

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 21 July 2021
REPORT OF THE AUDIT WORKING GROUP – 23 June 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 23 June 2021. The group received an update on corporate risk management arrangements and also on the directorate risk management arrangements within CODR (Customers, Organisational Development and Resources). Officers attended to provide updates on the implementation of the agreed actions plan from the previous audit of Adult Direct Payments.

Introduction

Attendance:

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

Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor, Lucy Tyrrell, Committee Officer, Katherine Kitashima, Audit Manager, Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance, Ian Dyson, Assistant Director of Finance, Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes.

Part Meeting:

Claire Taylor, Corporate Director CODR, Mark Haynes, Director Customers and Culture, Alastair Read, Head of IT, Tracey Harwood-Jones, Policy, Governance and Business Continuity, Belinda Dimmock-Smith, Service Manager, Karen Fuller, Deputy Director Adults, Tessa Clayton, Audit Manager, Kathleen Gibbons, Senior Auditor.

Matters to Report:

AWG 21.16 Corporate Risk Register Arrangements (incl Leadership Team Risk Register)

3. The group received an update on OCC's risk management work, including the revised Risk and Opportunities Management Strategy. The group noted that

the risk development plan has been updated and is linked to the action plan agreed from the recent internal audit of risk management. The group noted the further work underway, for example delivery of risk management training, to further embed effective risk management across the organisation.

4. The group received a presentation and an accompanying explanatory note, explaining the risk report templates and scoring matrix. The group reviewed the Leadership Risk Register, which contains the Council's most significant risks, which are closely managed and reported on each month at CEDR (Chief Executive Direct Reports) as part of the Council's Business Management and Monitoring Reports. The group discussed some of the individual risks.

AWG 21.17 Directorate Risk Management Arrangements - CODR

5. The group received an update on the risk management arrangements within CODR. The group noted the different services within the directorate and different types of risks that are being managed. It was acknowledged that the directorate has been newly formed, with risk management arrangements being further enhanced and developed. It was reported to the group that risk registers are in place for all key service areas within CODR.
6. The group requested officers review the current method in which risk management is considered by the AWG, and how the Committee can be assured on the adequacy and effectiveness of the risk management process that is applied across the Council's services and operations. A proposal is to be prepared, by officers, for consideration at the next meeting.

AWG 21.18 Direct Payments

7. The group received a further update on the progress in addressing the weaknesses identified during the audit of Adult Direct Payments completed during 2019/20, which had an overall grading of Red. The group were satisfied with the significant progress made to date in implementing the agreed actions, which are all now complete. This has included the implementation of a streamlined direct payments model, a dedicated direct payments advice team and revised policies and procedures. An approved provider list for Direct Payment Support has been established. Processes are now also in place to support a greater number of people to use pre-paid cards to undertake direct payment transactions.
8. The group acknowledged the significant work undertaken to launch the new model and how the service are now focussed on robustly embedding the new processes and procedures. An internal audit will be completed later in 2021/22 to follow up on the progress made.

LORNA BAXTER,

Director of Finance

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Date of next AWG meeting Wednesday 8 September at 14:00

Agenda items for AWG September meeting:

- Annual Whistleblowing Report
- Internal Audit Update
- Internal Audit of Childrens Placement Vacancies
- Risk Management – AWG/A&G – assurance