

**GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE held at  
COMMITTEE ROOM - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON  
WALDEN, ESSEX CB11 4ER, on THURSDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2017 at 7.30  
pm**

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

Also present: Councillor S Howell (Cabinet Member for Finance and  
Administration) and Councillor H Rolfe (Leader of the Council)

Officers in attendance: R Auty (Assistant Director - Corporate Services), A Bochel  
(Democratic Services Officer), S Bronson (Audit Manager) and  
R Dobson (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

**GAP20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barker, Davey and Foley.

**GAP21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 July were signed and approved as a correct record of the meeting.

**GAP22 POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW**

The Chairman said the Chief Executive had contacted him to explain that she had with the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager reviewed the polling district review timetable in the report. Due to the absence of the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager during the timeframe which had been proposed, she had requested the Committee should be invited to permit a revised timetable to be implemented. .

The Principal Democratic and Electoral Services Officer said staff commitments meant that it was sensible to defer the review until the February meeting of the committee. There were no statutory requirements necessitating the review to be completed earlier.

In response to a question from Councillor Light, asking what would happen if a snap election had been called and the review of polling station places had not been decided, the Principal Democratic and Electoral Services Officer said the Returning Officer would have powers to take action as necessary.

In response to a question from Councillor Jones asking whether the review should be completed before the electoral register was updated on 1 December,

the Principal Democratic and Electoral Services Officer said this was not necessary and the review would still be completed to a satisfactory timetable.

RESOLVED to approve a revised polling district review timetable, to be communicated to the Committee, and the Polling District Review to be considered at the February meeting.

#### **GAP23 OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW 2016-17**

The Chairman said this was the first time the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (“LGO”) annual review letter had been brought before the committee. Previously it was reported on a more informal basis in the Members’ Bulletin. However the Chief Executive had felt members should have more oversight over the report.

The Principal Democratic and Electoral Services Officer said members could see in the report that one complaint against the Council had been upheld, but this had been resolved in the form of an apology to the complainant.

The Assistant Director – Corporate Services said he would suggest the idea of complaint handling training run by the LGO to a Corporate Management Team meeting.

The report was noted.

#### **GAP24 REVISED INTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME 2017-18**

The Chairman said the Audit Manager had first composed the strategy and programme in April, and it had now been revised.

The Audit Manager said there would be some change in staff allocation meaning there would be fewer hours spent working on the internal audit strategy and programme, but the quality of work would not be negatively affected.

RESOLVED to approve the revised internal audit strategy and programme.

#### **GAP25 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT**

The Audit Manager said this was her regular update. There were still three audits from the 2016-2017 programme to be concluded. One had come back from management, one was undergoing a fraud risk assessment with the Corporate Management Team and one was still outstanding. Work had begun on a number of audits for the current programme, and five had been completed.

The report was noted.

GAP26 **GAP ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2016-17**

The Assistant Director – Corporate Services said the letter summarised the key findings of the 2016-2017 audit, although these had already been reported at the last meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Administration said he was pleased to note the letter stated that an unqualified value for money conclusion had been issued on 27 July 2017.

The report was noted.

The meeting ended at 7.50pm.