

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**Held on Friday, 29 September 2017 at 2.00 pm in  
Anglia Room, Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

**PRESENT**

Mr W.P. Borrett (Chairman)	Mr M. J Nairn
Mr P. S. Wilkinson (Vice-Chairman)	Mr J. Newton
Mr M. J. Nairn	Mr J. Plaskett

**Also Present**

Mr J. Plaskett (Independent Member)

**In Attendance**

Alison Chubbock	- Chief Accountant (Deputy Section 151 Officer) (BDC)
Greg Pearson	- Corporate Improvement and Performance Manager
Alison Riglar	- Manager, Ernst & Young
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

**51/17 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**52/17 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (IF ANY) (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

None.

**53/17 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

None.

**54/17 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

None.

**55/17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

None.

**56/17 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

None.

**Action By**

**Action By**

**57/17 TRAINING (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

It was noted that the next training session, on self-assessment, would take place after the meeting on 1 December 2017.

**58/17 QUARTER 1 2017-18 RISK REPORT (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

The Corporate Improvement & Performance Manager presented the report which informed the Committee on the current status of the Council's strategic risks.

The key points were highlighted and the one risk, the Council's ICT provision, currently reported in the high category was explained.

The risks for Quarter 2 were now under review.

Councillor Nairn raised concern about possible cyber-attacks and asked if there was an immediate way for these to be detected. Members were informed that South Holland District Council was protected by 'Mimecast' to manage such risks from sophisticated hackers. Breckland Council was looking to have something similar although it was already protected by Firewalls and Public Sector Network (PCN). Further to the above Data Protection training sessions were now being rolled out to all staff and Members.

The Chairman drew attention to Agenda item 13, the appendix that contained private & confidential information and as there was no public present, Members discussed this part of the risk report in open session.

The Independent Member, Mr John Plaskett asked if there was any mileage in having an audit on the ICT systems. The Corporate Improvement & Performance Manager said that he would take this suggestion back to the ICT Team.<1>

<2> Greg Pearson

The Chairman was pleased that the Committee's suggestions on how the risk register should be developed and managed had been taken on board and asked if this methodology was being used as a tool by anyone else in the Council. Members were informed that the Council was using it internally at Executive Management Team level and Cabinet Members via their Portfolio meetings. Each Portfolio had its own dashboard on Covellant and the register was periodically reviewed by the Executive.

Councillor Nairn mentioned the risk under the occupancy rates for Riverside in Thetford and felt that the risk should be reduced as work was in-hand. Members were informed that this was under discussion.

The Chairman referred to the Data Protection training sessions and it was noted that the risks on Data Protection were quite high and the Council was paying for an individual health check to be carried out prior to 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 when the new legislation came into force. Further training for Members on the new regulations was being discussed.

The contents of the report were noted.

**Action By**

**59/17 ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017**  
**(AGENDA ITEM 9)**

Alison Riglar a Manager for Ernst & Young presented the Annual Audit Letter and highlighted the findings following completion of their audit procedures for the year ending 31 March 2017.

Attention was drawn to pages 15 and 16 of the agenda pack and reminded Members that the certificate had been issued on 29 July 2017. In December 2017, Ernst & Young would also be issuing a report to those charged with governance of the Council summarising the certification work that had been undertaken.

The Independent Member was very pleased with the report but asked if the new deadlines for the production and audit of the Financial Statements from 2017/18 would present any problems. The Chief Accountant (Deputy Section 151 Officer) explained that the Council had been working to the earlier deadlines in relation to the Statement of Accounts for the past two years; therefore, the new deadlines for the Financial Statements by the end of May should not cause any issues.

The Chairman agreed that the Annual Audit Letter was a very positive report.

Another question asked was in relation to the rules changing for the procurement of new Auditors. Members were informed that for 2017/18 the current contract with Ernst & Young would remain but a new auditor would be required for 2018/19; however, it had already been proposed that Ernst & Young should continue as the Council's External Auditor for the next 5 to 7 years.

The report was noted.

**60/17 WORK PROGRAMME (AGENDA ITEM 10)**

It was noted that a Treasury Management training session would be required in February 2018 - it was agreed that the invitation would be extended to all Members of the Council.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. Risk Policy Review to be added to the December meeting; and
2. Treasury Management training session to be added to be held after the February meeting.

Other matters discussed were whether this Committee needed to review the Counter Fraud Policy and if a further update was required on ICT and cyber security issues. In response, Members were informed that there were Policies that came under the Governance & Audit Committee's remit including the Whistle Blowing and Anti-Fraud Policies which Members reviewed every four years. However, these were considered to be over-arching Policies and were therefore reviewed by Internal Audit on a regular basis. The Anglia Revenues Partnership had its own Policies but it was unclear whether it was Breckland Council that had to review them and this would have to be clarified and the outcome would be reported to the next meeting.<2>

<1> Alison  
Chubbock

**Action By**

**61/17 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 11)**

The arrangements for the next meeting Friday, 1 December 2017 at 10.00am in the Norfolk Room were noted.

**62/17 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 12)**

Not approved, see Minute No. 58/17 above.

**63/17 QUARTER 1 2017-18 RISK REPORT - APPENDIX 1**

See Minute No. 58/17 above.

The meeting closed at 2.30 pm

CHAIRMAN