

**Minutes of the Meeting of the AUDIT, CRIME & DISORDER AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE held on 3 February 2022**

PRESENT -

Councillor Steve Bridger (Chair); Councillor Nigel Collin (Vice-Chair); Councillors Arthur Abdulin, Liz Frost, Rob Geleit, David Gulland, Jan Mason (as nominated substitute for Councillor Previn Jagutpal) and Phil Neale

In Attendance: Neil Pitman (Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership) (Southern Internal Audit Partnership (Internal Auditor)) (Items 28 - 31 only) and Natalie Jerams (Assistant Head of Partnership) (Southern Internal Audit Partnership (Internal Auditor)) (Items 28 - 31 only)

Absent: Councillor Previn Jagutpal, Councillor Alan Sursham and Councillor Chris Webb

Officers present: Gillian McTaggart (Head of Corporate Assurance), Brendan Bradley (Head of Finance), Sue Emmons (Chief Accountant), Will Mace (Business Assurance Manager) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

28 QUESTION TIME

No questions were asked or had been submitted by members of the public.

29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in relation to items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

30 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 November 2021 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

31 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report summarising progress against the Internal Audit Plan.

The report was introduced by the Internal Auditor.

The following matters were considered by the Committee:

- **Rating of actions.** Following a question from a Member, the Internal Auditor informed the Committee that the priority rating of actions was assigned by Council officers and signed off by the Council's senior management. The priority rating would not be amended if the implementation of the action became overdue, but the action would be identified in the Auditor's report.
- **Implementation of internal Audit Plan.** Following a question from a Member, the Head of Corporate Assurance informed the Committee that the Council had sufficient internal resource to enable the implementation of the Internal Audit Plan.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved:

- (1) **To receive the internal audit progress report from Southern Internal Audit Partnership attached at Appendix 1 to the report.**

32 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report setting out progress on the actions contained in the Council's Annual Governance Statement. 2020-2021.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Receive the update on progress in implementing the Action Plan contained within the Annual Governance Statement 2020-21.**

33 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 3

The Committee received a report presenting the forecast revenue outturn position for the current financial year 2021/22, as at Quarter 3 (31 December).

The following matters were considered:

- **Budget for planning appeals.** Following a question from a Member, the Head of Finance informed the Committee that the planning appeal budget allocation agreed by the Strategy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 27 January 2022 would be implemented through the Council's budget virement policies.
- **Financial recovery from Covid-19.** Following a question from a Member, the Head of Finance informed the Committee that a £600,000 contingency for the impact of Covid-19 was budgeted for 2022-23 and that strategy for managing the permanent impact of Covid-19 would be developed in advance of the budget setting process for 2023-24.
- **Organisation restructure.** Following a question from a Member, the Head of Finance informed the Committee that the organisational restructure undertaken in 2021 was costed to be budget neutral. The

Chair provided the Committee with an update on the number of current staff vacancies.

- **Pension contributions.** Following a question from a Member, the Head of Finance informed the Committee of the processes followed by the Council to validate the cost of 'compensatory added years'. This included checking the names of claimants against historic records and challenging the pension administrator on the controls it had in place.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Receive the revenue budget monitoring report, which projects a £2.38m budget deficit for 2021/22, along with provisional funding for the deficit;**
- (2) **Note that the provisional outturn position will be reported back to this Committee in July.**

34 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 3

The Committee received a report presenting the capital monitoring position at Quarter 3 for the current financial year 2021/22.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Investment of CIL finds.** Following a question from a Member, the Chief Accountant informed the Committee that Community Infrastructure Levy funds held by the Council were invested in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.
- b) **Joint Infrastructure Group.** The Committee noted that the Joint Infrastructure Group had not met for an extended period of time and requested officers to look into this matter.
- c) **Updates on CIL projects.** Members requested that future reports to the Committee should provide more detailed updates on CIL project progress where possible. The Chief Accountant informed the Committee that this was due to a lag created by publication requirements, but that she would look at ways in which this could be reduced for future reports.
- d) **Members' communications.** A Member asked whether Stage 2 of the Microsoft 365 project referenced on page 63 of the agenda would address an issue that had been identified with regard to access to the weekly Members communication. It was noted that a response to this query would be provided by officers following the meeting.
- e) **Hogsmill streams.** A Member asked whether works to the Hogs mill streams detailed on page 64 of the agenda also included the Bonesgate.

It was noted that a response would be provided by officers following the meeting.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Receive the capital monitoring position at Quarter 3, as set out in the report;**
- (2) Note the progress of capital projects as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.**

35 WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

The Committee received a report presenting the work programme for 2021/22.

The following matter was considered:

- **Request for post implementation review of Council restructure.** The Committee noted that the Scrutiny officer had received a request for the Committee to consider a review of the Council wide staffing restructure, to realign resources, which was implemented on 1 September 2021. The Committee considered that further detail on the nature of the requested review was required prior to making a decision on whether it would be added to the work plan and asked officers to seek this information for consideration at the next meeting.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note and agree the on-going work programme for 2021/22 attached at Appendix 1 to the report.**
- (2) Request officers to seek further information on the nature of the requested post implementation review of the Council restructure, for consideration at the Committee's next meeting.**

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.48 pm

COUNCILLOR STEVE BRIDGER (CHAIR)