

Division(s): N/A

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 3 March 2021
REPORT OF THE AUDIT WORKING GROUP – 10 February 2021

Report by Director of Finance

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the report.**

Executive Summary

2. The Audit Working Group met on 10 February 2021. The group received an update on corporate risk management arrangements and also on the directorate risk management arrangements within CDAI (Commercial Development Assets and Investment). Officers attended to provide updates on the implementation of the agreed actions plan from the previous audit of SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities).

Introduction

Attendance:

Full Meeting: Chairman Dr Geoff Jones Councillors: Nick Carter, Roz Smith, Deborah McIlveen and Charles Mathew.

Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor, Lucy Tyrrell, Committee Officer, Katherine Kitashima, Audit Manager, Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance.

Part Meeting:

Ian Dyson - Assistant Director of Finance, Louise Tustian – Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes, Celia Prado-Teeling – Team Leader, Performance, Kevin Gordon – Director for Children’s Services, Hayley Good – Deputy Director of Education, Steve Jordan – Corporate Director for Commercial Development, Assets and Investment

Matters to Report:

AWG 21.03 SEND

3. The group received a further update on the progress in addressing the weaknesses identified during the audit completed during 2020/21, which had an overall grading of Red. The group were satisfied with the significant progress made to date in implementing the agreed actions, acknowledging there is still further work to complete the improvement plan, which includes implementation of the new IT system by the Autumn Term.

4. Officers agreed to circulate to AWG members the Accelerated Progress Plan & Letter reporting the outcome of the DfE monitoring visit due in February 2021. The group will also monitor the completion of the remaining actions via the Internal Audit quarterly updates. There is a planned follow up audit for later in 2021/22.

AWG 21.04 Internal Audit Update Corporate Risk Register Arrangements (incl Leadership Team Risk Register)

5. The group received an update on OCC's risk management work, including the Risk and Opportunities Strategy and accompanying Risk Development Plan. The group noted that the annual review of the strategy will be complete during quarter 4 and there were several areas in the risk development plan that were still to be delivered, however revised target dates are now in place. The group also noted that the work needed on risk opportunities, risk appetite and risk tolerance should be included within the plan.
6. The group were updated that the recruitment of the corporate performance and risk team is now complete. A new performance reporting system will be implemented from April 2021. It is envisaged that this will be reviewed to see how this can be extended/linked in with risk management reporting at a later stage.
7. The group also reviewed the Leadership Risk Register, which contains the Council's most significant risks, which are closely managed and reported on each month into CEDR as part of the Council's Business Management and Monitoring Reports. The group discussed some of the individual risks and process for current scoring of current and residual risk scoring.
8. The group agreed that it would be helpful to receive a further briefing at the April meeting explaining in more detail the mechanics of how the risk register process works.

AWG 21.05 Directorate Risk Management Arrangements - CDAI

9. The group received an update on the risk management arrangements within CDAI, which included review of the current operational registers for each service area.
10. The group noted the processes within CDAI for risk management information, acknowledging that the services areas have only recently been brought together into the new directorate and that work was underway to ensure a more consistent approach is achieved.
11. The group discussed in detail a number of the individual risks, the scoring and mitigation plans and were satisfied with the arrangements currently in place. 'the Group asked that more consideration be given to the information management register as all risks are showing as green which did not seem

compatible with the leadership risk on business continuity, which currently has the highest red rating.

12. It was agreed that each Directorate will continue to attend the meeting on a rotational basis.

LORNA BAXTER
Director of Finance

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Date of next AWG meeting Wednesday 28 April at 14:00

Agenda items for AWG April meeting:

- Internal Audit Update
- Annual Governance Statement, including Corporate Lead Statements
- Fire & Rescue – Statement of Assurance