

**GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE held at  
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30pm on 16  
NOVEMBER 2017**

Present: Councillor E Oliver (Chairman)  
Councillors G Barker, J Gordon, N Hargreaves and B Light.

Officers in attendance:  
R Auty (Assistant Director - Corporate Services), S Bronson (Audit Manager), B Ferguson (Democratic Services Officer), R Harborough (Director – Public Services), P Snow (Electoral and Democratic Services Manager) and A Webb (Director – Finance and Corporate Services).

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

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councilors Davey, Harris, Jones and Rolfe.

**GAP21 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2017 were signed and approved as a correct record of the meeting.

**GAP22 ANNUAL AUDIT CERTIFICATION FEES 2017-18**

Members received the letter from EY confirming the fee for audit and certification work for 2017/18.

**GAP23 PROCUREMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

Members received an update on the Council's procurement arrangements for the first six months of the financial year (April – September 2017).

In response to a question from Councillor Hargreaves regarding the £500,000 contribution to the Superfast Essex Rural Broadband project, the Director – Financial and Corporate Services said the Council had no say in what part of Uttlesford the money was spent, although it would primarily be the eastern part of the district where the 'superfast' cable would be laid, as this part of the district was less commercially attractive to Broadband providers. The money would provide 4000 properties with superfast broadband that otherwise would have been left behind by commercial providers. Councillor Light said the problem with broadband speeds occurred when the cable entered a home and she asked if the superfast cable would be connected directly to homes. The

Director - Finance and Corporate Services said the cable would be laid at the roadside of properties in Uttlesford but individual households would be required to pay if they wanted this cable connected directly to their homes.

**GAP24 LOCAL PLAN COST 2016-17**

The Local Plan costs for 2016-17 were outlined to members.

Councillor Hargreaves said the net spend on the Local Plan was £810,000. The Director - Finance and Corporate Services agreed but said recharges had to be taken into account.

**GAP25 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT – 16 SEPTEMBER TO 03 NOVEMBER**

The Audit Manager presented her report, updating members on the audit work which had been carried out since September.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Audit Manager said the audit of Street Services had been stopped as an effective audit could not be carried out at this time. Instead, an interim report had been issued with recommendations for the service as well as a realistic timeframe to implement them. She said that eight recommendations had already been implemented and a full audit would be carried out in due course.

The report was noted.

**GAP26 GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)**

The Audit Manager presented her report concerning the implementation of GDPR.

Councillor Barker asked if more staff would be needed and if the additional work would slow the Council down. The Audit Manager said a Compliance Officer had been recruited on a one year contract for the implementation of GDPR, although she added that she was unsure how long that role would be in operation. She said the burden of work would be greater with the regulation, although it would not slow processes down if the new information management system worked as efficiently and as effectively as she thought it would.

Councillor Hargreaves asked if a fee would be charged when members of the public requested information, especially if such files were requested as paper copies. The Audit Manager said the current guidance was not to charge although she hoped that all files would be electronic to save on printing and to allow easy access when searching for a file. She said the period of time to make a response to an information request would be reduced from 40 days to one month and if the Council was at fault for an information breach, it would be required to notify all individuals concerned within 72 hours.

In response to a question from Councillor Gordon, the Audit Manager said the new regulation would come into force in May and that it applied to all data held by the Council, including files from the past. She was unsure if there would be a spike in requests when the regulation came into effect, but as there would no longer be a charge she suspected there would be more interest.

Councillor Howell said the GDPR would have a significant financial impact on the Council in terms of resourcing staff, software and information management systems.

Councillor Light asked if this regulation had any impact on Freedom of Information (Fol) requests. The Audit Manager said the same information management systems could be utilised for FOI requests, although GDPR related to the holding of personal information. In the case of GDPR, the data subject was any individual that had supplied personal data to any organisation. Whilst this was primarily aimed at corporations, all institutions had a duty to protect such data.

The report was noted.

GAP27

## **REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES**

The Electoral and Democratic Services Manager presented his report reviewing polling districts and places within Uttlesford.

Members were told that an interim review would be needed in the district before the next scheduled election in 2019. Although a full review would be carried out between 2018-20, there was a degree of uncertainty regarding a number of polling stations and an interim review was required to provide accountability if any changes were needed.

Councillor Light asked if breaching the 3,000 population figure in a single polling district would automatically trigger a boundary review. The Electoral and Democratic Services Manager said this figure was for general guidance only rather than a formal limit but would be one factor taken into account in conducting a review.

In response to a question from Councillor Light, the Electoral and Democratic Services Manager said secrecy at the ballot box was absolute and privacy was taken into account when selecting a polling station. He said schools could be closed for elections but this was not imposed unless absolutely necessary. The Director – Public Services said he was aware of an incident at RA Butler School during the general election in June where a teacher had been posted in the polling station for safeguarding reasons and had to be asked to leave due to the importance of preserving the secrecy of the vote when voting.

RESOLVED to approve the timetable and terms of reference for the polling review as set out in the report.

GAP28

## **PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARY REVIEW**

The Electoral and Democratic Services Manager presented his report on the proposed change to the parliamentary boundary in the Saffron Walden constituency.

Members were informed that the new rules laid down by Parliament had resulted in significant changes to constituency boundaries and a reduction in the number of seats in Essex. The Electoral and Democratic Services Manager said the review had treated Uttlesford favourably as it would continue to be included within a single constituency, although 10,000 electors would be imported from the Braintree district to meet the minimum quota of electors. The Chairman said this was similar to the make up of the Saffron Walden constituency in the past. The Electoral and Democratic Services manager said the proposal was favourable for the district in terms of administering an election, as well as precedent and social cohesion.

RESOLVED to request Full Council to make representations to the BCE supporting the revised proposals for the Saffron Walden constituency.

GAP29

## **2017-18 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The Assistant Director - Corporate Services presented the performance indicators for quarter 2 2017-18. He highlighted the following indicators:

### **PI03 - Percentage of minutes from meetings made available to the public within 10 working days (Max)**

The Electoral and Democratic Services Manager said a number of minutes had not been published in the allotted 10 day period but this was a consequence of administering two elections within a year, as well as the transition to a new meeting management system.

### **PI22 - Museum users: Total visitors to the museum building and on-site events (Max)**

Members were informed that a new Outreach Officer had been employed by Saffron Walden Museum who had successfully increased the number of school visits in a short space of time.

### **PI16 - Number of households living in temporary accommodation (Min)**

With reference to the latest note for PI16, Councillor Hargreaves asked how a 'non-compliant tenant' was defined. The Assistant Director - Corporate Services said he would find out and get back to him.

The meeting ended at 8:15pm.