

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS -

Meeting:	Audit Committee	
Date:	Tuesday, 17 November 2020	
Place:	Virtual (via Zoom)	
Members Present:	Councillors:	Teresa Callaghan (Chair), John Gardner, Sandra Barr, Stephen Booth, Laurie Chester, Lizzy Kelly, Graham Lawrence and Geoffrey Gibbs (Independent Member)

1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	<p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dave Cullen.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
2	MINUTES - 10 SEPTEMBER 2020	
	<p>It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 10 September 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>	
3	THE REDMOND REVIEW: INDEPENDENT REVIEW ON THE QUALITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORTING AND EXTERNAL AUDIT	
	<p>The Strategic Director (CF) presented a report updating Members on the Redmond Review and advising Members of any impending changes to future Statement of Accounts and External Audit.</p> <p>The views of the Council's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) were reported along with Ernst and Young's comments on the Redmond Report.</p> <p>The following issues were raised during the debate:</p>	

- It was noted that the current fee system was not adequate but this could mean fee increases which should be consistent across all councils;
- The deadline for publishing audited local authority accounts be revisited with a view to extending it to 30 September from 31 July each year. This was seen as a backward step by the CFO as it would impact on other functions provided by the Council such as budget monitoring and medium term planning and budget setting. However, the Audit companies welcomed the change.
- Whether there was scope to simplify the presentation of local authority accounts prior to communication of the information to council taxpayers/service users.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (1) That the outcome of the review is noted by the Audit Committee;
- (2) That the views of the Council's Chief Finance Officer (CFO) are noted;
- (3) That the views of the Council's External Auditors are noted.

4

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2020/21 - PROGRESS REPORT

In response to a question from the Chair, the SIAS Client Audit Manager agreed that the Community Safety Audit which had been intended for Quarter 1 would be added to the reserve list of audits for this year.

It was **RESOLVED**:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Internal Audit Progress Report be noted. 2. That the amendments to the Internal Audit Plan, as at 30 October 2020, be approved. 3. That the status of Critical and High Priority Recommendations be noted. 4. That the Community Safety Audit which had been intended for Quarter 1 would be added to the reserve list of audits for this year. 	
5	SECTION 106 (S106) ALLOCATION UPDATE	
	<p>The Assistant Director (Planning and Regulation) submitted a report providing Members with an update to how the S106 allocations could more effectively work.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p>	
6	PROGRESS OF CORPORATE AND SERVICE GOVERNANCE ACTIONS	
	<p>In response to a question from the Chair, the Corporate Performance & Improvement Officer (SB) agreed that an interim report would be submitted to the March meeting of the Committee which would include a mid year review of the Council's response to Covid-19 and a summary of decisions made by the Council during the Pandemic.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the progress to date of corporate governance actions to strengthen the Council's corporate governance arrangements, as identified in the Council's 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement reported to the Audit Committee on 9 	

	<p>June 2020, be noted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. That the progress to date of service governance actions identified by the 2019/20 Service Assurance reviews carried out at business unit level to strengthen the Council’s service governance arrangements reported to the Audit Committee on 9 June 2020, be noted. 3. that Officers submit an interim report to the March meeting of the Committee including a mid year review of the Council’s response to Covid-19 and a summary of decisions made by the Council during the Pandemic.
7	<p>MID YEAR REVIEW OF 2020/21 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY</p>
	<p>In response to a question regarding investments within the EU, Officers advised that although one fund in Luxembourg had closed the Council’s Treasury Management Advisors did not anticipate any further problems but that the situation would continue to be monitored.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Council be recommended to approve the 2020/21 Treasury Management Mid Year review. 2. That Council be recommended to approve the latest approved Countries for Investments list (Appendix D to the report). 3. That the updated authorised and operational borrowing limits be approved (Paragraph 4.4.7 in the report).

8	URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS	
	<p>The Chair asked for a progress update from Ernst &Young (EY) on the current Audit.</p> <p>Nick Harris (EY) advised that it had been agreed with the Council's Chief Finance Officer that in order to safeguard the Audit and due to the impact of the Pandemic and the significant increase in the work required, a further period of time was necessary to conclude the Audit. The Audit Committee/Statement of Accounts Committee meeting originally scheduled for 26 November would now meet in January 2021.</p>	
9	EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS	
	<p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1-7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006. 2. That Members considered the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determined that the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure. 	
10	PART II MINUTES - AUDIT COMMITTEE - 10 SEPTEMBER 2020	
	<p>It was RESOLVED that the Part II Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 10 September 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>	

11	STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER	
	It was RESOLVED : 1. That the latest Strategic Risk Register (set out in Appendices A1 – A3 to the report) be noted. 2. That developments on risk management issues be noted.	
12	URGENT PART II BUSINESS	
	None.	