

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held in the Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn, on Tuesday, 10th October 2017 at 5.30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor A Grehan (Chairman)

Deputy Mayor
Councillor H Legge

Alderman S Martin

Councillors J Baird, R T Beckett, R B Bloomfield MBE,
S Carson, J Gallen, A Givan, A McIntyre, C Quinn and
N Trimble

OTHER MEMBERS:

Councillor O Gawith

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive
Director of Service Delivery (Non-Regulated)
Director of Service Support
Head of Sports Services
Head of Finance & IT (Interim)
Audit and Risk Manager
Performance Improvement Officer
Policy Officer
Member Services' Officer

Commencement of Meeting

The Chairman, Councillor A Grehan, extended a welcome to all present and proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

The Chairman asked that any Member entering or leaving the meeting alert her accordingly so that the Member Services' Officer might accurately reflect arrival and departure times in the minutes.

1. **Apologies**

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor T Morrow; Alderman W A Leathem; and Councillors A Girvin and M H Tolerton.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman invited Members to declare any Interests they might have in relation to the business of the meeting and reminded them of the requirement that they complete Declaration of Interest forms which had been provided at the meeting.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Minutes

It was proposed by Councillor J Baird, seconded by Councillor C Quinn and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held on the 13th June 2017 as adopted by the Council at its meeting held on the 27th June 2017 be confirmed and signed.

4. Report from Chief Executive

It was agreed that the report and recommendations of the Chief Executive be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below.

4.1 Report from Performance Improvement Officer

Members had been provided with a copy of a report prepared by the Performance Improvement Officer containing the following matters:-

4.1.1 Performance Improvement Objectives & Associated KPIS
1st Quarter Review

It was proposed by Councillor A Givan, seconded by Councillor N Trimble and agreed to recommend that the following reports be approved, copies thereof having been provided with the Performance Improvement Officer's report:-

- quarterly monitoring document providing an update on all Improvement Projects against their 2017/18 Performance Improvement Objectives;
- a report detailing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each service within the organisation, the report being in respect of the period April – June 2017 inclusive.

4.1.2 APSE Performance Networks Membership

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Councillor A Givan and agreed to recommend that the invoice from APSE in the sum of £3,500.00 (excluding VAT) by way of the Council's membership of the APSE Performance Networks for 2017/18 be paid.

4.1.3 APSE NI Executive Board

Members were advised that APSE NI was creating on a pilot basis, an Executive Board comprising one Elected Member and one Officer from each of the APSE NI

4.1.3 APSE NI Executive Board (Cont'd)

member councils. In her report the Performance Improvement Officer outlined the aims and objectives of the Executive Board which was anticipated to meet two – three times per year.

It was proposed by Councillor S Carson, seconded by Councillor R B Bloomfield and agreed to recommend that the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee and the Performance Improvement Officer be nominated to represent Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council on the Executive Board of APSE NI.

The Director of Support Services entered the meeting. (5.37 pm)

**4.1.4 APSE Performance Networks Seminar
7th & 8th December 2017
Hilton Hotel, Blackpool**

Members had been provided with details of the above seminar, the fee per delegate being £219.00, inclusive of accommodation on the 7th December 2017.

A dedicated NI session would have speakers from the Department for Communities and Derry City & Strabane District Council. Each NI member authority was being offered one free seminar place to include one night's free accommodation.

It was proposed by Councillor J Baird, seconded by Councillor R B Bloomfield and agreed that the Council's members on the APSE NI Executive Board be nominated to attend the above seminar, the Council to be responsible for approved expenditure over and above that provided by APSE.

Alderman S Martin entered the meeting (5.39 pm)

4.1.5 APSE Training Opportunities

Members had previously expressed concern at the apparent lack of training courses which APSE provided in Northern Ireland.

It was agreed to recommend that information from APSE in relation to training opportunities available over the coming months be noted, such courses including a number being held in Belfast.

4.1.6 NI Local Government Awards (NI) Update

Members were advised that – out of the Council's six applications - the following three were finalists in the 2017/2018 NI Local Government Awards:-

- “Best Local Authority Service Team” - Grounds Maintenance Unit;
- “Best Enterprise Initiative by a Council” - Invest Lisburn Castlereagh
- “Best Initiative by a Councillor/Councillor Group” - Heart City (Community Defibrillators)

4.1.6 NI Local Government Awards (NI) Update (Cont'd)

The winners would be announced at the Gala Awards Dinner following the NILGA Annual Conference at the La Mon Hotel on the 12th October 2017.

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor A Grehan, congratulated the Council's finalists on this achievement.

4.2 Report from Audit and Risk Manager

Members had been provided with a copy of a report prepared by the Audit and Risk Manager containing the following matters:-

4.2.1 Internal Audit Summary Reports

(a) Summary audit reports

Councillor J Gallen entered the meeting during discussion in relation to Aberdelghy Golf Course. (5.45 pm)

It was proposed by Councillor C Quinn, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed to recommend that the undernoted reports be agreed:-

- Corporate Services – Report on Year-End Stock at 31st March 2017
- Economic Development – Report on Year-End Stock at 31st March 2017
- Environmental Services – Report on Year-End Stock at 31st March 2017
- Leisure Services – Report on Year-End Stock at 31st March 2017
- Castlereagh Hills Golf Course – Satisfactory Assurance
- Aberdelghy Golf Course – Limited Assurance

In regard to the Castlereagh Hills Golf Course, the Head of Sports Services confirmed that issues raised in the Audit Report had been addressed.

In regard to the Aberdelghy Golf Course, the Director of Service Delivery (Non-Regulated) outlined the measures that were being taken to address a number of issues raised in the Audit Report. The Director agreed to report on the current percentage of Grounds Maintenance staff who were trained in "Emergency at Work First Aid" and undertook to ensure that all such staff were in receipt of such training.

(b) Capita Audit Report on Treasury Management

At this stage in the meeting, the Chairman of the Committee welcomed Mr Francis Hughes who had been appointed recently as the Interim Head of Finance & IT. Mr Hughes responded accordingly.

The Interim Head of Finance & IT confirmed that appropriate action and update of procedures had taken place in respect of Treasury Management. Should any matters remain outstanding they would be dealt with accordingly.

(b) Capita Audit Report on Treasury Management (Cont'd)

It was proposed by Councillor C Quinn, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed to recommend that the Satisfactory Assurance by Capita for Treasury Management be agreed.

(c) Capita Audit Report on Economic Development

In furtherance of a decision of Committee on the 11th April 2017, Members were provided with an amended Page 7 of the above report by Capita. The original Page 7 was also provided for information purposes. There being no further changes to the Audit Report, the level of assurance therefore remained unchanged at a Satisfactory Level.

It was proposed by Councillor C Quinn, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed to recommend that this amendment and the Satisfactory Level of Assurance be accepted.

(d) Update on other audit reports/work from Audit Plan

It was proposed by Councillor C Quinn, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed to recommend that progress reports in respect of ongoing audits as detailed in the report of the Audit and Risk Manager be agreed.

4.2.2 Risk Management – Corporate Risk Register

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed to recommend that:-

- the Updated Corporate Risk Register inclusive of new risks as detailed in the report of the Audit and Risk Manager be accepted;
- the role of Internal Audit in Risk Management processes (as recommended by the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors) be accepted.

A number of Members expressed concern that the Departmental risk assessments had not transferred into the Corporate level. The Chief Executive explained that the Departmental risks would have differed to those at a Corporate level.

In regard to risk associated with the General Data Protection Regulation due for implementation in May 2018, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Interim Head of Finance & IT was addressing this as a matter of urgency.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Chairman of the Committee would be kept informed of matters re risk management; that appropriate Officers would attend future meetings to discuss their areas of the Corporate Risk Register; that the Head of Service Delivery (Regulated) would attend the meeting in regard to waste management issues.

4.2.3 Risk Management – Brexit Report

Members had been provided with a report on Brexit as prepared by Audit and Risk. This report had been considered by the Corporate Management Team and the Committee was invited to do likewise. The content of the report was noted.

It was proposed by Councillor J Gallen, seconded by Councillor N Trimble and agreed that the issue of Brexit, its repercussions for the Council and the Council's way ahead in this regard be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Party Group Leaders Forum with a view to it being discussed at a future "Away Day".

4.2.4 Risk Management – Risk Officer

Members were advised that a new Risk Officer had been appointed as from the 2nd October 2017. The officer had worked within Environmental Services and – in order to accommodate their operations, Environmental Services had requested a phased introduction of the employee into Audit and Risk.

In order to accommodate the above request and to ensure adequate resources in Audit and Risk to deal with the work of the unit as had been listed in the report, Members were requested to extend the contract of the agency worker (who had been in post from the 30th June 2017) until the 31st March 2018.

It was proposed by Councillor S Carson, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre and agreed to recommend that the contract of the agency worker currently in post within Audit and Risk, be extended to the 31st March 2018 for the reasons as set out above.

It was proposed by Alderman S Martin, seconded by Councillor C Quinn and agreed that the manner by which public bodies and other Councils deal with staffing issues within Internal Audit and Risk Assessment be investigated and reported back to Committee, eg whether or not the Head of Audit should independently assess the staffing requirements of the unit and report that to the Committee for appropriate action.

4.2.5 Internal Audit Charter

Members had been provided with a copy of the revised Internal Audit Charter to take account of the revised Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) effective from the 1st April 2017.

It was proposed by Councillor J Baird, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre and agreed to recommend that the revised Internal Audit Charter be accepted and that it be signed off accordingly by the Chairman of the Committee and the Chief Executive.

4.2.6 Draft Report Letter to those Charged with Governance and its Recommendations included unto NIAO Tracker

Members were reminded that the Council's Report to Those Charged with Governance 2016-2017 had been presented by the Audit Office to the Committee at its special meeting held on the 25th September 2017.

Members were advised that recommendations from the Draft Report had been inserted into the Audit Recommendation Tracking package thus allowing the actions of Management to be monitored and thereby ensuring the implementation of all recommendations.

It was agreed to recommend that the summary of the recommendations be noted with Management responses still having to be obtained. An update on the Implementation of the recommendations would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

Particular mention was made with regard to an issue concerning lodgements which Officers had considered should not have been contained in the Letter to those Charged with Governance. The Head of Finance & IT (Interim) was taking this matter up with the NI Audit Office.

**4.2.7 NIAO Report and Summary
(Year Ended 31st March 2016 – for all Councils)**

It was agreed to recommend that the NIAO Report & Summary for all Councils for the Year ended the 31st March 2016 be noted.

4.3 Report from Policy Officer

Members had been provided with a copy of a report prepared by the Policy Officer containing the following matters:-

4.3.1 Corporate Plan

Members had been provided with a progress report in respect of the development of a new Corporate Plan for the Council from which it was noted that:-

- as a first step in gathering Member input, a workshop with Elected Members had been held on the 11th September 2017;
- the emerging plan would come back to Members at the end of November 2017, having already been the subject of a Corporate Managers Development Forum.
- the plan was likely to be presented for Members' approval in early December 2017.

4.3.2 Chief Executives' Forum
"Managing the Risk of Bribery & Corruption"
14th November 2017 (0800 hours – 1000 hours)
Malone House, Barnett Demesne, Belfast

Details of the above event were set out in the Policy Officer's report.

It was agreed to recommend that any Member wishing to attend the above event notify the Chief Executive's office accordingly so that a place might be reserved. The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor A Grehan, had already indicated her intention to attend.

The Policy Officer noted comments by Councillor J Gallen that details of this invitation should be circulated to all Members of Council.

5. Confidential Business

It was proposed by Alderman S Martin, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre and agreed that the report and recommendations of the Chief Executive be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below.

The matters contained in the confidential report would be dealt with "In Committee" due to containing information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of a crime.

"In Committee"

It was proposed by Councillor C Quinn, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre and agreed that the following matters be considered "in Committee", in the absence of members of the press and public being present.

5.1 Report from Audit & Risk Manager

Presented by Chief Executive.

5.1.1 NFI – Data Matching (update)

It was agreed to recommend that the update on NFI – Data Matching, be noted.

5.1.2 Investigation into alleged breaches of Council Procedures and Staff Code of Conduct at Moneyreagh Community Centre

It was agreed to recommend that information in relation to the above matter be noted.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Councillor N Trimble and agreed to come "Out of Committee" and normal business was resumed.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 General Data Protection Regulation due for implementation in May 2018
Councillor S Carson

Councillor S Carson raised a query about Elected Members' protection under the above Regulation and – indeed - if it did in fact apply to them in the carrying out of their Elected Member duties.

Alderman S Martin reported that the Data Commissioner had advised that - until the regulation was in Statute - it would be difficult to provide definitive guidance on this matter.

It was proposed by Councillor J Baird, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed that the Chief Executive have investigated, the level of risk to Elected Members in relation to Data Protection and the planned General Data Protection Regulation and that furthermore, a report on this matter be made to the appropriate Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.41 pm.

Mayor/Chairman