

**GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE held at
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30pm on 18
MAY 2017**

Present: Councillor E Oliver (Chairman)
Councillors J Davey, J Gordon, N Hargreaves, D Jones and B
Light

Officers in attendance: R Auty (Assistant Director Corporate Services), S
Bronson (Internal Audit Manager), B Ferguson (Democratic Services Officer), A
Knight (Assistant Director of Resources) and A Webb (Director of Finance and
Corporate Services).

Also Present: Councillor S Howell (Cabinet Member for Finance and
Administration)

GAP1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Barker.

GAP2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2017 were received and signed
by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the replacement of **“two thirds
of”** with **“two or three”** in paragraph 4 of PA40.

GAP3 PROCUREMENT BI-ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman brought item 8 forward in proceedings for the benefit of the
Assistant Director of Resources.

Members received an update on procurement activity from October 2016 to 31
March 2017. Specifically, the report provided information on two areas;
contracts let over £50,000 and instances where exceptions to Contract
Procedure Rules were requested. The Assistant Director of Resources said
savings had been made as demonstrated throughout the report on a case by
case basis.

Councillor Hargreaves asked for clarification of the term ‘framework providers’.
The Assistant Director of Resources said ‘framework providers’ were a range of
suppliers who had already passed eligibility tests and where certain contractual
agreements were already in place.

GAP4

DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2016-17

The Internal Audit Manager presented a report on the draft Annual Governance Statement. She said the Statement was based on previous governance statements, although there had been some slight amendments. Specifically, the aim was to reduce the volume of information within the Governance Statement and, given that the existing Statement was already quite short, not much had changed. She added that the Annual Governance Statement had been approved by the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

Reference was made to the two Significant Control and Governance issues identified during 2016/17. The first was the Council's revised Document Retention Policy and Schedule, which was still awaiting approval from CMT. The second was the potential data breach reported by the payroll provider Sage in August 2016. In that instance, the Council had taken the appropriate action by informing the relevant authorities and organising protective registration for those individuals affected. Since then, the Council had moved to a new payroll provider.

Actions identified for 2017/18 included a Code of Corporate Governance and consideration of the Council's position on Data Protection in preparation of the regulation coming into effect on 25 May 2018.

In response to a question from Councillor Jones, the Internal Audit Manager said the actions identified for 2017-18 were for CMT rather than Full Council.

Councillor Gordon asked what impact the Freedom of Information Act had on the document retention schedule. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services said all documentation was retained or destroyed, within the relevant and appropriate length of time.

Councillor Jones expressed concern over the retention schedule for documentation, in particular, documents relating to asbestos records. The Assistant Director of Corporate Services said records on asbestos would be retained in perpetuity.

RESOLVED that the draft Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 be approved.

GAP5

INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT AND OPINION 2016-17

The Internal Audit Manager presented her report, which showed the work carried out by the Internal Audit team during the 2016-17 year, and gave their view of the Council's control environment. Internal Audit had concluded that overall identified risks were being satisfactorily managed and controlled.

GAP6

INTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME 2017/18

The Internal Audit Manager presented her report and explained that the Council had arrangements in place to ensure risks to the Council's objectives were identified and managed. It was recommended that members approved the Strategy and Work Programme for 2017-18.

Councillor Light commended the audit team for such detailed and extensive work.

RESOLVED that the revised Internal Audit Strategy and Work Programme 2017/18 was approved

GAP7

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 28 JANUARY TO 30 APRIL 2017

Members considered the report, which detailed work undertaken by Internal Audit since the last report to the Committee and any progress made on recommendations made by Internal Audit. The Internal Audit Manager said that audits due to be completed by 31 May 2017 would now likely be completed by the end of June.

GAP8

PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT 2016-17

Members considered the report, which detailed the self-assessment undertaken by the Committee for the 2016/17 municipal year.

Councillor Howell, in response to the answer of question 19 in the self-assessment, said the committee had added value to the Council as an organisation. The Chairman had routinely reported to Councillor Howell, as portfolio holder of Finance and Administration, and he thanked the Committee for its valuable contribution.

GAP9

Q4 PERFORMANCE 2016-17

The Assistant Director of Corporate Services presented his report of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Performance Indicators (PIs) for quarter four.

He directed the committee's attention to appendix A to demonstrate that performance across the majority of indicators had remained strong.

There were two red warnings on Key Performance Indicators which were highlighted by the report. KPI08 (average re-let time) had missed its target but had recorded an improvement on the previous year. KPI15A (number of return visits to collect missed bins) had worsened since the previous quarter, although this was partly attributed to the exceptional withdrawal of 10 refuse vehicles.

In response to a question from Councillor Jones, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services said that after one vehicle had been found to have a cracked chassis, all vehicles were investigated and were found to have the same fault. For safety purposes the vehicles had been withdrawn. The supplier would replace the vehicles but this had caused a temporary delay in collections which had negatively affected performance targets.

Councillor Howell said that the response from staff was impressive and that overall, the organisation had demonstrated robustness and dealt with an extraordinary situation remarkably well.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services said that the Council had reviewed their policy on vehicle renewal and from now on a number of vehicles would be replaced per year, rather than a renewal of the fleet every seven years.

GAP10 PERFORMANCE TARGETS 2017-18

The Assistant Director of Corporate Services presented his report on performance targets for 2017-18.

In response to a question from Councillor Gordon, the Assistant Director of Corporate Services told members that a new indicator would be established, PI42, to incorporate three indicators for planning appeals which had been deleted.

RESOLVED that the Performance Targets for 2017/18 were approved.

The meeting ended at 8.10pm