

GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2021

Councillors: S J Carr (Substitute)
E Cubley
M Handley
J M Owen
J C Patrick
P J Owen (Substitute)
J P T Parker
M Radulovic MBE
H E Skinner
P D Simpson
C M Tideswell (Substitute)
I L Tyler
D K Watts

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Williamson, S A Bagshaw and H G Khaled MBE.

25 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that H Skinner be appointed chair for the meeting.

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M Handley declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item due to living in one of the areas suggested for change. Minute number 28 refers.

27 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

28 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Committee considered the draft recommendations to be put forward for consultation as part of the Community Governance Review (CGR) which started in June 2021.

It was noted, there would be a 3 month consultation period on the draft recommendations from 1 December 2021 to 28 February 2022, after which there would be 2 months for the Council to consider the comments received and prepare and publish the final recommendations. The final recommendations would be considered by Council and a decision made on arrangements with a resolution to make a Reorganisation Order in May 2022.

RESOLVED that the draft recommendations put forward by the Task and Finish Group be approved.

29 AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2020/21 AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

The Committee noted the letter of representation of the Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 and considered the Audit Completion Report from the Council's external auditors.

It was noted that the auditors had yet to complete their work in respect of the Value for Money conclusion for the year ended 31 March 2021. At the time of preparing their report, Mazars had not identified any significant weaknesses in the Council's arrangements that require it to make a recommendation.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Statement of Accounts 2020/21 and the letter of representation as circulated with this agenda be approved; and**
- (ii) delegation be given to the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer along with the Chair of this Committee to approve any minor changes required to the Statement of Accounts 2020/21, with any substantial changes being reported back to Committee.**

30 GOING CONCERN STATEMENT

Members noted the assessment by the designed Section 151 Officer of the Council's Going Concern status. The concept of a 'going concern' assumes that an authority, its functions and services would continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. This assumption underpins the accounts drawn up under the Local Authority Code of Accounting Practice and was made because local authorities carry out functions essential to the community and are themselves revenue-raising bodies (with limits on their revenue-raising powers arising only at the discretion of central government).

31 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee noted the recent work completed by Internal Audit. Internal Audit had reviewed progress made by management in implementing agreed actions within six months of the completion of the respective audits.

It was noted that there is flexibility within audit planning arrangements to allow for audits to be deferred.

RESOLVED that the revisions to the Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22, as set out, in appendix 2 be approved.

32 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE BEESTON TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

A report was provided to members on the governance arrangements for the Beeston Town Centre Development project. Internal Audit had completed a review of the governance arrangements which have operated through the life of the Beeston Town Centre Development project.

33 REVIEW OF STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Members received an update on the Strategic Risk Register and the action plans identified to mitigate risks.

The Risk Management Strategy, as revised in December 2018, aims to improve the effectiveness of risk management across the Council. Effective risk management would help to ensure that the Council maximises its opportunities and minimises the impact of the risks it faces, thereby improving its ability to deliver priorities, improve outcomes for residents and mitigating legal action and financial claims against the Council and subsequent damage to its reputation.

RESOLVED that the amendments to the Strategic Risk Register and the actions to mitigate risks as set out in appendix 2 be approved.

34 REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

Members noted the Housing Ombudsman recommendations in relation to a finding of injustice in respect of a lack of repairs undertaken to a complainant's shower. It was noted that all the recommendations had been completed.

35 WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the Work Programme.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be approved.