

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 25 June 2013

Present: Councillor Len Horwood (Chairman)
Independent Members: Hedges, Lewis and Segall Jones
Town/Parish Council Members: Councillors Mrs Codd and Mackenzie
Borough Members: Councillors Hall, Poile, Rook, Scott and Stanyer

Officers in Attendance: Lee Colyer (Head of Finance & Governance (Section 151 Officer)), Ian Cumberworth (Internal Audit Manager), Paul Cummins (Legal Services Manager/Monitoring Officer), Jane Fineman (Financial Services Manager), Holly Goring (Policy, Performance & Partnerships Manager), Jonathan MacDonald (Director of Development and Environment), Wendy Newton-May (Democratic Services Officer), Brian Parsons (Head of Audit Partnership, Mid Kent Audit), Richard Smith (Audit Manager, Grant Thornton), Gary Stevenson (Head of Environment & Street Scene) and Darren Wells (Director, Grant Thornton)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillors Price, Webb and Weeden

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

AG1/13 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ward.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

AG2/13 No declarations of interest were received.

NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK (IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 8):

AG3/13 Councillor Weeden was in attendance and had requested to speak on item number 6(B) – Constitutional Review Working Party – Feedback from meeting dated 6 June 2013.

Councillor Price attended the meeting and requested to speak on item 10(A) – Internal Audit Report – Royal Victoria Place.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE DATED 25 MARCH 2013

AG4/13 The minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee dated 25 March 2013 were submitted.

Councillor Poile referred to minute reference AG38/12 (Tunbridge Wells Regeneration Company Update) and advised that, following that meeting, he had still not received the further information he had requested from Mr Candlin. Mr Colyer agreed to speak to Mr Candlin to rectify this.

Mr Hedges advised that he had been marked as being present at the meeting, when he was in fact absent. In addition several of the 'other members in attendance' names had been repeated. It was agreed that these errors would be corrected.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the above amendments, the minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee dated 25 March 2013 be approved as a correct record.

STRATEGIC COMPASS MONITORING REPORT: END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE (2012-13)

AG5/13 Ms Goring presented a report which informed members of the Council's performance against the three internal sections of the Strategic Compass 2012-2013, namely Our Customers, Our People and Providing Value.

Members noted that there were 33 work programmes assigned to these three sections, with a total of 28 actions to measure progress against the work programmes. Of these, Ms Goring advised that 25 actions were complete and three had experienced delay. Attached at Appendix B to the report were details of the projects, including the reasons for any delays.

With regard to the project relating to developing a business plan for the crematorium, members were advised that, although work had been done to progress this, it was behind its original schedule. Ms Goring explained that work had commenced and the Registrar was supporting an Overview and Scrutiny Working Group that had been tasked with identifying opportunities to enhance the service, whereby a report was scheduled for August 2013.

Councillor Horwood asked when the project would be completed and Ms Goring agreed to find out this information and update members accordingly.

(NOTE: following the meeting the following timeline had been produced for members' information –

- The Overview & Scrutiny Working Group were due to report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 August 2013.
- The Committee recommendations would be presented to Cabinet on 12 September 2013.
- Dependent on the decision made by Cabinet in September, it was anticipated that the Business Plan would be presented to Cabinet on 24 October 2013.)

Attached at Appendix C to the report was the Council's key work programmes planned for delivery in 2013-2014 for members' information.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Council's performance against the three sections of the Strategic Compass (our customers, our people and providing value) at the end of the financial year (2012-13) be noted; and
- 2) That the Council's key work programmes planned for delivery in 2013-14 against these three sections of the Strategic Compass be noted.

UPDATE ON MEMBER COMPLAINTS

AG6/13 Mr Cummins advised that four complaints had been received under the Code of Conduct since the last meeting of the Committee.

He advised that the first complaint had involved two councillors, both of whom had agreed to undertake mediation and this had been undertaken by West Kent Mediation Service, free of charge. Members noted that the feedback received following the mediation had indicated that this process had been successful and the issues had been resolved.

Members were informed that the second complaint had involved an officer against a councillor. An Investigator had been appointed but the case had not progressed and was likely to be closed as the Investigator had been unable to contact the officer involved.

Mr Cummins advised that he would shortly be producing a Decision Notice regarding the third complaint, which involved a member of the public and a councillor. He explained that this complaint would not be pursued as it fell outside the remit of the Code of Conduct.

It was noted that the fourth complaint, made by a member of public against a councillor, had only recently been submitted and therefore was currently still being assessed.

Mr Segall Jones expressed concern regarding the second complaint and queried whether a more pro-active approach should be taken in this instance before the case was closed. Mr Cummins explained that the officer involved had left the particular Council and not responded to subsequent correspondence.

Parish Councillor Mackenzie considered this to be an example of where the former Standards Committee model, through the Sub-Committee meetings, could have provided re-assurance to members that the complaints process was robust, fair and just. He added that the Audit and Governance Committee lacked the 'standards' element and closer scrutiny was required.

Mr Cummins explained that under the previous standards regime the legislation allowed for public hearings and meetings, however this no longer applied and now information about complaints had to be processed under the Data Protection Act meaning such information could not be disclosed. He further advised that breaches of the Data Protection Act could result in hefty fines for the Council. Councillor Horwood added that Mr Cummins would be happy to discuss any of the complaints further with any member of the Committee confidentially.

Councillor Hall stated that if the Data Protection laws prohibited disclosure then it was not for this Committee to investigate the matter. However Mr Segall Jones clarified that his concern was that the Committee required reassurance that all complaints were being dealt with in the correct manner.

RESOLVED – That the oral update on complaints be noted.

CONSTITUTION REVIEW WORKING PARTY - FEEDBACK FROM MEETING DATED 6 JUNE 2013

AG7/13 Mr Cummins provided members with details of the discussion that took place at the Constitution Review Working Party (CRWP) at its meeting on 6 June 2013.

He advised that the main topic considered was a proposal to write a new constitution using a free piece of software that was available from Dickenson Dees Solicitors, who had been commissioned by ACSeS to assist local authorities.

The CRWP had agreed that during the summer months it would review each of the re-drafted sections and once this process had been completed the document would be sent to all members and relevant officers for a six week consultation period. The completed re-draft would then be presented to this Committee, before being submitted to full Council in December for final approval.

Mr Cummins advised that a review of the Council's petition scheme was also discussed at the CRWP meeting. He explained that legislation relating to the original petition scheme had since been repealed by the Localism Act and therefore it would be appropriate for the scheme to be reviewed. The CRWP had agreed that Mr Cummins should circulate the existing petition scheme to all members asking for their comments and Councillors Poile and Mrs Mayhew would discuss this with their respective political groups.

The changes to the Planning Committee were also considered by the CRWP and it was agreed that the speaking arrangements be examined when the operation of the Planning Committee was reviewed in March 2014 by this Committee.

In addition, the CRWP was asked to examine the current operation of the outside body appointments and Mr Cummins was tasked with producing a set of procedures for the working party to consider at a future meeting.

With regard to the petition scheme, Mr Lewis (Chairman of the CRWP) added that an increase in the usage of social media had resulted in many more people signing petitions, even if they did not reside or work in the area. He made the point that more people signed petitions than actually voted in an election. He considered it important to have a review of the way in which the Council managed its petitions.

Councillor Weeden was then invited to speak on this item. He expressed his concern at the recent revision made to the speaking rules at meetings of the Planning Committee whereby the Chairman dis-allowed members to question the registered public speakers, and instead direct their questions to the officers.

Councillor Weeden referred to recommendation (7) of minute AG35/12 which stated:

“That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, the two current Area Committee Chairs and the Head of Planning Services to make such further minor revisions to the Constitution as are necessary.”

Councillor Weeden felt that not allowing questioning of speakers was not a ‘minor amendment’ and that to make such a restriction was unacceptable, as it was essential for members to have all the relevant facts available to them.

He added that this change to the speaking rules had been led by the officers and a full report should be considered by the Audit and Governance Committee. Councillor Weeden stated that a strong chairman should be able to manage the members' questioning of speakers and therefore it was unnecessary to completely ban it.

In addition, Councillor Weeden asked that sub-headings be used on future agendas containing feedback from the CRWP in order that members could identify the issues that had been considered by the Working Party.

In response to Councillor Weeden's concern Mr Cummins advised that the Constitution had not been amended to restrict questioning of public speakers. However, his advice was that the Chairman had discretion as to whether he allowed this practice to take place at meetings. At the time both the Chairmen of the Eastern Area Planning Committee and Western Area Planning Committee had decided to use their discretion to not allow questioning of public speakers.

With regard to the Council's petition scheme, Councillor Hall welcomed the fact that social media had increased the younger generation's engagement in signing petitions. He considered it important that constituents got involved with local matters, but suggested that the threshold on the number of signatories required before any action was taken should remain at a sensible level. He urged officers to examine successful schemes in other local authorities to identify best practice.

Parish Councillor Mackenzie queried whether the amount of time that the new revised Constitution was expected to take to complete was realistic, when the CRWP had spent many years updating and reviewing the existing document. He considered that this was a hugely ambitious project to undertake. Mr Cummins explained that the software provided each local authority with model wording, derived mainly from legislation. This could then be amended so it was unique to each council. In addition any legislative updates would be provided by Dickenson Dees Solicitor which would ensure that the Constitution was up to date.

RESOLVED – That the oral update from the CRWP be noted.

BENEFIT FRAUD PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

AG8/13 Mrs Daly presented a report updating members on the achievement of the Benefit Fraud Investigation Service.

She advised that during the last quarter of 2012/13 the staffing within the Benefit Fraud and Compliance Team had been reduced to 2.6 fte investigators due to a resignation and maternity leave.

Members noted that in 2012/13 381 referrals had been received and of these 247 were raised as investigations. There had been eight prosecutions, five administrative penalties and three cautions for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. At the end of the financial year there were also 14 further identified prosecutions working their way through the legal system.

Mrs Daly advised that the total overpayments found valued £170,308.19. The total face value of weekly benefit that ceased as a result of these cases was £3176.18.

It was expected that, if the implementation ran smoothly, the Welfare Reform Act and introduction of Universal Credit would impact on the Fraud Investigation Team from 2014. The Department for Work & Pensions would be responsible for the administration of the new Universal Credit and the investigation of benefit fraud would transfer from the Council to a new Single Fraud Investigation Service that would also be operated by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Mrs Daly informed the Committee that a business case was being prepared for MKIP to consider the feasibility of extending the fraud shared service to include Swale Borough Council, which would provide more resilience and experience.

Mr Lewis commented that he considered 2.6 fte members of staff to be an extraordinary low number, considering that the Council paid out £40 million in housing and council tax benefit. Mrs Daly confirmed that the service was short staffed, however if the partnership was extended it would ensure that there were sufficient staff to police the scheme.

In response to a question from Parish Councillor Mackenzie, Mrs Daly explained that the police referral model of scoring was used to determine which referral cases were acted upon. However, no action would be taken by the Fraud Investigation Team for cases of less than £600. It was noted that Swale Borough Council acted upon all cases.

Parish Councillor Mackenzie questioned why this Council would form a partnership with Swale if they operated so differently and was told that both councils' policies, practices and casework would be examined to establish the most efficient and effectively working methods – which would then be adopted by all councils within the partnership.

Parish Councillor Mackenzie considered that the budget for this service was unacceptable and stated that further investment in this area would be of financial benefit to the Council. Mr Colyer agreed to feedback this point to MKIP.

Councillor Scott expressed concern that an informed decision could not be made on investment due to an absence of data regarding how much fraud was being carried out. Mrs Daly advised that an investment in software would result in more sophisticated techniques being used to measure this. Mr Colyer added that when Swale joined the partnership it would be easier for the Council to access improved software. He mentioned that it was also important to increase the Fraud Team's profile to act as a deterrent.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report be noted; and
- (2) That members be updated as soon as there are any developments around the Single Fraud Investigation Service.

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012/2013

AG9/13 Mr Cumberworth presented the draft Annual Report for the Audit and Governance Committee 2012/2013, which had been circulated to members of the Committee on 6 June for their comments and feedback.

It was proposed to present the Annual Report to full Council at its meeting on 24 July 2013, to provide assurance that the Committee had discharged its responsibilities to oversee the governance arrangements within the authority.

Parish Councillor Mackenzie referred to the Foreword by the Chairman. He stated that he did not feel that the Committee addressed the extra responsibilities of the former Standards Committee. He mentioned an email he had sent to the Chairman of the Committee in April regarding his reservations that the newly created Committee appeared to have lowered the profile of ethical governance and standards of member conduct issues.

Parish Councillor Mackenzie had asked that this issue be debated further, but noted it was not an agenda item for this meeting.

Councillor Horwood advised that a review of the operation of the Committee was scheduled for the meeting dated 24 September and all members would be given the opportunity to comment at that stage. In response to a question from Mr Segall Jones it was confirmed that the review would include a discussion on the membership of the Committee.

Parish Councillor Mackenzie asked that his email addressed to Councillor Horwood be circulated to all members of the Committee prior to the next meeting, which explained his points in more detail. This was agreed by Councillor Horwood.

Members' attention was drawn to the updated position regarding the previous recommendations made by the Local Government Improvement and Development Agency, which undertook a review on the then Audit Committee. Parish Councillor Mrs Codd referred to an action point which required a pro-forma agenda to be produced four weeks prior to the meeting and distributed to members of the Committee. She commented that this was not the current practice and Mr Colyer explained that, although this had been a recommendation, it had been agreed by the Chairman that it not be taken forward, as the work programme was an adequate tool to give members the opportunity to raise items for future agendas.

RESOLVED - That the Audit and Governance Committee's Annual Report be agreed and submitted to full Council on 24 July 2013.

INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2012/2013

AG10/13 Mr Parsons presented a report which considered the work of the Internal Audit Team over the financial year 2012/13, provided the Committee with an opinion in relation to the Council's control environment, in the context of the Annual Governance Statement, and allowed the Committee to review and provide comment on the effectiveness of Internal Audit.

The report considered that Internal Audit was organisationally independent and fully met the necessary standard for independence and objectivity. It was Mr Parsons' opinion that substantial reliance could be placed on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control.

Members were advised that seventeen significant audit projects had been completed between April 2012 and March 2013 and the details of these were found in Appendix B to the report. It was noted that the work of the Internal Audit Team had established that for the majority (64%) of the areas examined, satisfactory controls were in place at the time of the original audit. However, where weaknesses had been identified the appropriate Head of Service had since agreed the action to be taken to rectify those weaknesses.

Mr Parsons informed the Committee that eleven follow-ups took place during 2012/13, shown at Appendix D to the report

In the context of the Annual Governance Statement, Mr Parsons highlighted two audit reports which had corporate or significant implications where only limited control assurance was found to be in place at the end of the financial year. Both reports were completed in the latter part of the financial year and had not yet been followed-up, namely 'Compliance with Contract Procedure Rules' and 'Royal Victoria Place'.

Mr Hedges expressed his concern that in practice the number of projects completed during 2012/13 was 17, which was 77% of the revised target of 22. He questioned whether the high levels of sickness among the audit staff had been remedied.

In response, Mr Parsons stated that staff sickness within a small team had affected progress with certain projects, however he reassured the Committee that the team was working hard to improve performance.

Councillor Horwood queried why the Partnership was not more robust and resilient to issues such as staff sickness. Mr Parsons explained that although the Partnership shared ideas, best practice and resources, such as IT software, the teams were fixed to each authority. However, the possibility of having one large team would be investigated further.

Councillor Hall mentioned that this had been a reoccurring theme within the organisation over the past five years. He stated that there was no critical mass in the organisation to ensure effective performance and suggested that a unitary authority in Kent could be the way forward to ensure adequate resources were available.

Councillor Stanyer expressed concern that in-house skills were being lost within Partnerships.

The external auditor, Mr Wells, was then invited to comment on the Internal Audit Team's performance over the year. He advised that the percentage of reports completed was low when compared to some other local authorities but the key aspect was whether the reports that were completed were high priority.

Both Parish Councillor Mackenzie and Mr Segall Jones felt that 36% of areas examined not having satisfactory controls in place was a substantial number. In light of this, Mr Segall Jones queried how the Head of Audit Partnership justified his opinion that “substantial reliance can be placed on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council’s framework of governance, risk management and control”.

Mr Parsons replied that in his experience it was not unusual to find that a third of the areas examined by audit needed controls to be improved at the time that the audit was carried out. The important aspect was the commitment of management to make the necessary improvements and at this Council the managers were keen to implement improvements. He mentioned that it was also the case that satisfactory controls were in place for all of the main financial systems, which provided substantial assurance in terms of financial management and control. In terms of opinion, Mr Parsons said that this was based on the Council’s overall arrangements including the actions taken to improve controls.

Mr Parsons reassured the Committee that work was prioritised, particularly the key financial systems. He explained that the entire Audit Plan was risk based and could be adjusted during the year. In response to a question from Mr Lewis, Mr Parsons advised that external audit had access to all the internal audit reports; they were not provided to the external auditors as a matter of course but were provided when requested.

Mr Parsons informed the Committee that when weaknesses had been identified the senior management accepted the findings and agreed actions to rectify them. This then led to improvements within the Council. Mr Colyer explained that Internal Audit worked on behalf of the Senior Management Team and it was not unusual for them to identify areas that required improvement. He added that this was healthy for the organisation.

Mr Lewis referred to the high quality of Internal Audit reports and congratulated the team on its performance.

Parish Councillor Mackenzie referred to the customer surveys that were issued to clients following each internal audit to assess satisfaction within the audit service. He asked for sight of these and Mr Parsons agreed to circulate this information after the meeting.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Head of Audit Partnership’s opinion that substantial reliance can be placed on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council’s framework of governance, risk management and control be noted;
- (2) That the results of the work of the Internal Audit Team over the period April 2012 to March 2013, as shown in Appendix B of the report be noted and that this is the prime evidence source for the Head of Internal Audit’s opinion;
- (3) That the summary of the work and the other matters referred to in the report which supports the opinion be agreed, and that the report be used to inform the Annual Governance Statement for 2012/13;

- (4) That the improvements in control that occur as a result of the audit process be noted; and
- (5) That the internal audit process is considered to be effective.

ANNUAL RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

AG11/13 Mr Cumberworth presented a report to members which set out the Council's risk management arrangements in accordance with the requirements of the Risk Management Strategy. He advised that as at 31 March 2013, the authority had eight strategic risks. It was noted that, although there had been no overall change in risk scores, detail in action plans had been amended and adjusted to reflect actions taken by management to manage/mitigate these risks.

The five highest risks for 2012-2013 were set out in the report for members' information. Councillor Poile queried why the Regeneration Company was still listed as a risk in the management action plan and Mr Cumberworth explained that the data was valid up to 31 March 2013 and had not been updated to reflect the dissolution of the Company.

Councillor Scott commented that more progress should have been made in relation to the opportunity to 'score' risks through the introduction of relevant definitions, especially as the Council had recently engaged the assistance of Zurich Management Service. He considered that the risk management progress used was common practice but not best practice.

Mr Parsons clarified that a certain amount of work had been referred to Zurich, through the Audit Partnership, however this aspect had to be prioritised against other risk management initiatives.

Councillor Rook referred to an action involving MIDKIP services. He expressed concern that an increase in partnerships could result in less control over the way this Council operated its services.

Mr Colyer agreed that, as the Council entered into more partnerships, it would face challenges and some elements of control may have to be given up. However he assured the Committee that officers would work hard to ensure there were benefits for all the councils involved.

Mr Hedges considered that sickness levels could increase as staff pressures increased, and this would have a huge impact on the authority. He questioned whether this area should be reviewed more frequently than quarterly.

Mr Colyer advised that the Council's overall staff sickness record had reduced since the introduction of an Absence Management Policy.

RESOLVED – That the Annual Risk Management Report be noted and that the arrangements for managing strategic risks as set out in the report be approved.

DRAFT FINANCIAL REPORT 2012/2013

AG12/13 Mrs Fineman presented the draft Financial Report for 2012/2013 for members' information and comments. It was noted that the audited version would then be presented to the Committee in September.

The Committee was advised that the accounts had been prepared on virtually the same basis as in 2011/12, and therefore the accounts did not contain any re-statements of prior year figures or balances.

Mrs Fineman explained that the revenue accounts showed that the Council achieved a small surplus of £6,000 compared to the budget, which was a considerable achievement bearing in mind the requirement to cover the cessation payment of £250,000 to John Laing and the £42,000 for demolishing the Cranbrook offices, both resulting from the end of the regeneration partnership. She referred members to the detailed information found in the Quarter 4 Monitoring Reports on the Cabinet agenda for 20 June 2013.

Mrs Fineman advised that usable reserves had decreased by £3.9m during the year, from £20.7m to £16.8m, resulting mainly from two major transactions, namely payment to Kent County Council of just over £2m to extinguish the Council's continuing liability to pay for unfunded pensions and the use of £1m from the Usable Capital Receipts Reserve to finance part of the Council's investment in the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS). It was noted that at the end of the 5-year LAMS period the Council's deposit would be returned and the reserve replenished.

Mrs Fineman also made reference to an outstanding claim to HMRC for VAT paid in respect of overpayments made into car park machines.

Councillor Scott queried why the Pension Fund was not included in the risk register and Mr Colyer advised that under the Local Government and Pension Scheme a comprehensive review of the fund would take place.

Councillor Poile asked where the funds for the LAMS came from and was told that this had been taken from Usable Capital Receipts reserves and therefore would be returned as a Capital Receipt, which could then be used for capital investment.

RESOLVED – That the draft Annual Financial Report, containing the draft Statement of Accounts be noted.

EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2012/2013

AG13/13 Mr Wells, the External Auditor from Grant Thornton, presented a report outlining the audit work proposed by them for the audit of the 2012/13 financial statements.

A copy of the audit plan was attached to the report and it was noted that the proposed fee was £81,456, which compared to the previous planned fee of £112,344 for 2011/12.

The Committee was advised that the findings of the audit, along with the audited financial statements, would be presented at the September meeting.

RESOLVED – That the Audit Plan be agreed.

FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME 2013

AG14/13 The Committee's work programme was presented for members' information.

Members noted that the review of the Audit and Governance Committee would be added to the agenda for the September meeting.

RESOLVED – That, with the addition of a review of the Audit and Governance Committee at the 24 September 2013 meeting, the work programme be agreed.

EXEMPT ITEM

Local Government Act 1972, Section 100a (4)

Discussion took place on whether the following two items should be considered in exempt or open session. Mr Cummins explained that the decision to go into exempt session was a decision for the Committee but as Monitoring Officer he strongly advised the Committee that the contents of the reports clearly fell under the exempt criteria. The reasons he considered that the reports should be exempt, were that they contained information relating to the business affairs of the Council and an external partner. Further the reports contained advice on how the Council should approach negotiations with that external partner and thus if the information were in the public domain it would be adverse to the Council's negotiating position which would not be in the public interest.

Mr Lewis argued that the reports should be discussed in the public domain because it was in the public interest to do so and that the Council should adhere to the Department for Communities and Local Government guidance to be more open and transparent. Mr Cummins noted that the guidance from the Department of Communities and Local Government reiterated the legal position under the Local Government Act 1972 that some items of business, for example, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person would be dealt with in exempt session.

A vote was taken on whether the meeting should go into exempt session.

RESOLVED – It was proposed and seconded that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business referred to below on the grounds that they may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Act namely: -

Paragraph (3) - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - ROYAL VICTORIA PLACE

AG15/13 Mr Cumberworth presented a report which set out the findings of a recent review undertaken by Internal Audit on Royal Victoria Place (RVP), as part of the 2012/13 annual work plan.

Members requested that a further report be presented in six months' time detailing progress against the action plan.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Royal Victoria Place management action plan set out in Appendix B to the report be agreed; and
- (2) That a report on progress against the action plan be presented to the Committee in six months' time.

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

AG16/13 Mr Cumberworth presented a report advising members of a recently completed review of the arrangements in place to ensure compliance with Contract Procedure Rules.

Councillor Horwood suggested that a further progress report be presented in six months' time.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Contract Procedure Rules Action Plan, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be agreed; and
- (2) That a report on progress against the action plan be presented to the Committee in six months' time.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 8.55 pm.