

**A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS & AUDIT SUB BOARD  
WAS HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2022**

Councillors Mrs Cully, Hylands, Marshall, Pepper and Raffaelli

**8. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE**

There were none

**9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none

**10. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SUB BOARD HELD ON 30 JUNE 2022**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2022 be signed as a true and correct record

**11. DEPUTATIONS- STANDING ORDER 3.4**

There were none

**12. PUBLIC QUESTIONS - STANDING ORDER 3.5**

There were none

**13. AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 1ST APRIL TO 19TH AUGUST 2022**

Consideration was given to a report by the Chief Internal Auditor updating the Sub Board on the progress of the Audit Plan 2022/23.

The Chief Internal Auditor advised the Members that this was the standard report that he brings to every meeting showing the progress of the Audit Plan. He explained that he is happy with the current rate of progress, despite still having to be dealing with grant work. There was nothing contentious to report from the follow up audits currently being carried out,

Following a question from a Member, the Chief Internal Auditor advised that the heating allowance grant work was not as significant as the covid grants work, but he would report if the timetable was going to be impacted.

Following a question regarding the historic Procurement Audit, Officers explained that as a result of this audit an Action Plan was drawn up and it is this action plan that is now being reviewed as part of the wider Procurement audit that is being undertaken. The Head of Benefits and procurement updated the Board that of the 13 points on this plan 7 have been completed, 3 are in progress and 3 have not as yet been started, due to resources being diverted to welfare work. It was hoped that 10 of these actions would be complete by end of

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September. Work was also taking place on a rewrite to the Contract Procedure Rules, which would be taken to the November Policy & Organisation Board.

A Member was concerned that the social value consideration was slipping, as it is a Government priority for procurement. Officers advised that although the spend level was below that required, social value was included in as many purchases as possible. The Head of procurement asked for written clarification of the guidelines.

The Chief Internal Auditor was able to reassure Members that the users of the procurement system are consulted during audits. A question was raised on the areas subjected to audit and he explained that the auditors carry out risk assessments to determine which audits will be actioned, and section heads are included in the discussions to determine scope and help identify high risk areas. The Chief Internal Auditor then carries out a quality check on the agreed programme.

Members were advised that things had moved on since the report was written and the results of the Community Infrastructure Levy Audit would be brought to the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Sub Board noted the report

#### **14. AUDITORS ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21**

Consideration was given to a report by the Auditor regarding the findings of the 2020/21 audit which was completed in March.

The External Auditor explained that there was no new information or update to provide. This was an historic report that had already been discussed at a Policy and Organisation Board alongside the accounts, as required.

Members were advised that the key change was the commentary on Value For Money and that the key purpose was to provide an independent true and fair view, and to conclude if there was value for money. The unqualified opinion was that all is fine.

RESOLVED: That the Sub Board noted the report

#### **15. GIFTS & HOSPITALITY RETURN FOR COUNCIL STAFF**

Consideration was given to a report by the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer advising the Sub Board of the Gifts and Hospitality declared by Council Staff for the period April 2021- March 2022.

The Borough Solicitor advised that although the amount and value of items reported was relatively small, the reporting to the Standards Sub Board provided a deterrent against officers accepting gifts in return for favours.

RESOLVED: That the Sub Board noted the report.

**16. LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN REVIEW 2021/22**

Consideration was given to a report by the Chief Executive advising the Sub Board of the Annual Review Letter 2022 received from the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer advised that the report was very straightforward and contained nothing of concern, with no decisions against the Council being upheld. He felt that our 3 stage complaints system prevented too many complaints being passed to the Ombudsman.

Members asked for clarification of the outcomes as listed in paragraph 2.2 of the report, which the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer agreed to provide.

RESOLVED: That the Sub Board noted the report

**17. ANY OTHER ITEMS**

**CHAIRMAN**

Concluded at 7.38 pm