



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

MINUTES OF MEETING

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT MEETING

MONDAY, 21ST JUNE, 2021

PRESENT: Councillors C T Jones (Chair)
D Roberts (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: J Amos, D Chaplin, D Sammon, C Tovey and
J Thomas

Lay Member:
R Williams (Lay Member)

Other Councillors in Attendance:
A Barry (Cabinet Member)

Officers:
S Jones (Head of Finance), M Thomas (Head of Regional Audit
Service) and H Harbord (Senior Auditor)

Outside Bodies:
H Goddard and I Phillips (Audit Wales)

M Morgan (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
85	Appointment of Chair	Resolved that: Councillor C T Jones be appointed as Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee. Councillor C T Jones thanked the Committee for his appointment and took the Chair.

86	Appointment of Vice Chair	<p>Resolved that:</p> <p>Councillor D Roberts be appointed as Vice Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee.</p> <p>Councillor D Roberts then thanked the Committee for his appointment as Vice Chair.</p>
87	Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Davies.
88	Declarations of Interest	No Declarations of Interest were made.
89	Audit Wales - Annual Audit Summary 2020 - Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	<p>Helen Goddard of Audit Wales referred the Committee to the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Annual Audit Summary 2020 and together with Ian Phillips and the Officers responded to the following questions raised on the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous Improvement – Cabinet Work Programme – The Constitution stated a period of twelve months with an update every quarter but that only one month Cabinet Forward Work Programme was available not the twelve months as referred to in the Constitution <p><i>(Steve Jones advised that he would make enquiries and relay the response to the Committee)</i></p> <p><i>The Committee also agreed that the Chair write to the Cabinet Policy Officer requesting the Cabinet Work Programme for the next twelve months</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity on what is meant by Paragraph 2019 – 20 – ‘Material valuation uncertainties over the Council’s property assets and property’ • Rough Sleeping in Wales – Response requested in relation to where money and resources are to come from to deal with this very serious issue • Key Facts – The increase in the number of people aged 65 and over – Where was this figure extracted from – Pressure on Services and Social Services <p><i>(Ian Phillips advised that he would try and get more information on this figure and relay his findings to the Committee)</i></p> <p>The Chair then thanked Helen Goddard and Ian Phillips of Audit Wales for the Presentation and update of the report to the Committee.</p> <p>Councillor D Sammon left the Meeting at 2.27 pm and returned at 3.02 pm.</p>
90	Audit Enquiries to those charged with Governance and Management 2020/21	Steve Jones referred the Committee to the ‘Audit Enquiries to those Charged with Governance and Management 2020/21’ report.

		<p>The following was then raised on the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 2 – Question 2 – How are instances of Fraud dealt with <p><i>(Steve Jones and Mark Thomas advised of a Meeting to be held in relation to Fraud and at the request of the Chair stated that the outcome of discussions would be shared with the Committee).</i></p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>The Council's response to Audit Wales request for information on respect of Management and Governance as set out in Appendices 1 to 3 of the report be noted.</p>
91	Audit Wales Letter to Committee Chairs	<p>The Chair referred to the Audit Wales letter on 'Audit Wales Reports and Recommendations' and referred in detail to paragraphs five and six of the letter and the issue of duplication.</p> <p>Ian Phillips then responded to the points raised by the Chair on the letter.</p> <p>A Committee Member then referred to the extended role of the Committee to include Governance and the importance of being kept informed.</p> <p>The Chair then suggested that he respond on behalf of the Committee to Huw Rees Audit Director advising of the debate by the Committee in response to the letter.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>A response be sent by the Chair on the letter to Huw Rees Audit Director.</p>
92	Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and Proposed Updated Committee Terms of Reference	<p>Mark Thomas referred the Committee to the 'Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and Proposed Updated Committee Terms of Reference' report.</p> <p>Mark Thomas then advised that Paragraph 4.4 of the report should read 'Merthyr Tydfil' and not 'Vale of Glamorgan'.</p> <p>Mark Thomas also referred to Appendix 1 – Quorum – The need to clarify the Quorum and membership numbers of the Committee.</p> <p>A Member then referred to Paragraph 5.0 of the report and advised that if lay members were paid then there would be financial implications.</p> <p>Questions were then raised in relation to the following and were responded to in detail by Mark Thomas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment • Training • Committee Composition

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Duties • Clarification of Paragraph 4.4 – Committee Chair • Frequency of Meetings • Updating of The Constitution <p>Resolved subject to the foregoing that:</p> <p>The content of the report and the proposed Updated Committee Terms of Reference be noted.</p>
93	Annual Internal Audit Strategy and Plan 2021/22	<p>Mark Thomas referred the Committee to the 'Annual Internal Audit Strategy and Plan 2021/22' report and responded to the following questions raised by the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix B – Explanation in relation to Ref numbers: (33) Trailgazers, (34) Sunse and (18) Housing and Regeneration – Homelessness • How did Corporate Risks fit into the Plan • The Objectives and Priorities <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>The Annual Internal Audit Strategy and Plan for 2021/22 be approved.</p>
94	Governance and Audit Committee Forward Work Programme 2021/22	<p>Mark Thomas led the Committee through the 'Governance and Audit Committee Forward Work Programme 2021/22' report.</p> <p>Steve Jones referred to the Accounts and advised that Adele Lewis was on a phased return to work and that a Special Meeting may need to be held on 4 October 2021 in relation to the final accounts.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>The Forward Work Programme for 2021/22 be approved.</p>
95	Internal Audit Information Reports	<p>The Chair referred to the Issued Internal Audit Reports and no reports were referred by the Committee for consideration at a future Meeting.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>Updates be received from the appropriate Officers on progress made in implementing recommendations.</p>
96	Reflection and Evaluation of Meeting	<p>The Chair and the Committee reflected in detail on the issues that had been considered at the Meeting.</p>
97	Any other business deemed urgent by the Chair	<p>Vacant Post</p> <p>Mark Thomas advised the Committee that Gary Evans Audit Manager had left the Authority.</p> <p>Best Wishes</p>

		The Chair on behalf of the Committee asked Steve Jones to pass on Best Wishes to Adele Lewis for her recovery.
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