

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
23 November 2022

Report of the Audit Working Group 9 November 2022

Report by Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the report.

Executive Summary

2. The Audit Working Group (AWG) met on 9 November 2022. Officers attended to provide a further update on one of the risks from the Leadership Risk Register in relation to Capital Infrastructure Programme Delivery.

Introduction

3. Attendance:
Full Meeting: Chairman Dr Geoff Jones Councillors: Roz Smith, Brad Baines, Judy Roberts.

Officers: Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor, Jonathan Deacon, Committee Officer, Ian Dyson, Assistant Director of Finance, Bill Cotton, Corporate Director, John McLauchlan, Head of Infrastructure Delivery Kate Charlton, Interim Head of Legal.

Matters to Report:

Housing Infrastructure Fund 1

4. Officers previously attended the January 2022 Audit Working Group (AWG) meeting to provide an update on the status of the Housing Infrastructure Funded schemes (HIF) which the Council is in contract with Homes England to deliver. The group requested on-going assurance on the management of the risks in relation to the funding and deliverability of these major programmes and officers were invited to the November 2022 meeting to provide a further update.
5. The Group were updated on the assurance review of the HIF1 programme that was undertaken in April / May 2022 by the Local Partnerships. The need for the review was agreed between Oxfordshire County Council and Homes England as part of negotiations for Homes England to provide additional funding towards

the scheme. This was a peer review process intended to provide assurance that the project or programme can progress successfully to the next stage. The report had an overall conclusion grading of Amber / Red. A set of recommendations to address the identified risks has been agreed.

6. The Group discussed resourcing and staffing, communications, programme governance arrangements and performance management processes. A key stage of the programme will be the appointment of the design consultant/s by March 2023. At design stage the affordability and viability of the programme will be reviewed and fully assessed.
7. The Group noted that next Gateway Review is expected at the end of the detail design stage (2024) prior to Cabinet approval of the three works packages. The group also noted the intention to obtain planning approval in 2023.
8. To support assurance that risks are being sufficiently managed and adequate governance arrangements are in place, the group requested that an updated position of the implementation of recommendations and the impact of any delays in addressing them is brought back to the next meeting of the AWG in December 2022.

Financial Implications

9. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by: Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance
lorna.baxter@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

10. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by: Kate Charlton, Interim Head of Legal
kate.charlton@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Lorna Baxter
Director of Finance

Annex: None
Background papers: None

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

November 2022

Next AWG meeting: 14 December 2022