

...Decisions... Decisions...

These notes indicate the decisions taken at this meeting and the officers responsible for taking the agreed action. For background documentation please refer to the agenda and supporting papers available on the Council's web site (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk.)

If you have a query please contact Lucy Tyrrell, Tel 07741 607834; E-mail: lucy.tyrrell@oxfordshire.gov.uk

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - WEDNESDAY, 3 MARCH 2021

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA	DECISIONS	ACTION
1. Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments	Councillor Jeannette Matelot - temporary appointment.	DLG (A. Newman)
2. Declaration of Interests - see guidance note	None.	
3. Petitions and Public Address	Item 13 – Councillor Jane Hanna Item 15 – Councillors Jane Hanna and Tim Bearder	
4. Minutes To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2021 and to receive information arising from them.	The minutes of 13 January 2021 were agreed.	DLG (L. Tyrrell)
5. Ernst & Young - Progress Report incl Audit Plan Representatives from the external auditors Ernst & Young will attend to present the following report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxfordshire County Council & Oxfordshire Pension Fund Annual Audit Letter for the year ended 31 March 2020 - February 2021 	The report was noted.	
6. Statement of Accounts 2020/21 Report by the Director of Finance. This report sets out the approach taken to the preparation of the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts. The Committee is RECOMMENDED to:	Recommendations agreed.	DF (H. Doney)

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RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p>a) <i>note the proposed timetable for the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts and external audit</i></p> <p>b) <i>ratify the accounting policies as approved by the Chief Finance Officer and included as an appendix to this report</i></p>		
<p>7. Counter-fraud Update</p> <p>Report by the Director of Finance.</p> <p>This report presents an update on the Counter Fraud activity</p> <p><i>The committee is RECOMMENDED to comment and note the progress update for Counter Fraud activity.</i></p>	<p>Recommendation agreed.</p>	<p>DF (S. Cox)</p>
<p>8. Progress Update on Annual Governance Statement Actions</p> <p>Report by Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Each year the Council must approve an Annual Governance Statement. The Statement gives a description of the effectiveness of the Council's governance framework and an Opinion as to its sufficiency. It also includes a set of governance actions that will form a priority for the year ahead. Last year's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) identified three specific governance actions for 2020/21. As such, this report includes a brief update on those actions ahead of the final position being set out in the new Annual Governance Statement in May.</p> <p><i>The Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider and note the outcomes on the governance actions agreed in last year's Annual Governance Statement.</i></p>	<p>Recommendation agreed.</p>	<p>DLG (A. Bradley)</p>

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<p>9. Audit & Governance Committee Annual Report to Council 2020</p> <p>Report by the Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee to be presented to The Council.</p> <p>The Annual Report sets out the role of the Audit & Governance Committee and summarises the work that has been undertaken both as a Committee and through the support of the Audit Working Group in 2020/21.</p> <p><i>The Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider the Annual Report and suggest any additions or amendments.</i></p>	<p>Recommendation agreed.</p>	<p>Chairman (S. Cox)</p>
<p>10. Highways Contract Update</p> <p>Paul Fermer, Assistant Director of Community Operations will give a verbal update on Highways Contracts to the Committee.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	
<p>11. Scale of Election Fees and Expenditure</p> <p>Report by Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>The County Returning Officer is responsible for the conduct of the County Council elections and by-elections. Expenditure properly incurred in the Returning Officer is to be paid by the Council. As such, a scale of expenses is normally set as a guide to such expenditure. With the County Council elections scheduled to take place in May 2021, this report sets out the scale of expenses that would be applicable to those elections and any by-election occurring in 2021/22. It is brought to the Committee in the interests of transparency about this area of election governance.</p>		

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<p>The Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the Scale of Election Expenses for the financial year 2021/22, as shown in the Annex to this report, for the election of County Councillors and any other poll associated with the County Council during the year.</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed.</p>	<p>DLG (A. Newman)</p>
<p>12. Audit Working Group</p> <p>Report by the Director of Finance.</p> <p>This report presents the matters considered by the Audit Working Group Meeting of 21 October 2020.</p> <p>The Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the report.</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed.</p>	<p>DF (S. Cox)</p>
<p>13. Constitutional Review</p> <p>Report by the Director of Law and Governance.</p> <p>Under the Constitution, the Monitoring Officer is required to monitor and review the Constitution and to make or recommend any necessary changes. While the Monitoring Officer can make administrative changes for accuracy and clarification, it is for Full Council to make any substantive amendments. This report sets out one substantive change for potential consideration by Full Council. It also outlines administrative changes to be made in-year by the Monitoring Officer. It also looks ahead to a potential way forward with reviewing the Constitution following the County Council elections in May. This Committee is asked to note and comment upon these matters.</p> <p>The Committee is RECOMMENDED to:</p> <p>(a) Endorse the proposed amendment to review and bring the definition of a Key Decision into the main body of</p>	<p>Recommendations (a) and (b) agreed.</p> <p>Recommendation (c) as amended</p>	<p>DLG (A. Bradley)</p>

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<p><i>the text with the addition of consultation arrangements for Key Decisions taken by officers;</i></p> <p>(b) Note the administrative changes that the Monitoring Officer intends to make to update the Constitution to bring clarity and correction to it;</p> <p>(c) Endorse the proposal that the Monitoring Officer should bring forward proposals to this Committee after the May 2021 County Council elections in the 3rd cycle of meetings for this Committee, for achieving a full review of the structure and content of the Constitution.</p>	<p>below:</p> <p>(c) Endorse the proposal that the Monitoring Officer should bring forward proposals to this Committee after May 2021 County Council elections in the 4th cycle of the meetings for this Committee, for achieving a full review of the structure and content of the Constitution.</p>	
<p>14. Work Programme</p> <p>To review the Committee's work programme.</p>	<p>The following amendment was agreed:</p> <p>17 November 2021 – Constitution Review</p>	
<p>15. Review of Procurement Award Process Update</p> <p>Report by Corporate Director for Commercial Development, Assets and Investment and Corporate Director for Customers and Organisational Development.</p> <p><i>The public should be excluded during consideration of Annex 3 because its discussion in public would be likely to lead to the disclosure to members of the public present of information in the following categories prescribed by Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended):</i></p> <p>3. <i>Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)</i></p>		

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<p><i>It is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, in that such disclosure would be to the detriment of the Council's ability properly to discharge its fiduciary and other duties as a public authority.</i></p> <p>The report sets out the conclusion of a successful challenge from an existing contractor as a result of the parking enforcement procurement award process.</p> <p><i>The Audit & Governance Committee is asked to:</i></p> <p><i>(a) Consider the management response and action plan resulting from the Marston Holdings Ltd case, as detailed in this report and Annex 1;</i></p> <p><i>(b) Comment on the improvements highlighted in this paper; and</i></p> <p><i>(c) Note the thematic findings following the review.</i></p>	<p>Recommendations agreed.</p> <p>In agreeing the recommendations, the Committee noted that it was on the basis that the decision on item 13 above had relevance to this item.</p>	<p>CDAI (S. Jorden)</p>