

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the consultative meeting of Audit and Governance Committee held at Online via the Zoom app. on 23 September 2021

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 2.32 pm and ended at 3.45 pm

1 Public speaking

None

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 18 March 2021 were recommended for approval.

DECISION:

The recommendation was approved by a Senior Officer. The Senior Officer Decision Notice is listed above under Additional Documents.

3 Declarations on interest

Min 98. Section 106 and CIL update.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Clerk to 3 parish councils in receipt of S106 funding.

4 Matters of urgency

None

5 Confidential/exempt item(s)

None

6 Internal Audit Outturn Report 2020-21 - SWAP

Alastair Woodland from SWAP introduced the report that provided an update on the 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan as at July 2021.

During discussions the Committee agreed that an update from an officer from Housing in relation to the terms of the KPIs and the position of the Integrated Asset Management Contract was required for the next meeting.

Having received the report and noted the contents, members;

RECOMMENDED:

to note progress made in delivery of the 2020/21 internal audit plan and significant findings.

7 Internal Audit Annual Opinion Report 2020/21 - SWAP

The Internal Audit function played a central role in corporate governance by providing annual assurance to the Audit and Governance and Standards Committees, through looking over financial controls and checking on the probity of the organisation.

The Chair congratulated officers for getting to this stage in the audit, in what had been a challenging year.

Having received the report and noted the contents, members;

RECOMMENDED:

to note the Annual Opinion on the effectiveness of governance, risk and control in the delivery of EDDC Objectives.

8 **Internal Audit Plan Progress September 2021 (2021/22)**

SWAP provided an update on the 2021/22 Internal Audit Plan as at September 2021.

Having received the report and noted the contents, members;

RECOMMENDED:

to note progress made in delivery of the 2021/22 internal audit plan and findings Reported.

9 **Revenue and Capital Outturn Report 2020/21**

The Finance Manager informed the Committee of the financial outturn position for 2020/21.

Having received the report and noted the contents, members;

RECOMMENDED:

To note the Revenue and Capital Outturn position for 2020/21 and the recommendations to Cabinet on 14 July 2021.

10 **Risk Review Summer 2021 Part 1**

Risk information for the 2021/22 financial year was supplied to allow the Committee to monitor the risk status of Strategic and Operational Risks. This followed the full review of risks by responsible officers during May/June 2021.

In answer to a question from the Chair the Committee was informed that the Service Lead Growth, Development & Prosperity, would in future reviews provide a fuller update in terms of Cranbrook and relevant projects to how they were progressing.

Having received the report and noted the contents, members;

RECOMMENDED:

To note the current status of risks following the full risk review undertaken in May/June 2021.

11 **Partnership Review 2020/21**

Partnership information for the 2020/21 financial year until March 2021 allowed the Committee to monitor the status of the council's partnerships. This followed the year-end review of partnerships by responsible officers for 2020/21.

Having received the report and noted the contents, members;

RECOMMENDED:

To ensure that the Partnership Management Policy and Guidance was being followed and all partnership were being monitored.

12 **Section 106 and CIL update**

The Service Lead Strategic Planning and Development Management updated members on the progress in implementing the actions identified in the SWAP audit that was presented to members at their meeting on the 28th January. The audit report made two recommendations relating to appointing additional temporary staff resource to help get the Exacom system up to date and the updating of guidance on the participatory budgeting process. A further two recommendations were made in relation to the introduction of the public facing Exacom module and the use of Exacom for recovering outstanding payments. Officers had been working hard to progress these actions which had been largely completed within the required timescales.

The Committee thanked all officers for their hard work in resolving these previous issues.

Having received the report and noted the contents, members;

RECOMMENDED:

To note the progress that had been made to implement the actions of the S106 and CIL audit.

13 **External Audit Plan 2020/21 - Grant Thornton**

Jackson Murray from Grant Thornton provided an overview of the planned scope and timing of the statutory audit of the council for those charged with governance.

Having received the report and noted the contents, members;

RECOMMENDED:

To note the External Audit Plan 2020/21.

14 **Grant Fraud Assurance report**

The Service Lead Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services, Fraud & Compliance provided an update of the measures taken to protect against fraud & error for the administration of Covid-19 grants. Reporting to members was an action from the assurance report submitted to the Department for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Having received the report and noted the contents, members;

RECOMMENDED:

To note the information provided in the report and agree no recommendations were required.

15 **Informing the Audit Risk Assessment 2020/21**

The Strategic Lead Finance informed members of the areas of the auditor risk assessment that the Council's external auditors were required to make under auditing standards.

Having received the report and noted the contents, members;

RECOMMENDED:

To note the management responses to the questions raised in the Audit Risk Assessment which were consistent with the Committee's understanding.

16 **Audit and Governance Forward Plan**

Members noted the contents of the Committee Forward Plan for 2021/22.

Items to be considered at the November committee included:

- Audit Committee Progress update
- DBS Checks for Councillors - update from LGA
- Review of the Anti-Fraud Theft and Corruption Policy
- Review of the Anti-Bribery Policy
- Review of the Whistleblowing Policy
- Review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance
- RIPA update and policy review

Attendance List

Councillors present:

S Hawkins (Chair)
D Barrow
P Hayward
N Hookway
G Pook

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

P Arnott
S Jackson
J Rowland

Officers in attendance:

Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
Ed Freeman, Service Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management
Beth AC Garner
Libby Jarrett, Service Lead Revenues and Benefits
Jackson Murray
John Symes, Finance Manager
Georgina Teale
Mark Williams, Chief Executive
Alastair Woodland
Andrew Staines, Revenues, Fraud and Compliance Manager

Councillor apologies:

P Twiss

Chairman

Date: