

AUDIT and GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 12 SEPTEMBER 2018

REPORT OF THE AUDIT WORKING GROUP (AWG)

The Audit Working Group met on Wednesday 5 September 2018.

Attendance:

Full Meeting:

Chairman Dr Geoff Jones; Cllr Nick Carter, Cllr Roz Smith; Cllr Ian Corkin; Cllr Deborah McIlveen, Cllr Charles Mathew, Ian Dyson, Assistant Director of Finance; Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor; Tessa Clayton, Principal Auditor, Georgina Cox, Auditor (minutes)

Part Meeting:

Lucy Butler, Director of Children's Social Care, Dan Ruaux, Corporate Parenting Manager, Tim Chapple, Financial Manager (Treasury).

Matters to Report:

Following the resignation of Cllr Evans, this leaves a vacancy on the Audit Working Group. Cllr McIlveen attended the September meeting as nominated substitute for Cllr Evans. It was agreed that membership, including named substitutes of the AWG will be confirmed at the September 12 Audit & Governance Committee meeting.

AWG 18.22 Fostering Update

The group had previously noted during the update report made by the Chief Internal Auditor at the December 2017 meeting that the 17/18 Fostering Audit (overall grading of Amber) had identified insufficient progress in addressing the weaknesses identified from the previous audit. Members of the AWG requested that Officers now attend to provide an updated position on the implementation of agreed management actions from the past audits of fostering.

Lucy Butler and Dan Ruaux attended and provided a progress report. The group noted the work undertaken to implement the action plan and the improved governance, staff training and quality assurance regimes now implemented. The group were satisfied with the progress reported. The group also recognised the work now underway to implement the new Children's IT system and the design of processes and controls within the new system in relation to Fostering.

Members of the group were also provided with an update regarding the current fostering fraud investigation and the weaknesses identified with the current system. The group were satisfied with the action being taken to address these and will receive a full report on the outcomes of the investigation once concluded.

AWG 18.23 Treasury Management Update – ESG approach to investments

The group considered the report from the Treasury Management Team regarding ESG approach to investments. The group identified that the current strategy has no reference to ESG. The group requested that this issue is addressed in the annual strategy which is presented to Audit and Governance Committee during January to outline the council's approach to ESG when making pooled fund investments.

AWG 18.24 Internal Audit Update

The group received an update from the Chief Internal Auditor on progress against the Internal Audit Plan.

The group noted that the Senior Auditor has recently been offered a permanent position within the Policy Team and therefore the recruitment process will now be initiated to find a permanent replacement.

The group noted the ongoing follow up of Red reports and have scheduled updates from officers at future AWG meetings to report back on progress of implementation of agreed actions.

The group were updated on progress with developing and signing off the new agreement for working with the Oxford City Investigation Team to support with delivery of counter fraud work. The Audit & Governance Committee will receive a full update at the November committee.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 24 October 2018, 2pm

Recommendations

- a) The Committee is recommended to note the report.**

Lorna Baxter
Chief Finance Officer

Contact: Officer: Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor
07393 001246 sarah.cox@oxfordshire.gov.uk