

**Minutes of the Meeting of the AUDIT, CRIME & DISORDER AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE held on 19 April 2018**

PRESENT -

Councillor David Reeve (Chairman); Councillor Steve Bridger (Vice-Chairman); Councillors George Crawford, Tony Axelrod (as nominated substitute for Councillor Humphrey Reynolds), Rob Geleit, Jan Mason, Jean Steer, Peter Webb and Clive Woodbridge

In Attendance: Mike Cheetham (Partner) (RSM Risk Assurance (Internal Auditor)) (Item 30-34 only)

Absent: Councillor Alex Clarke and Councillor Humphrey Reynolds

Officers present: Damian Roberts (Chief Operating Officer), Brendan Bradley (Chief Accountant) (Item 30-35 only), Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Gillian McTaggart (Head of Corporate Governance), Margaret Jones (Scrutiny Officer) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer)

30 QUESTION TIME

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

31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In the interests of openness and transparency, the following declaration was made by a member of the Committee in respect of an item on the agenda:

Review of the Community and Wellbeing Services

Councillor Jean Steer, Other Interest: User of Community and Wellbeing Centre.

32 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 February 2018 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

33 INTERNAL AUDIT MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received a report summarising progress against the audit plan for 2017/18. The following matters were considered:

- a) **Finalised reports.** The Committee noted that four reports had been finalised by the Internal Auditor. These were: Homelessness Business Process Review, Planning Income, Corporate Governance and Payroll.
- b) **Audit of Homelessness Business Process Review - Contact Centre response to housing enquiries.** The Committee was informed that the Council's Contact Centre would be able to resolve a number of high level/routine housing enquiries made by customers. Enquiries that were more detailed or complex would be dealt with by the Council's Housing Officers.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Agreed to receive the internal audit progress report for 2017/18.

34 INTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY 2018/19

The Committee received a report introducing an updated internal audit strategy for 2018/19. The following matters were considered.

- a) **Internal Audit Contract.** The Committee noted that 2018/19 was the final year of the current internal audit contract and that assignments listed for future years were projected, but not confirmed.
- b) **Issues to consider when approving the internal audit strategy.** The Committee noted the questions detailed in page 7 of the Internal Auditor's Strategy, which it was asked to consider whilst approving the Internal Audit Strategy. The Committee did not identify any further areas for inclusion within the Strategy, and noted that the Strategy could be amended within the year if necessary.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Agreed to endorse the Strategy for Internal Audit for 2018/19 as prepared by RSM.

The Committee expressed its thanks to the Internal Auditor for his work over the past year.

35 EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN FOR 2017/18

The Committee received a report setting out the approach being taken by the Council's External Auditor (Grant Thornton) to the audit of the accounts for 2017/18. The following matters were considered:

- a) **Appointment of External Auditor.** The Committee noted that the External Auditor for the Council was appointed by Public Sector Audit Appointments, a national body. There were 5 years (2018/19 to 2022/23) remaining on the External Auditor's contract.

- b) **External audit of Epsom & Ewell Property Investment Company (EEPIC).** The Committee noted that the Council's subsidiary property investment company EEPIC had a separate external auditor, Williams & Co. Elements of EEPIC's final accounts would also be inspected by Grant Thornton in the course of its duties for the Council.
- c) **Clarification of funding of EEPIC.** Following a question from the Chairman, the Chief Accountant informed the Committee that the information on page 11 of the External Auditor's report regarding the Council's funding of EEPIC could be clarified. The Chief Accountant clarified the Auditor's statement by informing the Committee that the Council had funded the investment in the wholly owned Company through its Commercial Property Acquisition Fund, which had been established and earmarked for this specific purpose by full Council in September 2017. The fund was typically backed by external borrowing, although the Council could use any surplus cashflows to reduce the actual level of borrowing as part of its Treasury Management Strategy. There was no impact on the Council's strategic earmarked reserves.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Agreed to endorse the External Audit Plan.

36 REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING SERVICES

The Committee received a report presenting a review of the implementation of recommendations from the Scrutiny review of Routecall undertaken in 2015. The following matters were considered:

- a) **Success of scrutiny review recommendations.** The Committee noted the improvements to the Council's services which had been implemented as a result of the recommendations of the scrutiny review, and expressed its congratulations and thanks to the Head of Operational Services and his team for their work to achieve this.
- b) **Cashless payments for Transport from Home services.** The Head of Operational Services informed the Committee that approximately 90% of excursion bookings were now paid for via a cashless method. A move to 100% cashless transactions for all Transport from Home services was likely to take a few more years to achieve, to ensure that vulnerable users without access to cashless payment methods were not restricted from using the services.
- c) **Provision of services to customers outside the Borough.** In response to a question from a Member of the Committee, the Head of Operational Services informed the meeting that the Meals at Home service was used by some customers located outside the Borough, and that this helped to offset its operational costs. Confirmation of whether any non-borough residents used the Transport from Home service would be provided to members of the Committee following the meeting.

- d) **Integration with Adult Social Care and Health Services.** The Chief Operating Officer informed the Committee that local adult social care services (provided by Surrey County Council) and health services (provided by the NHS through clinical commissioning groups) were not currently engaged with the Wellbeing Daycare+ services provided by the Council. Similar issues were encountered by other Boroughs and Districts across the County.

The Committee noted the value and benefits which the Council's Wellbeing Daycare+ services provided in terms of reducing social isolation and 'bed-blocking' and was informed by the Chief Operating Officer that both he and the Chief Executive would take this matter forward with social care and health care providers.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Noted the progress made on implementing the recommendations contained within the review of the Routecall service.

The Committee expressed its thanks to all of the staff involved in implementing the recommendations of the review, and requested that its appreciation of their efforts be included within the Minutes of the meeting.

37 ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a report presenting its Annual Report for 2017/18. The following matter was considered:

- a) **Reference to the improvements and efficiencies gained as a result of the scrutiny review of Routecall.** The Committee requested that the success of the Scrutiny review of the Routecall Service and its thanks to the Head of Operational Services and his team be included within its Annual Report.

Following this consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Approved the Annual Report 2017/18 attached at Annexe 1 to the report.
- (2) Authorised the Scrutiny Officer in consultation with the Chairman to make appropriate amendments or additions to the Annual Report 2017/18 as a result of business transacted at this meeting, including an expanded reference to the Scrutiny review of Routecall.

38 VOTE OF THANKS

The Committee passed a vote of thanks to the Chairman for his work on its behalf over the past year. The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Committee and officers for their support over the same period.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.30 pm

COUNCILLOR DAVID REEVE (CHAIRMAN)