



# THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF NORTH YORKSHIRE

## Estates – Covid-19 Response

Internal audit report 5.21/22

Final

19 January 2022

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Why we completed this audit

On 16 March 2020, the Prime Minister announced that 'now is the time for everyone to stop non-essential contact and travel'. The Force announced on 17 March 2020 for those who could work from home, should do so. The first UK lockdown was announced on 23 March 2020, ordering people to 'stay at home', which legally came into force on 25 March 2020. By this point, the Force had already instructed a vast proportion of its workforce to stay at home, where possible, meaning there were few people on site across Force buildings, although this, naturally, did not apply to those classified as front-line workers, including officers, custody suite and force control room staff.

The Force have continued to operate with social distancing measures in place and only recently, in October 2021, the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire took the decision to make mask wearing a personal choice, except when working in clear customer facing situations, such as within custody suites. This decision was taken in line with Public Health England (PHE) and National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) guidance.

In March 2020, the Force set up a Gold and Silver Response Group to manage the Force's actions and decisions in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, with the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire having overall responsibility for the Force's Covid-19 response. The Force's Gold and Silver Response Groups have then developed to become recovery groups, with the aim of restoring a new 'business as usual' across the Force in line with the lifting of restrictions.

Our review has focused on the Covid-19 arrangements in place across the Force's estate, with the objective of assessing whether the organisation has appropriate measures in place to manage the health and safety risks to its officers and staff as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our review has included on-site visits to Northallerton HQ, Harrogate police station, Vale House in Thirsk, and Richmond police station, in which we engaged staff and officers on-site to canvass opinions on the Force's Covid-19 response in respect of estates and government guidance.

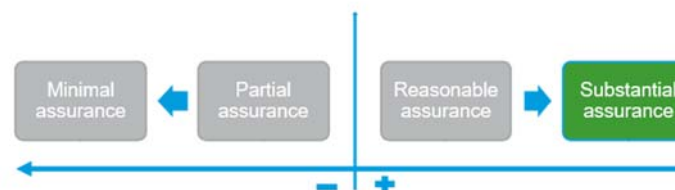
## Conclusion

As a result of our review, we have agreed **one medium** and **one low** priority management actions. Our conclusion was based on the results of our review of the evidence provided, by conducting on-site visits, a review of the Force's communication platforms, and through discussions with both staff and officers on-site and remotely.

We have determined that the Force have maintained sufficient Covid-19 measures within its estate throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and responded in a timely manner to changes in Government guidelines. The Force has excellently communicated with staff and officers via the intranet platform "The Source Covid-19 Hub" and visibility of Covid-19 measures is prevalent whilst on-site.

### Internal audit opinion:

Taking account of the issues identified, the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire can take **substantial assurance** that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this area are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective.



## Key findings

**Our audit identified the following exceptions with the Force's established control framework resulting in one medium priority action:**



### Timeliness of risk assessment process

We met with the Force Solicitor and Head of Legal Services who outlined that the Force introduced the Health and Safety Compliance Group, with the first meeting in July 2020, for the purpose of reviewing internal health and safety measures across the Force, which included the introduction of risk assessments in three stages:

- An overarching risk assessment applicable to all of the Force estate;
- Specific risk assessments for each functional area; and
- Individual risk assessments for each officer and staff member (to be carried out with their respective Heads of Function).

Only once all risk assessments had been completed, could the Chief Constable sign the Force's secure Covid-19 notice; however, this was not completed until January 2021. Whilst we appreciate the Covid-19 pandemic posed significant challenges across the Force's operations, where the Force had not carried out timely risk assessments, there is a risk of non-compliance with regulatory requirements in respect of health and safety measures and the Force may not have been able to evidence adequate risk assessments had been carried out, should a visit from Public Health England (PHE) have occurred.

We recommend the Force carry out a lessons learned exercise, with particular focus on the timeliness of the risk assessment process. **(Medium)**

For details of the low priority management action, please see section two of this report.

**Our audit review also identified that the following controls are suitably designed, consistently applied, and are operating effectively:**



### Responsibilities

The Chief Constable has overall responsibility for the Covid-19 procedures in place for North Yorkshire Police (NYP) and, at the start of the pandemic in March 2020, the Force established a Gold and Silver Response Group to manage the Force's response in relation to the outbreak. In respect of estates, the responsibility for ensuring the safety of buildings sits with the Head of Assets.

Whilst the responsibilities for managing health and safety risks relating to Covid-19 within the Force are not encapsulated within a single document, we were satisfied with the volume of information available on The Source intranet pages, which included email and telephone contacts, should anyone have any concerns in respect of the Force's Covid-19 arrangements. There is further detail on those managing estates buildings on The Source intranet pages.

## Site Visits



We visited four separate sites during the week of the audit: Northallerton Headquarters (HQ) on 25 October 2021, and Harrogate station, Vale House in Thirsk, and Richmond police station on 27 October 2021, which enabled us to speak with both officers and staff on site and canvas opinions in relation to the Covid-19 arrangements put in place by the Force. From our discussions during the on-site visits, we established that officers and staff were aware of who to contact regarding any Covid-19 queries and the Strategic Resource and Future Planning Manager was frequently mentioned as a key point of contact for any issues.

By way of illustration, we spoke with the team responsible for driver training courses and an example was provided of an instance where an individual had tested positive for Covid-19, completed the 10-day isolation period (as per Government guidance at that time) and had returned to work to complete a driver training course. However, the individual's family had also tested positive for Covid-19, therefore there were concerns over the safety of driving instructors if the course was to go ahead. It was mentioned that the Strategic Resource and Future Planning Manager was contacted, the response to which was extremely quick, and the officers received clear guidance and instruction, and were satisfied with the resolution.



There is a section on The Source intranet page entitled 'resources for managers' and outlines key information in relation to the Force's Covid-19 response and requirements for management, including working arrangements, individual risk assessments, display screen equipment assessments, and mental health and wellbeing.



### Force Covid-19 measures

Our on-site visits confirmed that the Force had implemented appropriate Covid-19 measures in estates buildings, which were well communicated to staff, officers, and visitors, and re-emphasised by front counter staff and personnel on-site. These measures included:

- High levels of signage, including social distancing signage, mask-wearing (where applicable), and hygiene signage, including sufficient instructions for visitors arriving at stations. We further noted that all Covid-19 signage was available on The Source intranet pages to download;
- Clear social distancing measures, including lines to indicate where individuals should stand at front counters and adequate spacing between desks;
- Ample supplies of hand sanitiser, masks, wipes, and cleaning products were available on sites. Discussions with staff and officers on site confirmed that there were no concerns regarding the level of PPE and cleaning products available; and
- In more enclosed environments, Perspex screens were installed. For example, this included interview rooms in the custody suites, at front counter receptions, and between desks in office environments.

All measures were supported by adequate risk assessments, which were able on the Force's intranet platform, The Source, and discussions with on-site staff and officers confirmed that various communications were issued via email and we concluded through our discussions that staff and officers felt well-informed.



We received the action log from the Silver Response Group and noted that all actions have been closed on the tracker. Clear actions to evidence the Force's compliance with government guidelines and consideration of prioritisation of roles included:

- Current role prioritisation uploaded to the Q drive and consideration of any areas struggling with reduced staffing levels, and what action needs to be taken now to increase resilience. Further notes to this effect include information on the use of the IT service desk and control of assets to enable working from home, some smaller departments affected by the impacted loss of staff, and difficulties with staffing to be highlighted to the Chief Inspector (Training, Planning and Logistics);
- Actions to determine system prioritisation and disaster recovery planning. The Business Continuity Leads were asked to confirm any systems listed as business critical were appropriately prioritised;
- Action to determine the level of cell cleaning required and confirmation that this is in line with the NPCC Guidance. We further confirmed that evidence of cleaning regimes is available on the Force's intranet system and we met with officers at Harrogate's custody suite, who outlined that cleaning regimes were thorough and adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) has been provided;
- Heads of Function and Superintendents were asked to feed any frontline team emergency childcare needs into the 'Covid-19' mailbox straight away, for consideration and prioritisation when resource planning;
- It was decided on 1 April 2020, that front counters would remain open with signage on the doors and the public only to attend for a valid reason. Estates put up screening to further safeguard any front counter staff. We met with the front counter staff at Harrogate and Richmond and verified that screens and signage remained in place. The Harrogate front counter staff continued to insist on the wearing of face coverings within the office, despite the Chief Constable's decision to remove the mandatory wearing of face masks; and
- Temporary additional screens in interview rooms and custody desks to be installed. The Force ordered 50 screens on 15 April 2020 for various locations as a start for screen installation across the Force, with installation starting in the following week. Our on-site visits confirmed that such measures remained in place, despite the lifting of restrictions as per government guidelines.

In the action logs reviewed, we noted numerous actions relating to both Covid-19 estates measures put in place to protect the safety of officers, staff and visitors, and the consideration of prioritisation of roles and resource planning from the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic. From review of emails and The Source intranet system, there was clear evidence to confirm that staff and officers were well-informed from the outset of the pandemic and throughout.



There is a clear legislation section included in the Coronavirus pages on The Source intranet platform, which directs officers and staff to government, Public Health England (PHE) and National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) guidance in relation to Coronavirus to ensure that the Force are kept well informed of requirements. In addition to the action log received from the Silver Response Group, the legislation pages evidence the Force's engagement with changes to guidance and considerations of updates.



The Strategic Resource and Future Planning Manager set up a Covid-19 dashboard in April 2020 to monitor levels of positive cases across the Force, with information feeding directly from the HR Department's Origin system. This enabled the Force to clearly monitor resource levels and identify any stress areas in a timely manner.

It further provided information on any relevant Covid-19 surges within teams or divisions across the Force, to ensure that sufficient risk assessment and actions were taken to mitigate further risks of spreading Covid-19 going forward. An example was provided of front-line team meetings.



The Force had a Test and Trace agreement in place with Public Health England (PHE) to enable internal contact tracing for positive cases. The Test and Trace programme ran up until August 2021, in line with the changes to isolation rules due to Covid-19 vaccinations and the Test and Trace programme was handed back to PHE. We were provided with a graph which outlines Covid-19 outbreaks at various police stations across the county. The Strategic Resource and Future Planning Manager headed up the Team responsible for Test and Trace, which was made up of five staff on duty seven days per week and outlined that the team were extremely busy providing a pivotal service in stopping any outbreaks quickly and effectively and outlined that this was highly successful in dealing with Covid-19 at the worst stages of the pandemic.

Running an internal Test and Trace programme enabled the Force to track changes in isolations and PPE, and to consider the impact from any changes to the rules or any other changes.

The Strategic Resource and Future Planning Manager outlined key dates throughout the pandemic and provided us with the Test and Trace figures from the start of the programme in June 2020 to its end in August 2021, which we have included under Appendix B of this report.



#### **Considerations of on-site and working from home roles**

Actions and decisions were made at the Silver and Gold Response Groups. The Strategic Resource and Future Planning Manager outlined that the decision as to who could work from home at the outset of the pandemic was relatively straight forward, in that if you could go home and carry out your work, you should do so. We understand that most people self-elected to work from home, and anyone not comfortable remaining on site could go home, for instance, those in a shielding category. Further internal actions were taken to enable critical functions to remain such as dividing the force control room staff, to ensure operations could continue and reviewing the staffing of the IT service desk.

The Strategic Resource and Future Planning Manager further outlined that operational policing demand dropped during the first months of the pandemic, due to the implementation of national lockdowns. Resourcing figures were monitored on a daily basis in line with the Covid-19 dashboards.



The Force later introduced individual risk assessments which would be completed with the respective line managers and considered the individual circumstances of each staff member or officer.



#### **Removal of Social Distancing Rules (RSDR) Working Group**

The Force established a RSDR Working Group in June 2020, which was a sub-group of the Gold Covid-19 recovery group, with the purpose of considering the Force's position if all restrictions were to be lifted. The Group was implemented to consider the expected lifting of restrictions on 21 June 2020 and how this would implement on Force operations. The RSDR Working Group was not a decision-making group, therefore no minutes were maintained. Given that the government had imposed another period of lockdown in November 2020 and January 2021, any discussions in relation to the RSDR were put on hold during this period, the Head of Assets therefore delivered an update to the Chief Officer Team in May 2021 to outline the work conducted thus far, once the lifting of restrictions once again seemed likely, which highlighted that:

- The Force had noted that they could not manage everyone being on the estate at the same time under the guidance at that point (May 2021), therefore were continuing the message of work from home where you can, with the exceptions being:
  - Operational need;
  - Equipment / specialist need; or
  - Welfare need.
- The Force implemented an agile toolkit for EnableNY employees, which required managers to complete a job role workplace risk assessment to determine which roles were being successfully delivered in a more agile way and should therefore be established as agile roles, and individual risk assessments and decision records, which outlined two categories for future working arrangements:
  - Agile working from home: predominantly working from home but with a suitable balance of estate-based working to meet organisational needs; or
  - Agile working within the estate: predominantly working within the estate but able to work from home or other locations as the role requires.

EnableNY employees have now had contracts updated completed to enable agile working.

The Force estates team carried out some analysis of the sustainable and environmental impact of working from home between 23 March 2020 and 23 March 2021 and we have highlighted some key figures under Appendix C.

## 2. DETAILED FINDINGS AND ACTIONS

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.

Area: Estates				
<b>Control</b>	The Force operates a Health and Safety Policy, which is available on the Force's intranet platform, 'The Source'.		<b>Assessment:</b>	
			<b>Design</b>	✓
			<b>Compliance</b>	×
<b>Findings / Implications</b>	<p>We obtained the Force's Health and Safety Policy, which highlights role specific responsibilities regarding health and safety. The policy is internally accessible by all staff through 'The Source' intranet system and is the responsibility of the HR Professional Support Team. However, we did note that the Force's Health and Safety Policy is currently out of date, with the scheduled review date set for 18 months prior, on 30 April 2020.</p> <p>We queried this with the Force's Health and Safety Manager and confirmed that the policy is currently undergoing a review and we were advised that this will address any changes required to reflect the new governance arrangements under Enable North Yorkshire, affecting both North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Services (NYFRS) employees.</p> <p>Where the Force's Health and Safety policy is out of date, there is a risk that outdated practices are followed by staff or officers, which could risk failure to meet current regulatory standards.</p>			
<b>Management Action 1</b>	The Force's Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed and updated, and published on the Force's intranet, The Source.	<b>Responsible Owner:</b> Health and Safety Manager	<b>Date:</b> 31 January 2022	<b>Priority:</b> <b>Low</b>

Area: Estates				
<b>Control</b>	The Force implemented a Health and Safety Compliance Group, with the first meeting held in July 2020, for the purpose of assessing internal risks and Covid-19 measures across the Force and ensuring action is taken, where appropriate.		<b>Assessment:</b>	
			<b>Design</b>	✓
			<b>Compliance</b>	×
<b>Findings / Implications</b>	<p>From discussions with the Head of Assets, we established that in March 2020, the Force implemented Gold and Silver command Response Group meetings, which initially took place on an at least weekly basis (often daily), to manage the Force's response in the early stages of the pandemic. From discussions with the Force Solicitor and Head of Legal Services, we noted that the initial Response Groups were predominantly focused on ensuring the Force could carry out its policing duties and operations, rather than an internal focus on</p>			



## Area: Estates

health and safety within the Force's estate. The Force Solicitor and Head of Legal Services became concerned of the risk in relation to internal health and safety arrangements, and therefore set up a Health and Safety Compliance Group, with the purpose of assessing internal risks and Covid-19 measures across the Force. The first meeting of the Group occurred in July 2020. The risk assessment process comprised three stages:

1. An overarching risk assessment applicable to all Force estates;
2. Specific risk assessments for each functional area; and
3. Individual risk assessments for each officer and staff member (to be carried out with their respective line manager).

Only once all three stages were completed across the functional areas, could the Chief Constable sign the Force's secure Covid-19 notice; however, this was not completed until January 2021. Review of eight risk assessments by estates areas identified that the earliest risk assessments were carried out in June 2020, three months after the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Whilst we appreciate that the Covid-19 pandemic was unprecedented and actions were taken on a responsive basis, where internal risk assessments were not carried out in a timely manner, the Force risked non-compliance with regulatory requirements in respect of health and safety and the Force may not have been able to evidence adequate risk assessments had been carried out should a visit from Public Health England (PHE) have occurred.

The Strategic Resource and Future Planning Manager provided us with a Covid-19 recovery organisational learning (volume one) booklet, which touches on the Force's plans for a recovery phase and considers any lessons learned and emerging good practice throughout the response to Covid-19. The Silver Recovery Group carried out an organisational learning exercise aimed at maximising opportunities for improvement and transformation, which considered opinions collated from Covid-19 staff surveys and included suggestions for improvements on estate and workplace provisions. We understand that a volume two organisational learning exercise will be carried out, but no official timeline for this has been set. Given that the Force are already carrying out lessons learned exercises, we have raised a management action to ensure that future organisational learning activities completed by the Silver Recovery Group include consideration of the risk assessment processes and potential areas for improvement.

<b>Management Action 2</b>	The Silver Recovery Group will consider the effectiveness and timeliness of the Covid-19 risk assessment process as part of the next lessons learned process.	<b>Responsible Owner:</b> Head of Assets Superintendent	<b>Date:</b> 30 June 2022	<b>Priority:</b> <b>Medium</b>
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## APPENDIX A: CATEGORISATION OF FINDINGS

### 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 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, reputational damage, negative publicity in national or international media or adverse regulatory impact, such as loss of operating licences or material fines.

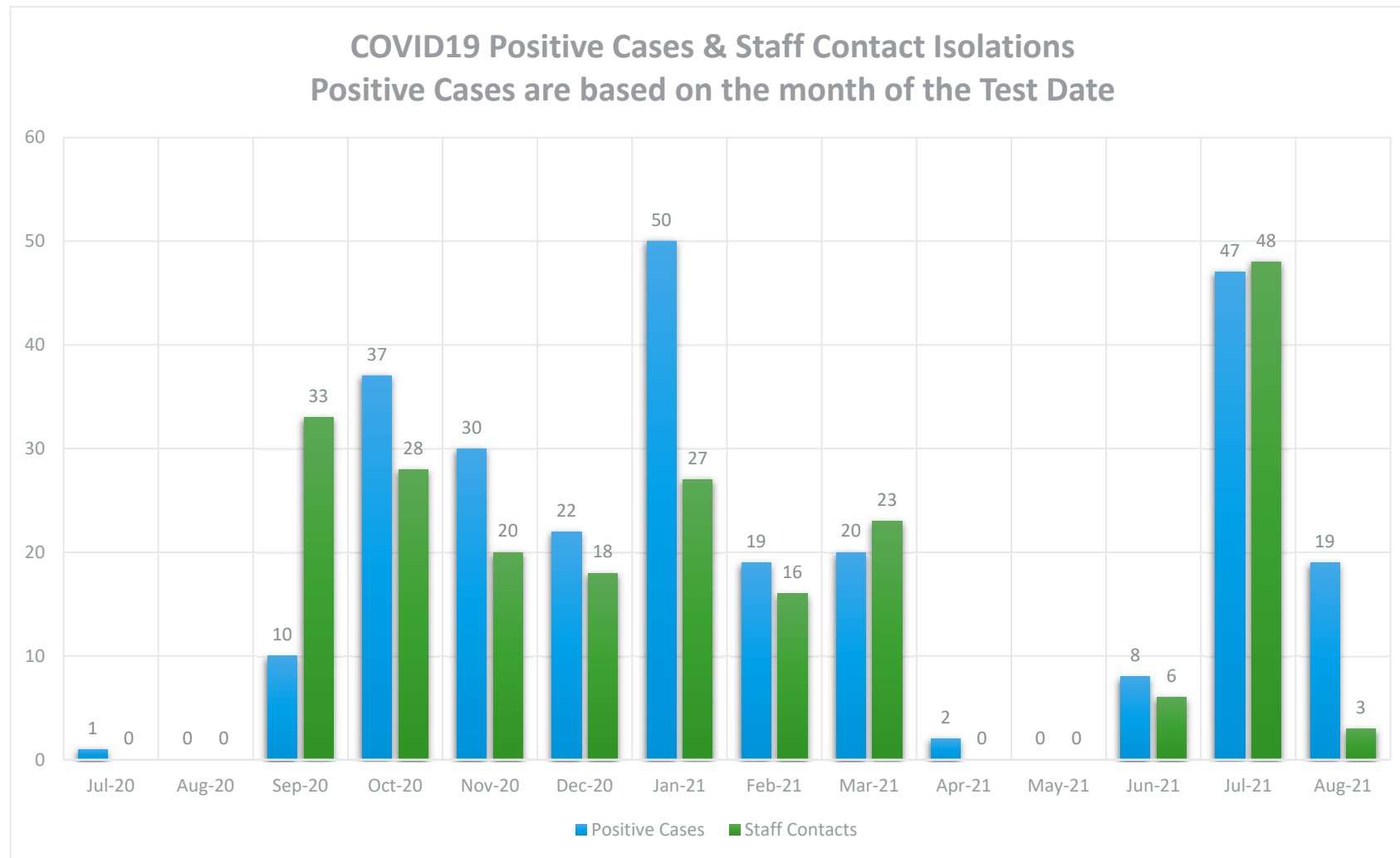
The following table highlights the number and categories of management actions made as a result of this audit.

Area	Control design not effective*		Non Compliance with controls*		Agreed management actions		
					Low	Medium	High
Estates – Covid 19 Response	0	(7)	2 *	(7)	1	1	0
<b>Total</b>					<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

\* 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.

## APPENDIX B: FORCE TEST AND TRACE – TIMELINE OF EVENTS

The below data was provided by the Strategic Resource and Future Planning Manager showing the monthly results of the Force's internal Covid-19 Test and Trace programme for both positive cases and staff contacts. The NYP Test and Trace programme was established in June 2020 under guidance from NPCC and PHE, which enabled Police Services to carry out their own Test and Trace programmes rather than using the NHS 119 system.



The Strategic Resource and Future Planning Manager outlined key dates throughout the pandemic, in line with government guidance and an assessment of any Covid-19 measures across the Force (or in wider society). The monthly analysis is as follows:

- **July 2020:** testing becomes widely available;
- **August 2020:** there were no cases of Covid-19 reported within NYP despite a wide range of operational activities taking place. This gave the Force confidence that PPE rules were being followed, but it is worthy of mentioning that schools were not open at this time;
- **September 2020:** schools return (to an extent) and the Force start to see cases rise through the Test and Trace programme. The number of isolations due to a positive case also increase significantly, indicating that the Force needed to re-communicate and review its adherence to Covid-19 hygiene rules;
- **October 2020:** the number of positive cases increased significantly; however, following some internal communications issued Force-wide, the Force see a decrease in the number of contacts from positive cases, indicating that measures are effective at this stage. However, the Force were alarmed by the number of positive cases coming through, although none appeared to be work-related;
- **November 2020:** there was a slight decrease in the number of positive cases and isolations were less than the number of confirmed infections. The Force were maintaining business as usual;
- **December 2020:** there was another slight decrease, but nationally there is a warning that in the new year, there will be a significant spike in the number of confirmed cases. Feedback from the Test and Trace team is key in making sure the Force continue to operate effectively and safely;
- **January 2021:** as anticipated, the Force deal with the highest ever level of confirmed infections in the Force, but thankfully this results in just over half the number of infections. This was a difficult and busy month for Test and Trace but the operational impact was reduced by the fact that January is generally a quiet month and the nation had entered another lockdown phase again;
- **February 2021:** a reduction in the number of cases was clear, which ties into the local lockdowns and closure of schools;
- **March 2021:** the Force remain steady in terms of the number of cases whilst remaining in a lockdown state. The Force introduced its own work-based lateral flow device (LFD) testing sites in five locations across the county;
- **April 2021:** there is a significant reduction in cases, likely due to the lockdown and closure of schools;
- **May 2021:** there are no positive cases for North Yorkshire Police. The Force also introduce its own home-testing LFD kits;
- **June 2021:** more positive cases appeared in June 2021, but the Force knew the vaccination programme was progressing well by this time and that changes to isolation rules may occur in the near future;
- **July 2021:** there is a significant increase in cases and isolations, whilst a number of restrictions nationally had been eased. The general population at this point are mixing much more freely than before, meaning there are more positive cases and isolations as a result. None of those with positive cases appeared to be unwell from Covid-19 and with potential isolation rule changes imminent, there is a more relaxed feel about the contact rules;

- **August 2021:** Covid-19 cases start to ease again but it is noted that nearly all positive cases are double-vaccinated, yet still catching the virus. The rules change in August 2021 around isolation and the Force ended its Test and Trace programme back to the NHS at the end of the month, which is where the NYP Test and Trace data stops, and the Force now relies on the internal Nexus dashboard for Covid-19 sickness monitoring. This dashboard was set up at the start of April 2020, and data is fed by the Origin HR system under the following coding:
  - Covid-19 sickness (unable to work);
  - Suspected Covid-19 (unconfirmed symptomatic);
  - Covid-19 WFH (confirmed case but okay to continue working from home); and
  - Covid Special (confirmed case or shielding – unable to work from home).
- **September 2021:** to date, the numbers of actual Covid-19 infections remain relatively stable, and isolations drop down to a rolling average of around seven at any one time. The Force continue to monitor the Covid-19 dashboard on a daily basis and are ready to react to any significant outbreaks using the Test and Trace Team methodology; and
- **October 2021:** NYP relax the mask wearing rules to mirror those nationally with the exception of custody areas. The Force currently work in line with national guidance on double-vaccinated persons required to isolate.

## APPENDIX C: NYP ONE YEAR WORKING FROM HOME ANALYSIS

The following is taken from analysis reported by the NYP Estates Team to the Executive Board in October 2021:

The volume of those on site across the NYP estate has significantly declined since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, with the introduction of work from home and social distancing measures. The Estates Team carried out some analysis of the environmental and sustainable impact of working from home on Force resources and emissions, which was presented to the Executive Board in October 2021 as part of its annual review of the Sustainability Strategy 2021 to 2026. The Force have recognised the potential environmental opportunities and are thus building these considerations into any future decisions in respect of estates arrangements.

We have included some key figures below which were highlighted within the Executive Board report from October 2021, which focused on four departments from 23 March 2020 to 23 March 2021 in relation to the environmental and sustainable impact of working from home rather than estates:

- By not commuting to work, the four departments had saved roughly **£60,800** in **fuel costs**;
- Working from home had therefore saved the production of **127.42 tonnes Co2** from commuting, which would have taken **5,853 trees** to absorb that volume of Co2 in one year. 5,853 trees would require **six acres of land**, which is equivalent to **96 tennis courts**;
- Nearly **540 days' worth** of commuting time has been used differently, and team members had reported better work / life balance, lower stress levels and concentration on tasks was easier; colleagues were choosing to log on earlier by not commuting or work later; and, were able to spend more time with families than before;
- Due to working from home within this period, a total of **503,194.5 commuting miles** had been avoided from the four departments.

To further exemplify the message of savings and benefits, the Estates Team developed a virtual 'race to the moon', thus exemplifying the significant impact working from home has on organisational carbon footprint and global environment, which the Force are looking to include within recovery decisions. The results reported to the Executive Board in October 2021 were as follows:

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the Estates, Information Management, Legal and Project Management teams started a virtual 238,900-mile journey to the moon using their usual commuting miles saved by working from home. As at 23 March 2021, the working from home results were that:

- The Information Management Team had **53,073 miles** left to travel, arriving in **15 weeks** on 21 June 2021;
- The Legal Department had **80,8854 miles** left to travel, arriving in **27 weeks** on 27 September 2021;
- Project Management had **110,578.5 miles** left to travel, arriving in **45 weeks** on 31 January 2022; and
- The Estates Team still had **122,752 miles** left to travel and would arrive in **56 weeks** on 18 April 2022.

# APPENDIX D: SCOPE

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

## Scope of the review

The internal audit assignment has been scoped to provide assurance on how the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire manages the following area:

### Objective of the area under review

The organisation has appropriate measures in place to manage the health and safety risks to its officers and staff as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic across its estate, with particular regard to any buildings which are shared.

## Scope of the review

The North Yorkshire Police estate comprises around 110 sites, incorporating around 150 buildings, although not all are occupied (storage units, garages). Of these, around 40 sites, including four sites shared by both services, are “owned” by the fire service (and, therefore, deemed outside of the scope of this review) with the remainder being “owned” by the Force. A fifth shared site (the HQ building) is “owned” by the Force.

Owing to the nature of police and fire service activities, many officers and staff have been required to continue their roles on site, although a proportion of activities have been able to be migrated to working remotely. In respect of the response to Covid-19, both services have followed broadly the same government and HSE guidance at all buildings irrespective of who “owns” them although there are a few areas of difference, e.g.:

- The fire service have largely been able to stop public access to sites whereas this has remained an operational requirement for the police.
- The police also have some specialist areas of activity (e.g. custody suites, front of station reception) which the fire service do not.

Our review is intended to cover only those buildings “owned” by the police service, including the headquarters building, which is also occupied by the fire service, and will focus on the following areas:

- Whether the force has a health and safety policy in place which is regularly reviewed and approved at an appropriate level.
- Whether the responsibilities to manage the health and safety risks to staff, officers and visitors, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic across the estate have been clearly set out and are well understood.
- Whether the measures that have been put in place to protect staff, officers and visitors, comply with all applicable guidance set out by the UK Government and other agencies such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- How the Force collated the information needed in order to assess risk and take the measures identified as being required early on in the pandemic and whether this was done on a timely basis.
- What information was taken into account when reviewing which roles / activities could be performed remotely and which were required to remain on site.

- How all staff, officers and visitors are informed of the health and safety expectations placed upon them in respect of Covid-19 when visiting a site.
- How all staff, officers and visitors are informed of the health and safety measures which have been put in place for their protection during the Covid-19 pandemic when visiting a site.
- Whether the measures currently being reviewed by the Removal of Social Distancing Rules (RSDR) Working Group to enable a move back towards a more “normal” working environment appear reasonable.

**The following limitations apply to the scope of our work:**

- The scope of this audit is limited to those areas examined and reported upon in the context of the objective set out for this review.
- Any testing undertaken as part of this audit will be compliance based and sample testing only.
- Our review is not intended to cover the full range of health and safety obligations of the force to its officers and staff.
- Our review is also not intended to cover the full range of property maintenance and other obligations of the force concerned with running its estate.
- We will not consider the appropriateness of decisions made in respect of individual officers or members of staff when the force reviewed which roles could be performed remotely and which were required to continue on site, or in considerations regarding any return to “normal” working patterns.
- Our review is intended to cover only the physical risks associated with the estate and, as such, will also not cover the provision of equipment, services and support to members of staff required to work from home during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Our work is not to be considered as a replacement for the specialist views of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- We will not provide an opinion on the adequacy of any risk assessments conducted.
- Our work does not provide an absolute assurance that material errors, loss or fraud do not exist.



<b>Debrief held</b>	12 November 2021
<b>Draft report issued</b>	18 November 2021
<b>Revised draft report issued</b>	19 January 2022
<b>Responses received</b>	19 January 2022

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	Michael Gibson, Manager
	Hollie Adams, Senior Auditor
	James Butler, Internal Auditor

<b>Final report issued</b>	19 January 2022
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<b>Client sponsor</b>	Managing Director
	Head of Assets
	Properties and Facilities Manager

<b>Distribution</b>	Managing Director
	Head of Assets
	Properties and Facilities Manager

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