



Committee: Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee

Date: Wednesday 20 March 2024

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA

Membership

Councillor Lynn Pratt (Chairman)

Councillor Besmira Brasha

Councillor Donna Ford

Councillor Simon Lytton

Harry Lawson – Independent Person (No voting rights)

Councillor Simon Holland (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Andrew Crichton

Councillor Harry Knight

Councillor Ian Middleton

Sarah Thompson – Independent Person (No voting rights)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

3. Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

The Chairman to report on any requests to submit petitions or to address the meeting.

4. Minutes (Pages 7 - 10)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 January 2024.

5. Chairman's Announcements

To receive communications from the Chairman.

6. **Urgent Business**

The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any item of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

7. **Risk Based Verification Policy 2024/2025** (Pages 11 - 34)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance.

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the reviewed Risk Based Verification (RBV) Policy for 2024/25

Recommendations

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To note the contents of the report.
- 1.2 To approve the Risk Based Verification Policy for the financial year 2024/2025, as set out at Appendix 1 to this report.

8. **Internal Audit Contract Procedure**

Verbal update from Head of Finance/Deputy S151 Officer.

9. **Update on Counter Fraud Annual Plan 2023/24** (Pages 35 - 44)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance.

Purpose of report

This report presents a summary of activity against the Annual Plan for the Counter-Fraud service at CDC for 2023/24, which was previously presented to the Accounts, Audit & Risk July 2023 committee. The Plan supports the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy by ensuring that the Council has in place proportionate and effective resources and controls to prevent and detect fraud as well as investigate those matters that do arise.

Recommendations

The Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee resolves:

- 1.1 Comment and note the summary of activity against the Annual Counter Fraud Plan for 2023/24.

10. **Draft Annual Report of Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee** (Pages 45 - 56)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance.

Purpose of report

The report presents the draft report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.

Recommendations

The Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To review the draft report, agree any amendments and finalise in preparation for presentation to Council by the Chair of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.

11. Risk Monitoring Report January 2024 (Pages 57 - 70)

Report of Assistant Director Customer Focus.

Purpose of report

To update the committee on how well the council is managing its Strategic Risks.

Recommendations

The Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To note the Risk Monitoring Report for January 2024.

12. 2021/22 Final Audit Results Report (Pages 71 - 344)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance.

Purpose of report

To ask the Committee to note the final audit results and annual report of the council's external auditors in relation to the 2021/22 statement of accounts. To also note the final Letter of Representation and the final 2020/21 Statement of Accounts.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 Note the final 2021/22 Audit Results Report (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 Note the final 2021/22 Annual Audit Report of the External Auditor (Appendix 2)
- 1.3 Note the final Letter of Representation (Appendix 3)
- 1.4 Note the final Statement of Accounts for 2021/22 (Appendix 4)

13. Draft Statement of Accounts 2022-23 (Pages 345 - 514)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance.

Purpose of report

To provide an opportunity for review of the draft 2022/23 Statement of Accounts which were published on 2 February 2024.

Recommendations

The Accounts, Audit and Risk committee resolves:

- 1.1 To note the report and publication of the draft statement of accounts 2022/23 (Appendix 1), and raise any queries on the draft statement of accounts.
- 1.2 To note the current consultations from Central Government to implement 'backstop' dates to combat the backlog of outstanding audits across England.

14. 2023/24 Accounting Policies (Pages 515 - 552)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance.

Purpose of report

To ask the Committee to review and approve the Accounting Policies for inclusion in the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts which are due to be published by 31 May 2024. The council is required to set accounting policies which set out the specific principles, bases, conventions, rules, and practices applied by an authority in preparing and presenting financial statements.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the accounting policies as recommended by the Chief Finance Officer (Appendix 1).

15. Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 - Update on Actions (Pages 553 - 580)

Report of Monitoring Officer & Assistant Director of Law & Governance.

Purpose of report

To consider an update on actions from the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2022/2023.

Recommendations

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Consider and comment on the update on the actions arising from the Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023.

16. Work Programme

To consider and review the Work Programme.

Councillors are requested to collect any post from their pigeon hole in the Members Room at the end of the meeting.

Information about this Meeting

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or 01295 221534 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item.

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare the fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

Evacuation Procedure

When the continuous alarm sounds you must evacuate the building by the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the car park as directed by Democratic Services staff and await further instructions.

Access to Meetings

If you have any special requirements, such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities to view a meeting online or attend a meeting in person, please contact the officer named below, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off.

Webcasting and Broadcasting Notice

The meeting will be recorded by the council for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the council's website. The whole of the meeting will be recorded, except when confidential or exempt items are being considered. The webcast will be retained on the website for 6 months.

If you make a representation to the meeting, you will be deemed by the council to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber, you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of those images for and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

The council is obliged, by law, to allow members of the public to take photographs, film, audio-record, and report on proceedings. The council will only seek to prevent this should it be undertaken in a disruptive or otherwise inappropriate manner.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221534

Shiraz Sheikh

Monitoring Officer

Published on Tuesday 12 March 2024