

## **Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee**

20 January 2020 – At a meeting of the Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Dr Dennis (Chairman)

Mr Waight, Mr Baldwin, Mrs Dennis and Mr Jones

Apologies were received from Mr Bradford and Ms Goldsmith

### **Part I**

#### **19. Declarations of Interest**

19.1 None.

#### **20. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee**

20.1 Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 November 2019 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **21. Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 - Actions Update**

21.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Law and Assurance (copy appended to the signed minutes).

21.2 Mr Kershaw introduced the item. An update was provided on actions from the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) from the year 2018/19 and an update for the current year's (2019/20) AGS.

21.3 It was reported that when the 2018/19 statement was being drafted officers noted the content of external inspection reports which raised issues of governance within the County Council. The actions being tracked in the final column of the report provide updates to members on the changes arising from these reports.

21.4 The AGS for 2019/20 was being drafted and would be included as part of the July meeting, however an update would be given at the next meeting of the Committee in March.

21.5 The following comments and issues were raised:

- The Scheme of Delegation action was not finalised due to the number of changes at a senior level. If any changes are made members would be informed.
- The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy would be scrutinised by a partnership forum and the Health and Adults Social Care Select Committee.
- Concerns were raised that there were some instances of little progress against some actions in the Annual Governance Statement, which were raised at the previous meeting. It was

advised these would be addressed at the Committee's meeting in March 2020 and ongoing matters might remain in the action plan for 2019/20.

- Governance arrangements around key Council Services were being reviewed.
- A need for further member engagement on budget planning.
- In response to questions from the committee on the additional funding allocated for Phases 1 and 2 of the Fire a Rescue Service Improvement Plan, a written response was to be provided. The Chief Fire Officer would also be present at the next meeting to answer the Committees questions.

21.6 Resolved – That the updates in the report be noted.

## **22. Internal Audit Progress Report**

22.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Finance and Support Services, and the Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership (copy appended to the signed minutes).

22.2 Mr Pitman, Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership, / Mr Harvey, Deputy Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership introduced the report and the appendices included, drawing attention to implementation dates of the low and medium priority overdue actions.

22.3 The Committee raised various comments and questions, including the following:

- It was confirmed that the Council's Fleet Management System was managed by County Council Officers and was not outsourced.
- The Crawley 'Dual Use' agreement related to dual use of leisure centres. A draft report on this would be made available in the following weeks.

22.4 The Chairman welcomed Mr Laird (Acting Head of IT) to the meeting to discuss the IT Asset Management plan. Mr Laird discussed the various measures that were in place that mitigated the loss of assets such as phones and laptops.

22.5 The committee raised the following comments and questions:

- Information relating to the percentage of assets lost, how many blacklisted and the financial impact of this was unavailable, but could be provided at a later date.
- A process was already in place to mitigate the losses, but needed refining. It was dealt with by County Council staff.
- Firewalls were used to protect the organisation from technological threats and were reviewed on a regular basis. It was the County Council's responsibility to ensure these reviews were completed by partner organisations and make recommendations of improvements.
- A written response regarding how/when these reviews were scheduled to take place would be provided.

- Partner organisations are provided a statutory 4 weeks notice of any plans of an audit process. Immediate audits happen rarely, and only under suspicion of fraud or significant irregularities.
- Disaster recovery processes were in place, with a number of second 'mirror' sites in place across the County should an incident occur. The actions listed on page 38 of the report referred.

22.6 Resolved – That the Committee noted the report.

### **23. Quarterly Review of the Corporate Risk Register**

23.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Finance and Support Services (copy appended to the signed minutes).

23.2 Mr Pake, Corporate Risk and Business Planning Manager, introduced the report and advised that 2 risks had been added.

23.3 The Committee made comments on the items included on the risk register but were reminded that the risk owners were the subject matter experts and would have to attend a future meeting to discuss them. The following comments were raised:

- It was advised that a senior officer meeting was due to take place to discuss the register and its implications. It was also noted that the Chief Fire Officer would be attending the next meeting of the committee.

23.4 Resolved – That the Committee notes the report.

### **24. Treasury Management Compliance Report - Third Quarter 2019/20**

24.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Finance and Support Services (copy appended to the signed minutes).

24.2 Mrs Chuter, Financial Reporting Manager, introduced the report and addressed issues such as compliance, borrowing, investment, and the exposure limits.

24.3 Resolved – That the report be noted.

### **25. Date of Next Meeting**

25.1 The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting would be held at 10.30 am on 23 March 2020 at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 13.15

Chairman