

Audit Committee and Audit Committee (Advisory) - 25 May 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee and Audit Committee (Advisory) held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 25 May 2021 at 7.00 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Nick Wayne (Chair), Sara Hyde (Vice-Chair) and
Flora Williamson

Also Present: **Independent member:** Alan Begg and Alan Finch

Councillor Nick Wayne in the Chair

214 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A1)

Received from Councillor Janet Burgess MBE.

215 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A2)

None.

216 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A3)

None.

217 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2021 be confirmed as a correct record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

218 APPOINTMENTS TO PENSIONS SUB-COMMITTEE, PENSIONS BOARD AND PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE (Item A5)

RESOLVED:

(a) That the membership of the Audit Committee, appointed by the Council on 20 May 2021, terms of reference and dates of meetings of the Audit and Audit (Advisory) Committee for the municipal year 2021/22, as set out in Appendix A of the report of the Acting Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, be noted, with the exception of the meeting currently programmed for 6 September 2021, which is to be postponed to a date in late September/early October 2021.

Pensions Sub-Committee

(b) That the size of the Pensions Sub-Committee and its Terms of Reference, as detailed in Appendix A of the report of the Acting Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, be confirmed.

(c) That the following members be appointed to the Pensions Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2021/2022, or until successors are appointed:

Councillors	Substitute Members
Paul Convery (Chair)	Jenny Kay
Satnam Gill OBE (Vice-Chair)	
Michael O’Sullivan	
(vacancy)	

(d) That Councillor Paul Convery be appointed as Chair and Councillor Satnam Gill OBE be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Pensions Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2021/2022, or until successors are appointed.

Personnel Sub-Committee

a) That the size of the Personnel Sub-Committee and its Terms of Reference, as detailed in Appendix A of the report of the Acting Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, be confirmed.

b) That the following members be appointed to the Personnel Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2021/2022, or until successors are appointed:

Councillors	Substitute Members
Anjna Khurana (Chair)	All other Executive members
Kaya Comer-Schwartz	Sheila Chapman
Satnam Gill OBE	Paul Convery
Janet Burgess MBE	Jenny Kay
Troy Gallagher	Martin Klute

c) That Councillor Anjna Khurana be appointed Chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2021/22, or until a successor is appointed.

Pensions Board

a) That the following appointments to the Pensions Board be noted:

a) Valerie Easmon-George as pensioner member representative for a term of four years, from 3 June 2019.

b) The reappointment of the following members for a three year term from 3 June 2019: (i) Mike Calvert, Unison, as a member representative
(ii) Maggie Elliott – Chair of Governors at Montem School as an employer representative.

c) Alan Begg as an independent member for a term of four years, from 3 June 2019.

d) Maggie Elliott as Vice-Chair of the Pensions Board.

- e) That there is an employer representative vacancy and a substitute pensioner member representative vacancy.
- 2) To reappoint George Sharkey, GMB, as a member representative on the Pensions Board for a three year term, with effect from 25 May 2021.
- 3) That Councillor David Poyser be appointed as a member and Chair of the Pensions Board.

219 2021-22 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN (Item B1)

In response to questions from Members, the Audit Manager stated that the reference in the report to c880 Audit days compared favourably to other similar local authorities and was sufficient to resource the current Plan. However, additional resources might allow additional work. She described the types of training available to the Audit Team and was satisfied with the balance between follow-up and new audits. The Audit Team was currently fully staffed and she was confident that the Plan as currently written was deliverable. She confirmed that a portion of the c880 Audit days was co-sourced to PWC and included capacity for additional audits if necessary. On the apparent lack of information on Pensions, the Audit Manager confirmed that the Audit Team relied on external actuaries and valuations for key elements of assurance.

The Chair suggested that Members of the Committee be invited to propose topics for follow-up, priorities or deep dives and to send these directly to the Audit Manager for consideration.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the 2021 – 22 Internal Audit Plan, appended to the report of the Corporate Director of Resources, be approved.
- (b) That Members of the Committee be invited to forward suggestions for topics for follow-up, priorities or deep dives directly to the Audit Manager for consideration.

220 PRINCIPAL RISK REPORT (Item B2)

Members of the Committee complimented the Audit Manager on the presentation of the report, its clarity and plain language.

The Committee noted the responses on the questions raised about the position of GLL and the running of the Council's leisure services and the sufficiency of mitigations against risks across the Council.

The Chair suggested that it would be useful for Members of the Committee to perhaps review the risk topics to identify if there were any particular areas of concern in order that the appropriate manager(s) might be invited to attend a future Audit Committee to respond to questions about the risk areas, which would have been supplied to the manager(s) in advance of the meeting. He undertook to discuss with the Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Committee to ensure that

there would be no duplication of work by the Committees if the Audit Committee were to consider reviewing schools' viability and place planning. He suggested that Members forward details of any particular area for review to him in the first instance.

RESOLVED:

That the current principal risks facing the Council, as detailed in the report of the Corporate Director of Resources, be noted.

221 CYBER SECURITY (Item B3)

RESOLVED:

That the report of the Corporate Director of Resources be noted as a statement of the current position for the Council's cybersecurity assurance programme and the ongoing audits and activity.

222 UPDATED EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (Item B4)

RESOLVED:

That the report of the Corporate Director of Resources, detailing the total anticipated fee for the external audit for the Council and Pension Fund for the year ending 31 March 2021, in the sum of £231,579, be noted.

223 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Item)

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following item as the presence of members of the public and press would result in the disclosure of exempt information within the terms of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, for the reasons indicated:

<u>Agenda item E1</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Reasons for exemption</u>
	Cyber defence assurance - exempt appendix	<u>Category 3</u>

224 CYBER SECURITY - EXEMPT APPENDIX (Item F1)

The Committee placed on record their thanks for the exceptional work carried out by Jon Cumming, Director of Digital Services, and the Digital Services staff, to ensure that the Council had achieved good levels of cyber security defence.

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The Chair requested a short report to the Committee in September 2021 on progress at that time.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the exempt appendix to agenda item B3 be noted.
- (b) That a short report be submitted to the Committee in September 2021 on progress to date.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

CHAIR