme / Project Assurance

There was no internal or independent external assurance of the Custody Remodelling project during 2019-20. An Independent SG Gateway Review was planned for January 2021 but has been postponed to April 2021.

Benefit Management and Realisation

HMICS are advised that a benefit map and benefit realisation plan for the Custody Remodelling project are not available (again due to the decision to not implement retrospectively). Benefit Owner Contracts, although a recent enhancement in Police Scotland BMS, have not been developed for the project as it has not yet completed.

HMICS was provided with evidence of the benefit recording within the Custody Remodelling project and can see how information in relation to officer backfill (baselined to year 2016-17), omnicompetent duties and more specific tasks[14] was gathered from across Divisions and subsequently relayed to the PMO to monitor benefit delivery across the transformation portfolio.

At its outset the Custody Remodelling project aimed to deliver 193 FTE officer productivity savings. It claimed 2 FTE officer savings in 2018-19 and 138 FTE officer savings in 2019-20. The most recent Benefit Reporting information from Police Scotland (March 2021) indicates that 265 FTE officer productivity gains have been achieved, and that there are further staff FTE productivity gains emerging.

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[14] Such tasks include Operation Nexus (checks on foreign national offenders), CJ samples and other related prisoner –related tasks (such as prisoner observation where capacity is available)

Conclusion

The purpose of this HMICS review is to validate that programmes and projects are following the good practice approaches set out in Police Scotland's BMS which have been validated by HMICS and endorsed by SPA's recent internal audit report.

HMICS recognise the significant benefits claimed by the Custody Remodelling project but the project approach to delivery has not held to the good practice set out in the over-arching Police Scotland BMS and previous standards (valid at the time of inception).

Although HMICS were offered no evidence of benefit mapping and planning at this stage to support the validation process, HMICS recognises the development of robust benefit tracking processes, Benefit Profiles and associated internal project validation and therefore confirms validation for 2019-20.

Appendix 5 – Mobile Working

Background

The Mobile Working project forms part of the Digitally Enabled Policing Programme and is a key mechanism through which strategic objectives and key benefits will be realised.

The project aims to deliver benefits that will:

- Increase Efficiency
- Improve Effectiveness
- Increase Officer Visibility
- Improve Officer Safety.

SPA Oversight

During the 2019-20 delivery year the SPA Board and Resources Committee did not receive any significant reports or establish any additional scrutiny arrangements in respect of the Mobile Working project. There were no specific SPA Internal Audits of this project, however the recent internal audit of Benefits Reporting included some consideration of the Mobile Working project

Programme / Project Assurance

There was no internal assurance of the Mobile Working project during 2019-20.

An independent SG Gateway Review was conducted on the DEP programme in March 2019, it looked specifically at the Mobile Working project and the COS Programme. The Gateway Review Team recommended that all delivery projects within the DEP programme have a Benefit Realisation Plan.

An SG Technology Assurance Framework Healthcheck was conducted on the DEP programme in September 2019. In relation to benefits management and realisation, the Review Team found that the emphasis on the business-based tracking of benefits was good practice. A Benefit Realisation Plan had been built but not yet implemented and benefit tracking was currently being worked on.

There was recognition that police divisions would like to be able to see metrics to allow them to track local changes / benefits to their workload and processes. The Review Team recommended that the benefit realisation metrics provision included data at the divisional level to ensure local contexts can be managed.

The Review Team also looked forward to when Mobile Working ran on a 'business-as-usual' basis and recommended that Police Scotland had benefit tracking and governance arrangements in place by March 2020.

Police Scotland and their delivery partners (Motorola) funded an external evaluation on the implementation of Mobile Working. The external evaluation was conducted by representatives from the Robert Gordon and Abertay universities. They delivered their report in November 2020.

The external evaluation was a qualitative rather than quantitative review. It focused on interviews with front-line police officers along with those in management and business support structures. The external evaluation did not review the management of change process that delivered the benefits nor did it attempt to quantify the various benefits that were expressed through the various interviews it conducted.

Benefit Management and Realisation

HMICS was provided with the comprehensive Benefits Realisation Plan (BRP) for the DEP programme Mobile Working project. The BRP is a constituent part of the DEP Full Business Case. The BRP contains Benefit Profiles for each of the intended project benefits. The Benefit Profiles are also recorded in the transformation portfolio Benefit Profile system, though the original benefit 'Improve Officer Safety' has been dropped, there are profiles for 'Improved Public Satisfaction' and 'A Reduction in Stationery' that were not set out in the profiles attached to the FBC.

HMICS are advised that a Benefits Map does not exist for the Mobile Working project. Benefit Owner Contracts have yet to be developed for the project (as part of the End Project Review process), though HMICS recognise that these are a relatively new requirement within Police Scotland's BMS.

HMICS was provided with evidence that benefit measurement data is being gathered and recorded at project level and relayed to the PMO for inclusion in the transformation portfolio's benefit tracking processes.

Conclusion

It is clear from other independent SG reviews that in 2019-20 benefit management and realisation was 'work in progress'. However, the existence of a comprehensive BRP, Benefit Profiles and the project's engagement with independent assurance, provide sufficient confidence at this stage for HMICS to validate the project approach to benefit management and realisation.

HMICS considers that this project represents good practice in the majority of aspects of benefits management. HMICS commends Police Scotland for this achievement and considers that there is an opportunity to extend this good practice to other projects.