THE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR NORTH YORKSHIRE AND THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF NORTH YORKSHIRE

Collaborations

FINAL Internal Audit report: 2.20/21

10 September 2020



CONTENTS

D	ebrief held	17 August 2020	Internal audit team	Daniel Harris, Head of Internal Audit
Fo	r further information contac	t		15
Ар	pendix B: Further information	on		14
Ар	pendix A: Scope			12
2	Detailed findings			5
ı	Executive summary			∠

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Background

In 2016, North Yorkshire Police entered into a collaborative agreement with Cleveland Police and Durham Constabulary through which each Force's Police Dog Support Unit was merged to form an Integrated Dog Support Unit (IDSU). The IDSU as a legal entity was dissolved as of 31 December 2019; however, operationally the collaboration had ceased since earlier in 2019 with the respective forces returning to operating as single-force dog support units.

The purpose of this review is to determine on what bases the collaboration was agreed, whether regular performance of the arrangement was monitored and any arising issues addressed, on what bases the decision to exit the collaboration was made and whether the decision had appropriate approval, and how exiting the collaboration has been managed.

1.2 Conclusion

Our review noted that, while the business case in support of the collaborative agreement was robust and the rationale for exiting the collaboration was thoroughly considered with appropriate signoff. There were issues around the lack of regular monitoring of performance and addressing of the underlying causes of underperformance or operational concerns, as well as formal monitoring and oversight of exiting the arrangement operationally and identifying lessons learned to inform any future collaborations. We have agreed **five medium** and **one low** management actions shown immediately below in the key findings.

Internal audit opinion:

Taking account of the issues identified, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire and the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire can take **reasonable assurance** that the controls in place to manage this risk are suitably designed and consistently applied.

However, we have identified issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure that the control framework is effective in managing the identified risk.



1.3 Key findings

We noted the following areas for improvement:

- A 'benefit's review' of the collaboration six months into its operation, as detailed in the collaboration agreement, was not undertaken nor was a full review undertaken within 12 months of implementation as stipulated in the business case. The first major review of the collaboration did not occur until two years into its operation (August 2018) and, though a number of recommendations were identified, we could not evidence that these had been implemented. Indeed, a recommendation for an independent review of the IDSU was delayed indefinitely.
 (Medium)
- Regular review of performance against the initial proposal through the governance structure could not be
 evidenced. Concerns were similarly raised around the time allocated at relevant meetings for discussion of the
 IDSU. (Medium)

- We could not evidence that, where issues with the collaboration had been identified, actions were raised, recorded in a plan with owners and deadlines, and fully implemented. (**Medium**)
- A formally documented exit plan covering termination of all operational aspects of the collaboration with actions and deadlines was not implemented. (Medium)
- A formal lessons learned exercise considering the causes of the dissolution of the IDSU and how these lessons can be used to inform future collaborations has not been undertaken. (**Medium**)

We raised a further three low management actions which are detailed in section two of this report.

We have identified the following controls that were well-designed and consistently applied.

- A robust business case was prepared in support of the collaboration agreement which outlined the key drivers in support of the Integrated Dog Support Unit (IDSU) as well as the expected benefits, risks and savings.
- The collaboration agreement and business case were presented to the Joint Governance Board, and the
 agreement was signed off by each of the Chief Constables as well as the Police and Crime Commissioners for the
 respective police areas.
- A review of the collaboration, the Integrated Dogs Support Unit (IDSU) Review, was undertaken two years into its
 operation. The review had an agreed terms of reference which outlined the purpose, objectives and desired
 outcomes of the review, and a report was prepared for the then Assistant Chief Constable.
- Internal and external stakeholders were consulted for their thoughts on the collaboration and the proposal to exit; their responses were summarised in a report, Dog Section Briefing November 2019.
- Clear rationale for exiting the collaboration, which was based on strong evidence and underlying data, which took
 into consideration the impact of efficiency and effectiveness of returning to a single-force dog support unit was
 presented to the Chief Constables and Commissioners.
- Approval to exit the collaboration was formally received from each of the Chief Constables and Commissioners at the 6 November 2019 meeting of the Evolve Coordination and Delivery Meeting (CDM).
- The termination arrangements for the IDSU collaboration were provided to the Chief Constables and Commissioners, and an Exit Protocol was signed.
- We confirmed that the termination notice period as per the collaboration agreement was formally waived on the
 agreement of all three Chief Constables and Commissioners (noted in the signed Exit Protocol and in Briefing
 Paper which went to an Extraordinary Meeting of the Chief Constables and Commissioners in late 2019).
- Monitoring of performance of the single-force dog support unit falls under the Service Plan review process for the
 Proactive Policing Unit for which there are quarterly performance review meetings held between the respective
 Chief Inspector and the Assistant Chief Constable. We confirmed the respective measures for the dog support unit
 had been set for the current year. There is also an internal governance structure through which the day-to-day
 operations of the single-force dog support unit is reported on a more frequent basis.

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1.4 Additional information to support our conclusion

The following table highlights the number and categories of management actions made. The detailed findings section lists the specific actions agreed with management to implement.

Risk	Control Non-				Agreed actions				
	design not Complian effective* with control			Low	Medium	High			
Unable to reliably measure the ratio of contribution against benefit of cross sector collaborative effort.	2	(11)	6**	(11)	1	5	0		
Total					1	5	0		

^{*} Shows the number of controls not adequately designed or not complied with. The number in brackets represents the total number of controls reviewed in this area.

^{**} More than one management action has been raised against one control.

2 DETAILED FINDINGS

Categorisati	Categorisation of internal audit findings							
Priority	Definition							
Low	There is scope for enhancing control or improving efficiency and quality.							
Medium	Timely management attention is necessary. This is an internal control risk management issue that could lead to: Financial losses which could affect the effective function of a department, loss of controls or process being audited or possible regulatory scrutiny/reputational damage, negative publicity in local or regional media.							
High	Immediate management attention is necessary. This is a serious internal control or risk management issue that may lead to: Substantial losses, violation of corporate strategies, policies or values, regulatory scrutiny, reputational damage, negative publicity in national or international media or adverse regulatory impact, such as loss of operating licences or material fines.							

This report has been prepared by exception. Therefore, we have included in this section, only those areas of weakness in control or examples of lapses in control identified from our testing and not the outcome of all internal audit testing undertaken.

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications	Priority	Action for management
1	The signed collaboration agreement includes a requirement that a 'benefits review' of the collaboration will be undertaken six-months post-inception.	Yes	No	We confirmed that there was a full review of the collaboration, Evolve Dogs Support Unit (IDSU) Review, two years into its operation. A terms of reference which outlined the purpose, objectives, and desired outcomes of the review was produced. We obtained a copy of the Evolve IDSU Report which gave an overview of the staffing arrangements and costs for each of the forces pre-collaboration, the anticipated savings and actual savings incurred by North Yorkshire Police as part of the collaboration.	Medium	We will ensure that any formal reviews which are stipulated within current and future collaboration agreements are undertaken with actions agreed to address any issues identified. We will document which
	business case that within 12 months of implementation a full review be undertaken focussing on IDSU delivery, benefits			Per the agreement a 'benefits review' was planned to take place six months into operation of the collaboration; however, this review never took place as confirmed in the terms of reference for the Evolve IDSU Report. Similarly, per the business case, the aforementioned full review should have taken place within 12 months of the implementation of the collaboration.		roles are responsible and accountable for commissioning and completing the benefits

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications		Priority	Action for management
	realisation and the potential for additional savings; however, this review did not take place until August 2018. The costing model used for the collaboration was in line with that stated in the overarching Evolve Partnership Framework: costs apportioned per Net Revenue Expenditure.			were allocated to each Force 'in the proport Expenditure (NRE) as detailed in the Finan Agreement'. We agreed that the model is the governing Evolve Partnership Framework A A review of the apportioning of costs in the August 2018 was included in the Evolve ID: were 'to remain as before'. A recommendate between the three forces to address that No. £156,000 (17/18 actuals) on top of the NYF	f the apportioning of costs in the interim proposal commenced 31 18 was included in the Evolve IDSU Report which concluded that costs main as before'. A recommendation was raised to split costs equally ne three forces to address that North Yorkshire Police was paying 17/18 actuals) on top of the NYP unit costs' for which it gained no evice' other than training; however, this recommendation was never. Risk exposure Review of collaborations are not undertaken within a reasonable timeframe of their commencement. Review of their commencement.		reviews so that those are clear to all parties. Nb Ongoing review of performance of collaborations should be effected through the governance oversight arrangements/structure as outlined in the respective Agreement (see below control). Implementation date 31 December 2020 Responsible owners ACC Crime and Operations
2	The governance structure through which performance of the collaboration was to be reported is outlined in the Evolve Programme Collaboration Framework Agreement.	Yes	No	The governance structure through which the agreed in the overarching Evolve Collaborathrough a Joint Governance Board and a Coboth of which include representation from ethe agreement the governance arrangement NETIC Framework. We noted further in a paper presented to the (NEAB) on performance monitoring of 'busing operational collaborative performance is monoperational performance is monitored via Research in the control of the control	ation Framework Agreement, namely coordination and Delivery Meeting, each of the forces. During the tenure of hits moved from the Evolve to the see North East Assurance Board iness as usual' collaboration, onitored by the NEAB while non-	Medium	We will ensure there is reporting on an at least quarterly basis at the appropriate fora (i.e. NETIC governance structure) on how collaborations are progressing/performing to allow for all relevant persons to have sight.

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications	Priority	Action for management
	The metrics against which performance of the collaboration was to be measured against, along with how the respective data would be collected, were also outlined in the initial Agreement.			From our review of the evidence provided and discussions with key persons, this more regular review of the collaboration could not be evidenced through the NEAB. Indeed, it was noted in the summary of the Evolve IDSU Report that 'there [was] no governance through the NETIC (North East Transformation Innovation. Collaboration, a collaboration programme of seven regional Forces) governance arrangements'. It was noted in discussion with the Chief Inspector - Proactive Policing Unit, that issues with the North Yorkshire Police handlers being able to record their data on the performance management system managed by Cleveland Police were encountered but never fully resolved. A work-around was implemented whereby North Yorkshire dog handlers' performance was recorded in a spreadsheet; however, this could have resulted in a lack of accuracy and completeness of data.		A record of performance will be made, whether this is positive or negative. Similarly, we will ensure that the ongoing performance of current and future collaborations are allocated sufficient time at the appropriate fora to allow for scrutiny and challenge of any areas of underperformance.
				Furthermore, it was noted in our discussions with the Chief Inspector - Proactive Policing Unit, that she had raised concerns that she did not have sight of the performance data returns and had to request them internally. Also, discussion of the collaboration at the Joint Operational Group meetings was reported to be 'brief' with a lack of time allocated for discussion of the IDSU.		Implementation date 30 November 2020 Responsible owners
				We were provided with emails between the Chief Inspector and one of the dog handlers who noted that they record their performance for the month in Dog Section Returns spreadsheet, an example of which was provided. Included in the return is the following information:		ACC Crime & Operations
				• Date;		
				• Log. No;		
				 Location: C (Cleveland), D (Durham), NY (North Yorkshire); 		
				 Deployment: Spontaneous (S) Pre-Planned (P); 		
				 Nature of Dog Deployment (e.g. Tracking, Search Person, Search Property, etc); 		

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications		Priority	Action for management
				Outline of Incident (Circumstances & Res	sult);		
				• Arrest made (Y/N);			
				• Dog Bite (Y/N);			
				Community Engagement Events;			
				Stop & Search; and			
				FPN (Fix Penalty Notice).			
				Risk exposure	Root cause		
				A lack of independent challenge and assurance of performance data does not highlight issues with the operation of the collaboration.	Infrequent reporting of performance of collaboration at the appropriate governance fora.		
3	Missing Control While actions to address underperformance had been formally documented in the Evolve IDSU Report, we could not evidence that a plan had formulated with allocated deadlines and owners and progress against achievement of the actions.	No	-	In our review of the Evolve IDSU Review rewere identified to address the areas of improvement of these recommendations be anecdotally it was raised that nothing came supported in the Briefing Paper which went Chief Constables and Commissioners in latindependent review of the IDSU, as recommended in the independent review of the IDSU, as recommended in the provision of a collaborative IDSU was impless which a new operating model which returned management/supervision to each force but created. Furthermore, we could not evidence that me address issues had occurred when the IDS	ing effected could be provided, and of the report. This assertion is to an Extraordinary Meeting of the re 2019, which noted that an mended in the Evolve IDSU Review e collaboration agreement for the remented in November 2018 through retained the joint arrangements was	Medium	For each collaboration, we will implement a rolling action plan in which any issues concerning the collaboration which have been identified (through any means/source) can be recorded along with mitigative actions, action owners and deadlines. Implementation date 30 November 2020

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications		Priority	Action for management
				Risk exposure	Root cause		Responsible owners
				Should actions raised to address issues with collaborations not be effected in a	A lack of a proactive response to concerns raised.		ACC Crime and Operations
				timely, these issues may continue	concerns raised.		•
				affecting, among other things, performance and staff morale.			Head of BDA
4	Outlined in a Briefing Paper were the termination arrangements. In addition to this there is a signed exit protocol which formally sets out the post-termination arrangements for the IDSU collaboration. A formal exit plan outlining key activities with owners and deadlines which would oversee exiting the collaboration from an operational perspective was implemented.	Yes	No	An exit protocol was presented to, and ultime Constables and the Commissioners which is arrangements for the IDSU collaboration for termination date (23:59 31 December 2019) arrangements which were to continue, namiliabilities and handling of legal risks for the terminated and provision for a 12 month per arrangements are maintained, following the Estates provides further details around the accommodation of police dogs. Similarly, So will fund the removal of tri-force livery' by the removal met by each force 'in respect of the key persons, it was noted that this latter act formal decision to exit the collaboration had IDSU as a legal entity was dissolved as of 30 operationally the collaboration had ceased is respective forces returning to operating as so operational benefits support this. Appended to the signed exit protocol is a difference of the Exit Protocol: Insurance and Liabilities and Employment Liabilities respective month Exit Protocol effective period as we December 2020).	set out the post-termination of the 12 months following the 12, including those specific ely the continuation of shared 12 months after the IDSU is riod within which the kennelling of termination of the IDSU. Section 13: continued provision of kennelling and ection 14: Fleet notes that each force the termination date with the costs of the element of the IDSU is riod within the solution of the IDSU. Section 13: continued provision of kennelling and ection 14: Fleet notes that each force the termination date with the costs of the element of the IDSU is riod with the seriod with the IDSU is riod with the costs of the IDSU is riod with the costs of the IDSU is riod with the costs of the IDSU is riod with the Costs of the IDSU is riod with the	Medium	We will look to introduce an exit plan proforma to be used for all collaborations which documents the consequences of exiting the arrangements as well as key activities and lessons learned that will feed into future arrangements. Implementation date 31 December 2020 Responsible owners Head of Business Design and Assurance, working with legal services

Ref	Control	Adequate control design (yes/no)	Controls complied with (yes/no)	Audit findings and implications		Priority	Action for management
				The termination arrangements were outline Extraordinary Meeting of the Chief Constable. An exit protocol covered the foreseen even collaboration being established, however it the arrangement. We were able to confirm to an email chain to Dog Training Centre (kennelling) prior to the agreement and a decision in principle made. Similarly we noted an email chain demonstrative concerning proposals to changing the its dog handlers, the response being that no retaining the vehicles (vans) at their home appurely for use in a working capacity in connecare' were foreseen. However, neither of these were documented. We confirmed in discussion with the Assistative aware of having received an update on the arrangements of the collaboration.	tualities at the time of the this did not cover all aspects of exiting that there had been liaison with the e legal dissolution of the collaboration of to a five year extension. Trating that the Force had sought legal ne way it provides vehicles for use by to taxation issues 'with handlers address on the basis the vehicle is ection with the police dogs in their d in a formal action plan.	Low	We will provide an update at the next meetings of the appropriate fora on the progress of the legal dissolution of the IDSU collaboration. Implementation date 30 November 2020 Responsible Owner ACC Crime and Operations
				Risk exposure	Root cause		
				Exiting collaborations and the transition to single-force operations are not managed in an efficient or timely manner, causing operational disruption and impacting on performance.	The lack of a comprehensive exit plan outlining individual activities assigned to owners and with deadlines to increase accountability.		

5 Partially Missing Control

No

We noted in our discussions with the key persons that no formal lessons learned exercise has been undertaken subsequent to dissolution of the collaboration.

Medium Using the outcomes in the Briefing Paper, Dogs Section Briefing November 2019 and similar reports, we will identify any lessons learned which can be carried forward in any future collaborations.

No formal lessons learned exercise was undertaken as part of the dissolution of the collaboration; however, the causes of the dissolution of the collaboration have been documented, and recommendations were identified in the Evolve IDSU review undertaken two years into the operation of the IDSU.

We did note, however, that recommendations were detailed in the Evolve IDSU Review report (August 2018). Demonstration of these recommendations being taken forward and informing future collaborations could not be confirmed; however, the recommendation in the report that the IDSU needed to be given 'enough time to enable evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness' was made in consideration of the 'whole collaboration picture and the future of activities with NETIC' and the inevitability that 'some forces will end up paying more than others for services' but that this 'will balance itself out over the whole collaboration landscape'. Moreover, collaboration is 'not just about the efficiency savings but the effectiveness and legitimacy aspects also need to be taken into consideration'. Similarly, a variation to the IDSU collaboration agreement was implemented subsequent to the review to address some of the recommendations, namely the creation of new operating model which returned governance and line management/supervision to each force but retained the joint arrangements.

Implementation date

31 December 2020

Responsible owners

ACC Crime and Operations

Head of BDA

It was noted in discussion with the Head of Business Design and Assurance that the Force via its Executive Board is currently reviewing its Collaboration Strategy and how it can best manage matters of efficiency, effectiveness and value for money in its collaborations.

Risk exposure	Root cause			
Issues are encountered in future	A lack of embedded lessons learned			
collaborations which could have been	within the Force's collaboration			
foreseen should a lessons learned	agreements.			
exercise have been undertaken on				
exiting previous collaborations.				

APPENDIX A: SCOPE

The scope below is a copy of the original document issued.

Objective and risk relevant to the scope of the review

The internal audit assignment has been scoped to provide assurance on how the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire and the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire manages the following risk.

Objective of the review	Risk relevant to the scope of the review	Risk source
There is an effective framework in place to monitor the relative efficiency and effectiveness of individual collaborative arrangements through the duration of joint partnership working.	Unable to reliably measure the ratio of contribution against benefit of cross sector collaborative effort. Police and Crime Plan Priority 2: Ambitious Collaboration	Principal risk register

Scope of the review

Exiting Collaborations

In the summer of 2016, the Force, Cleveland Police and Durham Constabulary merged their police dog support units to create a single integrated service. The Force are currently reviewing the collaborative arrangement and are in the process of de-collaborating their dog section arrangements with Cleveland Police and Durham Constabulary. Our review will consider the governance around managing / exiting the collaborative arrangement and in particular:

- Confirmation that a collaborative agreement was in place establishing the joint service, the service to be supplied to each of the partners in the service and the roles and responsibilities of each of the partners.
- The collaborative arrangement was reviewed on a regular basis against the initial proposal in terms of efficiency or effectiveness on which the decision was made. We will also consider the costing model used and if this was also reviewed on an on-going basis.
- A governance structure had been established to monitor actual performance against target and compliance with the Section 22 Agreement. We will consider how data was collected and reported to allow for the arrangement to be assessed.
- Actions and action plans were in place and agreed in a timely manner, where underperformance was identified.
- Consultation to exit the collaboration has taken due consideration of both internal and external stakeholders.
- The decision on exiting the collaboration has been clearly documented and the impact of efficiency or effectiveness has been considered.
- An exit plan is in place, has been reviewed and approved. The exit plan includes key activities such as returning assets back to the organisation or another provider or dealing with the impact on tax schemes and the regulatory environment, where applicable.
- Approval and consultation to exit the collaboration has been approved by a chief officer and relevant policing body. We will confirm the chief officer has been provided with sufficient information on which to make the decision.

- Collaboration termination notice period has been adhered to and communicated to relevant parties in a timely manner.
- Arrangements are reviewed on an on-going basis following the exiting of the collaborative arrangement.
- Lessons learned have been documented and fed into other arrangements.

The following limitations apply to the scope of our work:

- Our audit will only focus on the above collaborative arrangement.
- We will not review national collaborative arrangements as part of this review.
- We will not confirm that scrutiny and oversight is effective across all collaborative arrangements.
- We will not comment on the suitability of the collaborative arrangements; only whether the Force has appropriate mechanisms in place to assess the suitability.
- We will not provide assurance that all targets will be achieved.
- Testing will be completed on a sample basis. As such, we will not confirm compliance with all elements of the Statutory Guide for Police Collaboration.
- Our work does not provide absolute assurance that material errors, loss or fraud do not exist.

APPENDIX B: FURTHER INFORMATION

Persons interviewed during the audit:

- Head of Business Design and Assurance
- Assistant Chief Constable
- Superintendent Proactive Policing Unit
- Chief Inspector Proactive Policing Unit
- Chief Inspector Proactive Policing Unit

Documentation reviewed during the audit:

- Evolve Programme Collaboration (Framework) Agreement
- Collaboration agreement for the provision of the Dogs Support Unit
- Dog Support Unit Service Specification
- Integrated Dog Support Unit (IDSU) Business Case
- Joint Governance Board (JGB) minutes and agenda, 22 October 2015
- IDSU Exit Protocol and Annex A: Application of the Protocol diagram
- Proactive Policing extract from the North Yorkshire Police Service Plan

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