

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Special Meeting held on 13th December, 2018.

Present: Councillor Mrs. P. Drake (Vice-Chairman); Councillor G.D.D. Carroll and Dr. I.J. Johnson and Mr. P. Lewis (Lay Member).

593 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE -

These were received from Councillors M.R. Wilson (Chairman), V.P. Driscoll, K.F. McCaffer and L.O. Rowlands.

594 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -

No declarations were received.

595 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER - QUARTER 2 UPDATE (MD) -

The Head of Performance and Development presented the report, the purpose of which was to update the Audit Committee on the Corporate Risk Register - Quarter 2 position - April, 2018 to September 2018. The report also provided an overview of the emerging risk themes and issues as outlined in the Risk Register.

Members were advised that there were currently 15 corporate risks on the Register, as outlined within Annex A of the report. Since the last update, no further risks had been removed or added to the Register.

Of the 15 corporate risks, in terms of risk status, one risk scored high, one risk scored medium/high, 10 risks scored medium and 3 risks scored medium/low. The overall position of risks on the Register had remained largely unchanged, with the exception of the Housing Improvement Programme risk that had now reduced from a medium to a medium/low status. This was shown on page 2 of the Annex A.

In terms of exceptions, the Head of Performance and Development outlined matters relating to the following subject areas:

- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)
- Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)
- Safeguarding
- Contract Management.

Members were requested to consider the decrease in risk associated with the Housing Improvement Programme. This had been downgraded to a medium/low risk and was a reflection on the Council having formally completed the Welsh Housing Quality Standards. The residual risk that remained related to maintenance which presented a much lower risk. The Committee agreed that the risk for this should be removed.

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A Committee Member queried whether there was any indication of when issues with the WCCIS would be resolved by. In reply, the Head of Performance and Development stated that he would find out and also that further progress would be reported for the Quarter 3 update.

The Committee considered issues being experienced around Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and the increased pressure that this had placed on resources within Social Services. This was discussed at length at the previous Audit Committee meeting, but Members felt that given that this had been a high level of risk for a considerable amount of time that this should be flagged up with Cabinet.

A Committee Member queried whether a report on Safeguarding could be presented. Members noted that regular updates were provided to the Scrutiny Committees, but the Committee considered it appropriate for a report of an audit of the Council's Safeguarding arrangements to be provided.

The Committee were then provided with an update on Waste Recycling by the Operational Manager - Neighbourhood Services. He began by outlining that there were a number of changes that represented areas of risk, the first being the change to the two black bag rule. The Operational Manager added that next year was a 'target year' in which the Council had to hit its recycling target of 64%. If it did not then the Council could face fines of £200 per tonne that was not recycled. He advised that at present the Council's recycling rate was below the new target, and so this would be a challenge.

Another major change was the move away from co-mingled collections to source separation. This was not likely to be very popular but was something that the Council had to introduce because of new Government legislation. The move from co-mingled was likely to be introduced during September next year. This would be a challenge, particular in parts of Barry, so it may be necessary for these residents to remain co-mingled. The Operational Manager then went on to refer to the need for more investment and he stated that by signing up to the blue print outlined by Welsh Government, the Council would be eligible for funding and so had made bids for a fleet of new vehicles, new container bags and for new waste treatment centres. In relation to new vehicles, he advised the Welsh Government had allocated the Council £1.5m which would allow for the purchase of 12 new waste vehicles. Around new waste treatment centres, the Operational Manager advised that the first site would be operational during the summer 2019 in Cowbridge and would handle waste for the western part of the Vale. Further sites would be developed for Penarth and Barry.

In referring to the change of co-mingled collections, a Committee Member queried whether there was sufficient resources available particularly around raising public awareness. The Operational Manager stated this was a challenge particularly as the service was required to make efficiency savings. He referred to the need for the service to be adaptable and the time required for the new services to bed in. This would mean a change in collection days. He also referred to an investment of £6m, and also the development of a new business model which had taken account of the requirement for budget savings of £600k. Members were advised that the changes

No.

should result in operating costs reducing and a new fleet of vehicles that had been paid for by Welsh Government. In addition, the Council would still be operating the old type of waste refuse vehicles in conjunction with the new recycling Lorries, so this meant that the service would have more resources which also meant that there was some flexibility with how it operated.

Subsequently, it was

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the quarter 2 position of corporate risks for the period April 2018-September 2018 and the emerging risk themes be noted and the associated recommendations made by the Corporate Management Team be endorsed.
- (2) T H A T Audit Committee refers this report to Cabinet for their consideration and endorsement including proposals to remove the risk associated with the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS) as outlined in this report.
- (3) T H A T Cabinet be notified of the high level of risk associated with Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and the impact this was having on Care Management resources within Social Services.
- (4) T H A T Audit Committee receives a report on Safeguarding.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) Following consideration of the quarter 2 update.
- (2) Following the Committee's consideration of the reduction in risk associated with the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS).
- (3) In order to advise Cabinet of the level risk associated with the high number of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding assessments, and the impact on resources within the Social Services Directorate.
- (4) In order for the Committee to consider the findings following an Audit of the Council's safeguarding arrangements.