

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 01 December 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr J Beesley – Chairman

Cllr L Fear – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr D Butt, Cllr T Johnson and Cllr M Phipps

156. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Brooke, M Cox and A Filer.

Councillor M Howell was present at the meeting on a virtual basis (without entitlement to vote).

157. Substitute Members

Formal notification had been received appointing Councillor M DePoidevin as substitute for Councillor M Brooke, Councillor D Brown as substitute for Councillor Cox and Councillor L Williams as substitute for Councillor A Filer.

158. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

159. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee on 27 October 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

160. Public Issues

The Committee was advised of the receipt of one public statement.

Public Statement from Mr Alexander McKinstry

The draft minutes from 27 October may have been amended by now, but contained one potentially misleading paragraph: the 'additional note', p. 9. There WAS talk, in the meeting, of taking a public issue and referring it to the Constitution Review Working Group, but that related only to what has since been transcribed as 'Public Statement 3', re members' rights to information under the Constitution. Most other public statements that night concerned PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS, and there was no pledge to refer any of *those* matters back to any working group whatsoever. (Verifiable from livestream, 17.15 onwards: https://youtu.be/2_P4ieFXOnU).

The Chairman of the Committee advised that at the meeting of the Committee on 27 October 2022 the Chairman of the Constitution Review Working Group undertook to give consideration at the Working Group to issues raised relating to the Constitution. This was the proper way in which to bring forward these types of matters for careful consideration and review and that the Working Group could then make recommendations as appropriate to the Audit and Governance Committee who would then, in turn, and if necessary, make recommendations to full Council.

161. Corporate Risk - Transformation

The Committee received the first of two presentations providing Members with the opportunity to review in depth the governance elements of two key subjects from the Council's high level Corporate Risk Register. The Chairman explained that points arising from the presentations or in the course of subsequent questions and discussion would be fed back through the Committee's regular scheduled process for Corporate Risk management and review.

The first presentation related to Corporate Risk 13 (That the risks associated with the Council's Transformation agenda, of BCP Council services and functions, are being suitably managed). Copies of the presentation slides would be provided for Members after the meeting.

The presentation from the Chief Executive and from the Director of IT and Programmes set out and explained how, against the background of the Local Government Review and the merger of the three Councils, progress was now being made on achieving the opportunities for transformation within the Organisation.

Members were reminded of the agreed design principles and the programme for delivery through the Target Operation Model based upon the three major themes of Customer Platform, Common Data and the Enterprise Resource Platform. The ultimate aim was for BCP Council to become the leading digital and insight driven Local Authority in the UK with service delivery connected through citizen, business and insight.

It was reported that financial savings had already been achieved in addition to the savings from the Council mergers. Progress and achievements already made were set out and listed within the presentation including relevant examples and within the context of addressing existing operational limitations. The expectation was for a huge shift forward in available data and workforce information across the Council.

The Committee was assured that management of risk at both programme and project specific levels was a key part of the implementation process. The financial elements of the programme were also regularly reported through the Cabinet with the continuing expectation upon Corporate Management to drive through the identified financial cost savings.

Members raised a series of questions arising from the presentation. Members were assured that the sale of assets as part of the transformation

programme would be subject to agreement by Councillors. Loss of income was factored into the Medium Term Financial Plan and further information about how this was shown within the Plan would be provided. It was also confirmed that, although assets would potentially be sold, the borrowing costs would be retained albeit not identified specifically against specific assets. Cabinet reports would include all relevant facts and assumptions. The implications in terms of IT licensing costs were included and there was an undertaking to provide the relevant tabulation from the Cabinet report.

In response to further questions, it was explained that the transformation design programme extended only to core services and not to individual service system upgrades.

The Chief Executive agreed to suggestions that a self-contained financial statement for the transformation programme, to include the costs and funding within one informative document, would be useful and undertook to consider how best to present this to all Councillors.

The Chairman of the Committee also requested more regular financial reporting through to the Audit and Governance Committee and, once again, the Chief Executive undertook to discuss with the Chairman how best that could be delivered. It was also agreed that the further reports back to the Committee should include information and reasons for the length of time already elapsed within the design stage of the programme. Any comparisons with what was happening in other Local Authorities was identified as a possible source of useful learning although the Chief Executive informed the Committee that there were no other Councils that were making so much change at an equivalent pace to BCP Council.

The Chairman thanked the Officers for their presentation and repeated that any outcomes from the discussions relating to Corporate Risk 13 would be fed back through to the Committee's regular scheduled process for Corporate Risk management and review.

162. Corporate Risk - Climate Change

The Committee received a second presentation providing Members with the opportunity to review in depth the governance elements of a key subject from the Council's high level Corporate Risk Register. The Chairman explained that points arising from the presentations or in the course of subsequent questions and discussion would be fed back through to the Committee's regular scheduled process for Corporate Risk management and review.

The second presentation related to Corporate Risk 20 (That the risks associated with the Council's declaration of a climate emergency and suitable mitigation activities are being suitably managed). The presentation from the Head of Climate Action described the Climate Action programme, its links with the BCP Council Corporate Strategy and progress made against the development programme and timeline. Copies of the presentation slides would be provided for Members after the meeting and

Members would have the opportunity to absorb and consider the detailed information contained within the slides and add any further comments as part of the scheduled Corporate Risk review.

The Chairman thanked the Officers for their presentation. The Committee was also informed that a further paper was being prepared for all Councillors addressing climate change programme progress more generally and beyond the governance elements being discussed by the Audit and Governance Committee. This would include addressing important wider issues such as coastal erosion and the use of 'offsetting'.

The Council's Risk and Insurance Manager was present at the meeting listening to the presentations and debate and reported that all the Corporate Risks was currently under review in preparation for the next scheduled report to the Audit and Governance Committee in January 2023. The report would include reference to the Audit and Governance Committee's consideration of the two specific risks and incorporate comments where appropriate.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

CHAIRMAN