

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, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 27 July 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Donna Ford (Chairman)
Councillor Hugo Brown (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members:

Councillor Phil Chapman (In place of Councillor Barry Wood)

Also Present:

Councillor Adam Nell, Portfolio Holder for Finance
Alison Kennet, Ernst & Young, External Auditors

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Barry Wood

Officers:

Shahin Ismail, Assistant Director Law, Governance, Democratic Services & Procurement & Monitoring Officer Interim
Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor
Joanne Kaye, Strategic Finance Business Partner
Celia Prado-Teeling, Assistant Director Customer Focus Interim
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Robert Jolley, Assistant Director Growth & Economy
Sharon Hickson, Democratic and Elections Officer

14 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

15 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

16 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 May 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no chairman's announcements.

18 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

19 **End of year 2021- 2022 Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report**

The Assistant Director of Finance & S151 Officer and Interim Assistant Director Customer Focus submitted a report which summarised the Council's Performance, Risk and Finance monitoring positions at the end of the Financial Year 2021-2022.

Resolved

(1) That the Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report be noted.

20 **Regulatory Compliance Report**

The Interim Monitoring Officer submitted a report which updated the Committee on regulatory compliance.

In introducing the report, the Interim Monitoring Officer explained that a number of these functions; Freedom of Information requests, Environmental Information Regulations, Subject Access Requests, were currently in a transition period back in house having been run by Oxfordshire County Council under a shared service function arrangement. Future reports would provide more information for these areas.

Resolved

(1) That the Regulatory Compliance report be noted.

21 **Update on Counter Fraud Annual Plan 2021/22 and presenting the Counter Fraud Annual Plan 2022/23**

The Assistant Director of Finance & S151 Officer submitted a report which summarised the activity against the Annual Plan for the Counter Fraud service

at Cherwell District Council for 2021/22 and presented the Counter-Fraud plan for the year 2022/23

Resolved

- (1) That the summary of activity against the Annual Counter Fraud Plan for 2021/22 be noted
- (2) That the Counter Fraud Plan for 2022/23 be noted.
- (3) That the Investigation Report be noted.

22

Internal Audit Charter

The Assistant Director of Finance & S151 Officer submitted a report which presented the Internal Audit Charter and Internal Audit Quality Assurance programme for 2022/23.

Resolved

- (1) That after due consideration the Internal Audit Charter be approved
- (2) That the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme be noted

23

Treasury Management Report - Q4 (March 2022)

The Assistant Director of Finance & S151 Officer submitted a report which provided information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy for 2021-22 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

The Strategic Finance Business Partner advised the Committee that as interest rates were rising, the borrowing strategy had been adjusted in line with the change of circumstance and in consultation with Portfolio Holder, Treasury advisors and the Leader. Short term borrowing would be replaced by long term borrowing which would range from 5 – 10years.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the Q4 (March 2022) Treasury Management Report be noted

24

Support to Subsidiaries

The Assistant Director of Finance & S151 Officer submitted a report that informed the Committee of the overall level of support provided to the Council's subsidiaries and how this was considered as part of the external audit.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.

25

Work Programme

The Strategic Finance Business Partner advised the committee that the following items would not be submitted to the September meeting: Report of those in charge of Governance 2021/22; External Audit – Annual Audit Opinion 2021/22; and, Final Statement of Accounts and Letter of Representation 2021/22. The work programme would be updated to reflect the revised meeting at which these items would be considered.

The Committee agreed that a Counter Fraud & Whistleblowing training session be arranged to follow the AARC meeting on 28 September and that the training should be open to all Members.

Resolved

- (1) That the work programme be noted.

26

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, Paragraph 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.

27

Support to Subsidiaries - Exempt Appendix

Resolved

- (1) That the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

Chairman:

Date: