

## **Audit Committee**

**Wednesday, 22 September 2021**

Present: Mr M Wilkinson (Chair)  
Councillors Mrs L Arkley OBE, G Bell, L Bell, D Cox,  
J Mole, J O'Shea and J Stirling

### **AC/16/21 Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of the Chair, Mr K Robinson

### **AC/17/21 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

There were no declarations or interest or dispensations reported.

### **AC/18/21 2020/21 Annual Financial Report**

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Committee with an update on the progress being made regarding the completion of the 2020/21 audited annual financial report.

Reference was made to the late circulation of the main report and its appendices and it was suggested that consideration of the report be deferred to allow sufficient time for the contents of the report to be considered.

The reasons for the delay in producing and circulating the report were explained in detail. It was also explained that further works needed to be undertaken by the External Auditor and officers following receipt of the outstanding information required to complete the audit.

**Resolved** that consideration of the report be deferred to a future meeting

### **AC/19/21 Annual Governance Statement**

Consideration was given to a report which advised the Committee of the outcome of the review of the Authority's system of internal control. It was explained that consideration had been given in the Annual Governance Statement to the impact of changes made as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly the suspension of face-to-face Authority meetings and the sudden move to home working by over 1000 officers of the Authority.

In addition as part of the national sector-led improvement programme the Authority had taken part in a Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge. A follow up visit, on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021, had been undertaken to review progress on the six corporate peer challenge recommendations and to carry out a Covid-19 recovery and renewal challenge. It was explained that the feedback from the LGA team had been extremely positive and four recommendations had been made to support the Authority's ongoing work on Covid-19 recovery and renewal.

It was explained that the Annual Governance Statement was attached to the Statement of Accounts once finalised.

**Resolved** that consideration of the report be deferred to the next meeting.

**AC/20/21 Exclusion Resolution**

**Resolved** that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and having applied a public interest test as defined in Part 2 of Schedule 12A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**AC/21/21 Conclusion of Shared Service Arrangement (Internal Audit and Risk Management)**

Consideration was given to a report which set out the upcoming changes to the service delivery arrangements for Internal Audit and Risk Management.

Clarification was provided in relation to several questions raised by members of the Committee on the contents of the report and the implications for the Authority. It was suggested that an update on the changes be provided to the March 2022 meeting.

**Resolved** that (1) the report be noted;  
(2) the contents of the report be used as part of the ongoing evaluation of the framework of governance, risk management and control; and  
(3) an update be provided at the March 2022 meeting