



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Governance & Audit Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday, 12 January 2022 at 2.00 pm

**Present:** Paula O'Connor (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

C Anderson  
T J Hennegan  
J W Jones  
S Pritchard

**Councillor(s)**

P M Black  
P R Hood-Williams  
M B Lewis  
L V Walton

**Councillor(s)**

D W Helliwell  
O G James  
C E Lloyd  
T M White

**Lay Member**

Julie Davies

**Officer(s)**

Nick Davies  
Adam Hill  
Spencer Martin  
Tracey McNulty  
Tracey Meredith  
Martin Nicholls  
Jeremy Parkhouse  
Ben Smith

Principal Auditor  
Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources  
Third Sector & Trust Fund Commissioning Co-ordinator  
Head of Cultural Services  
Chief Legal Officer / Monitoring Officer  
Director of Place  
Democratic Services Officer  
Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

J A Raynor

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**63 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: -

Julie Davies declared a personal interest in Minute No.65 - Response to the Grand Theatre Audit Report 2020/21.

**64 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Governance & Audit Committee held on 14 December 2021 be approved as a correct record.

Noted that Corporate Complaints would be discussed by the Service Improvement Scrutiny Panel in March 2022.

**65 Response to the Grand Theatre Audit Report 2020/21.**

Tracey McNulty, Head of Cultural Services presented a 'for information' report which provided an update and response to the 2020/21 Internal Audit of the Grand Theatre.

The report addressed the 1 High Risk (HR); 6 Medium Risks (MR) and all other reported risks were either Low Risk (LR) or Good Practice (GP). It was added that all recommendations were now completed and the updated Action Plan was provided at Appendix A.

It was confirmed that a new Grand Theatre Manager had been appointed and procedures were in place going forward.

The Committee commented very positively on the progress made and queried the progress made in respect of community / residents use of the theatre. It was confirmed that progress was being made within the current Welsh Government restrictions and that the theatre would be fully functional once the restrictions were eased.

The Chair added that Internal Audit would revisit the service and report to the Committee in their Quarter 4 Monitoring Report which would provide assurance that the improvements had been actioned properly. She added that good progress had been made during very difficult times for the theatre and thanked the Head of Cultural Services for her report.

**66 City and County of Swansea Administered Trust Funds.**

Spencer Martin, Partnerships and Commissioning Officer presented a report which informed the Committee of the status of City and County of Swansea Administered Trust Funds.

It was explained that the Authority has responsibility for the finances and administration of 20 external Trust Funds. The status of a number of the trusts was uncertain, as is the Trusteeship. The Trustees Panel would appear to have influence in part over a majority, but not all, of the Trusts.

It was added that the financial administration of the Trusts had been managed in accordance with good practice but for various reasons, many of the Trusts had been dormant for a number of years. The Trustees Panel received an update report on the status of the Trusts in November 2021, following an audit of trusts undertaken by Internal Audit and the details of the trusts managed were provided, including active trusts and charities, dormant trusts and trusts administered by external trustees.

The report also detailed the status of the trusts, the Charities Commission Welsh Revitalising Trust - Review of Dormant Trust Funds and the future work plan.

The Committee discussed the history / status of individual funds.

The Chair added that she had requested that the terms of reference of the Charities Commission work and the powers that the Council could be subjected to, be

circulated to the Committee. She further commented on the options available regarding dormant funds and stressed the need to retain the funds, which were not significant amount but were very important.

**Resolved** that: -

- 1) the updated list and status of Trusts be noted;
- 2) the terms of reference of the Charities Commission work be circulated to the Committee.

## **67 Update Report South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee.**

Martin Nicholls, Director of Place presented a 'for information' report which provided the Committee with an update on the current status and progress in relation to the new South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC).

It was outlined that following the previous Cabinet report approved on 20 May 2021, work had progressed to develop the principles informing the future CJC structure and governance. A further report was presented to Cabinet on 16 December 2021 which outlined the ways in which the CJC may be constituted in order to meet legislative requirements and this was provided at Appendix A.

It was added that the purpose of the report was to set out the current proposed arrangements, subject to the first formal meeting of the CJC on 13 January 2022. The report discussed the following: -

- Outline of the Work streams and relevant legislative requirements where applicable;
- Operational responsibilities and the proposed approach to appointment of statutory officers across the region and leads for each work stream;
- The governance of the CJC and any respective sub-committee's and the supporting officer framework;
- The proposed regional requirements Standards Committee and Scrutiny functions and also for the new Governance and Audit Committee, including details of its terms of reference;
- The key activities and milestones.

The Committee discussed the following: -

- Procedures surrounding Identifying / notifying conflicts of interest, the controls surrounding the procedures, particularly concerning conflicts relating to individual councils within the CJC and how the CJC as a separate body is subject to its own standards review;
- The 35% contribution being made by the Authority to the CJC budget and its levying powers which would be similar to other bodies the Authority contributes towards, e.g. Swansea Bay Port Health Authority;
- The additional CJC budgetary work required and how the CJC would be undertaking work the Authority would have had to undertake previously;

- How the roles and responsibilities of the CJC were agreed by the Leaders / Chief Executives of each council on an equitable basis which reflected other regional responsibilities of each authority;
- The ongoing discussions surrounding the role / voting functions of National Parks;
- The membership of the CJC Governance and Audit Committee and the potential impact upon Lay Members of individual councils.

The Chair highlighted the need to closely monitor the progress of the CJC and requested that regular summary progress updates be provided to the Committee.

**68 Governance & Audit Committee Action Tracker.**

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

The Chair requested that an up to date Work Plan be provided for the next meeting which included any of the new areas of work identified in the new terms of reference and a draft 2022-2023 Work Plan.

She also highlighted the need to organize Committee training from June 2022 onwards.

**69 Governance & Audit Committee Work Plan.**

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

The Committee discussed the following: -

- Mandatory / bespoke training for Committee members;
- Delivering training over a 12-month period and introducing quarterly sessions;
- Utilising the details contained in the Additional Work Programme provided at Appendix 4.

Adam Hill, Deputy Chief Executive highlighted that it would be difficult to train the new members of the Committee by June 2022 and proposed that the Draft Governance and Audit Committee Training Programme presented to the Committee in July 2021, be revisited and discussed further.

He also highlighted the importance of mentoring, particularly for new Councillors / Lay Members of the Committee and having individuals they can approach for guidance.

The meeting ended at 2.50 pm

**Chair**