

Cherwell District Council

Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 28 June 2017 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Ian Corkin (Chairman)
Councillor Hugo Brown (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Sean Gaul
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Tom Wallis
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Also Present: Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Financial Management
John Cornett – KPMG
Mike Norman - KMPG

Officers: Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
Scott Barnes, Director of Strategy and Commissioning
Sanjay Sharma, Interim Head of Finance / Deputy Section 151 Officer
Belinda Green, Revenues and Benefits Manager
Mandy Emery, Joint Benefits Team Leader
Aaron Hetherington, Democratic and Elections Officer

3 Declarations of Interest

Members made the following general declarations of interest:

Councillor Ian Corkin, declaration, as a board member of Graven Hill Village Development Company.

4 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

5 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

6 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 March 2017 and 16 May 2017 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

7 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

8 **External Audit Progress Report (verbal)**

The Chief Finance Officer gave a verbal update on external audit.

Resolved

(1) That the Verbal update be noted.

9 **External Audit Letter to the Committee**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report to inform members of the response to the external auditor's, Ernst Young, letter to the Chairman of the Committee.

Resolved

(1) That the response to the external audit's request for management assurance from Those Charged With Governance Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

10 **Internal Audit - Annual Report for 2016/17 and Progress Report 2017/18**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which presented the council's former internal auditor, PwC's annual report for 2016/17 and from the council's new internal auditor, CWAS, internal audit reports finalised since the last meeting and the progress report for 2017/18.

Resolved

(1) That the update be noted

(2) That the contents of the 2017/18 progress report from CWAS be noted

11 **Corporate Fraud Team Update**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which provided an update on the joint Corporate Fraud team including an end of year performance summary for 2016-2017 and presented the Corporate Fraud Business Plan for 2017-2018.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted
- (2) That the Corporate Fraud Business Plan for 2017-2018 be endorsed

12 **End of year Risk Review 2016-17**

Director - Strategy and Commissioning submitted a report to update the Committee on the management of Strategic, Corporate and Partnership risks during the final quarter of 2016/17.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the Full Strategic, Corporate and Partnership Risk Register for 2016/17 be noted.
- (2) That the risk exceptions highlighted and proposed actions continuing into 2017/18 be noted.

13 **2016/17 Treasury Management Annual Report**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which presented information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy during 2016/17 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report in line with the Treasury Management Strategy be noted.

14 **Annual Governance Statement 2016/17**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which presented the Annual Governance Statement which would be considered at the same time as the Statement of Accounts for 2016/17.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be endorsed.
- (2) That the carry forward of budget underspends from 2016/17 to 2017/18 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (3) That the balances on capital schemes which have slipped in 2016/17 to be carried forward into the 2017/18 capital programme (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

- (4) That the outcomes from the informal review of the Statement of Accounts undertaken on 28 June immediately prior to the formal meeting at 5.00pm be noted.

15 **Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Risk Based Verification Policy**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report to seek support from members of the Committee for the introduction of a Risk Based Verification Policy for new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction with effect from 28 June 2017 or from the date that the Benefits work was insourced from Capita and the Academy processing system was introduced whichever is the later.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted
- (2) That, having given due consideration, the Section 151 Officer be recommended to adopt the Risk based Verification Policy in determining the evidence requirements for the assessment of new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction claims.

16 **KPMG NNDR Audit Follow-up**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which informed members of the findings of the KPMG follow-up review of their NNDR report.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted

17 **Closedown Update (verbal)**

The Chief Finance Officer provided a verbal update on the accounts closedown.

Resolved

- (1) That the verbal update be noted.

18 **Work Programme**

The Committee considered its work programme for 2016/17.

Resolved

- (1) That the work programme be noted.

19 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

Resolved

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 2 and 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

20 **Corporate Fraud Team Update - Exempt Appendices**

Resolved

- (1) That the exempt appendices be noted.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm

Chairman:

Date: