



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Governance & Audit Committee

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 9 November 2021 at 2.00 pm

Present: Paula O'Connor (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
P R Hood-Williams
S Pritchard
T M White

Councillor(s)

P M Black
O G James
J A Raynor

Councillor(s)

D W Helliwell
M B Lewis
L V Walton

Lay Member

Julie Davies

Officer(s)

Nick Davies	Principal Auditor
Marlyn Dickson	Strategic Change Programme Manager
Huw Evans	Head of Democratic Services
Jeff Fish	Corporate Fraud Team Investigator
Lucy Friday	Principal Officer - Transformation (Adult Services)
Adam Hill	Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources
David Howes	Director of Social Services
Simon Jones	Social Services Strategy and Performance Improvement Officer
Jonathon Rogers	Corporate Fraud Team Investigator
Richard Rowlands	Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager
Ben Smith	Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Helen St John	Interim Head of Integrated Services

Also Present

Jason Garcia Wales Audit Office

Apologies for Absence

C E Lloyd

43 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interests were declared:

- 1) Councillors P M Black & T M White declared a Personal Interest in Minute 47 "Internal Audit Recommendation Follow-Up Report – Quarter 2 2021/22".
- 2) Julie Davies declared a Personal Interest in Minute 48 "Fundamental Audits 2020/21 Recommendation Tracker".

44 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Governance & Audit Committee held on 12 October 2021 be approved as a correct record.

45 Internal Audit Annual Plan 2021/22 – Monitoring Report for the Period 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021.

Nick Davies, Principal Auditor presented an information report detailing the audits finalised and any other work undertaken by the Internal Audit Section during the period 1 July to 30 September 2021.

The Chair expressed concern that a full valuation of existing assets at the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery had not been carried out for 9 years.

The Principal Auditor stated that the issue had been highlighted in the report and that he would report to the Chair in due course. The Section 151 Officer also promised to raise the issue in order to get the matter addressed.

46 Response to the Community Equipment Stores & Community Alarms Service Audit Report 2021/22.

Helen St John, Head of Integrated Community Services & Lucy Friday, Principal Officer – Transformation – Adult Services presented an information report that provided an update and response to the 2021/22 internal audit of Community Equipment Stores and the Community Alarm Services.

The Officers outlined the work carried out and the work yet to be carried out in addressing the asset management of the stock at the stores. The work would see the asset stock being greatly reduced due to the age of much of the stock. They highlighted that since 2019, each item of stock bore an individual barcode.

The Committee asked a number of questions relating to training, stock control and performance management.

The Chair asked the Internal Audit Section to include a Review of the Performance Management Arrangements" to be included in their follow up review.

The Principal Auditor stated that the issue had been highlighted and that he would report to the Chair in due course. The Section 151 Officer also promised to raise the issue in order to get the matter addressed.

The Committee noted that it was a Joint Service between Swansea Council, Neath Port Talbot Council and the Health Board. The Committee asked for a breakdown

value of the split on the funding from those Organisations. The Officers agreed to feedback that information.

47 Internal Audit Recommendation Follow-Up Report - Quarter 2 2021/22.

Nick Davies, Principal Auditor presented an information report that provided the status of the recommendations made in those audits where the follow-up's had been undertaken in Quarter 2 2021/22, allowing the Committee to monitor the implementation of recommendations made by Internal Audit.

48 Fundamental Audits 2020/21 Recommendation Tracker.

Nick Davies, Principal Auditor presented an information report that provided a summary of the recommendations made following the fundamental audits in 2020/21 and identifies whether the agreed recommendations had been implemented.

Of the 36 recommendations, 25 had been fully implemented, 3 partly implemented, 5 not implemented and 3 were not yet due for implementation.

49 Internal Audit Section - Corporate Fraud Function Mid-Year Update Report for 2021/2022.

Jeff Fish, Corporate Fraud Team Investigator presented a report that provided a mid-year update on the work undertaken by the Corporate Fraud Function in 2021/22.

Committee discussed the following:

- Relative small size of the Team with limited resources.
- Their ability to conduct proactive work.
- Reassurance that fraud has occurred.

Resolved that the mid-year progress made against the Corporate Fraud Function Anti-Fraud Plan set out in Appendix A of the report and the outcomes achieved be noted.

50 Corporate Risk Overview 2021/22 – Quarter 2.

Richard Rowlands, Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager presented an information report that provided an overview of the status of Corporate Risk in the Council to provide assurance to the Committee that key risks were being managed in accordance with the Council's risk management policy and framework.

The following summarised the status of risks recorded in the Corporate Risk Register as at Quarter 2 2021/22:

- 6 Red status risks in the Corporate Risk Register as at the end of Q2 2021/22:
 - Risk ID 153. Safeguarding.
 - Risk ID 159. Financial Control: MTFP aspects of Sustainable Swansea.
 - Risk ID 222. Digital, Data and Cybersecurity.

- Risk ID 264. Covid-19.
 - Risk ID 274. Covid-19 Social Services.
 - Risk ID 296. Supply of construction materials.
- All of the Corporate risks were recorded as having been reviewed at least once during Quarter 2.
 - No Corporate risks were deactivated.
 - 1 risk was escalated to the Corporate Risk Register. Risk ID 274. Covid-19 Social Services.

51 (Directorate): Internal Control Environment 2021/22.

David Howes, Director of Social Services presented an information report that outlined the Social Services Directorate control environment, including risk management, were in place ensuring: functions were exercised effectively; there was economic, efficient and effective use of resources, and; effective governance to secure these arrangements.

The Director of Social Services provided a broad break down of the Portfolio under the following areas:

- Risk Management and Business Continuity.
- Performance Management and Key Performance Indicators.
- Planning and Decision Making.
- Budget and Resources Management.
- Fraud and Financial Impropriety.
- Compliance with Policies, Rules and Regulatory Requirements.
- Programme and Project Assurance.
- Internal Controls.
- Data Security.
- Partnership / Collaboration Governance.

He stated that 2021 had been a very challenging period for the Social Services Directorate due to Covid and its impact on the service. The service was already highly regulated and risk was a key factor in that regulation.

The Committee asked a number of questions of the Officer, who responded accordingly. Discussions included the Welsh National Software System and its initial stability problems.

The Chair thanked the David Howes for providing a detailed review.

52 Annual Report Corporate Safeguarding 2020-21.

Simon Jones, Social Services Strategy and Performance Improvements Officer presented an information report that outlined the latest annual report on the Council's corporate safeguarding arrangements, which reviews the work programme of the Corporate Safeguarding Group during 2020/21.

The report acts as a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy, which promotes a "safeguarding as everyone's business" approach. Safeguarding people from harm is a corporate priority in Swansea Council's Corporate Plan".

The Committee asked a number of questions of the Officer, who responded accordingly. Discussions included the:

- Compliance of Safeguarding Training.
- Need for a reminder to all Councillors and Officers reminded them of their corporate Safeguarding responsibilities.

The Head of Democratic Services stated that Councillor compliance relating to Safeguarding Training was at 100%. He also stated that Council at its meeting on 4 November 2021, resolved to ensure that Safeguarding remained in the mandatory training requirements for Councillors for the forthcoming term 2022-2027.

The Chair asked that Compliance of Safeguarding training be highlighted in the Risk Register.

53 Update on Swansea Achieving Better Together.

Adam Hill, Deputy Chief Executive and Marlyn Dickson, Strategic Change Programme Manager jointly presented an information report that provided an update on the Recovery and Transformation Plan – Swansea Achieving Better Together.

The Chair asked that the Deputy Chief Executive for an update on the Workforce Strategy and for a timeline for when it will be in place. The Deputy Chief Executive responded stating that it was currently out for consultation and that he would ensure that it was added as an agenda item to the February 2022 meeting.

54 Impact of the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020.

This item was deferred to the Governance and Audit Committee in February 2022.

55 Governance & Audit Committee Action Tracker Report.

The Governance & Audit Committee Action Tracker was reported for information.

56 Governance & Audit Committee Work Plan.

The Governance & Audit Committee Work Plan was reported for information.

The Chair asked that the work plan be updated with the following:

- The new areas of work of the Committee be incorporated into the work plan.
- The Deputy Chief Executive to provide an update report to a future meeting relating to the training requirements for members of the Governance & Audit Committee.

Minutes of the Governance & Audit Committee (09.11.2021)
Cont'd

The meeting ended at 4.03 pm

Chair