DÚN LAOGHAIRE-RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Audit Committee held in the Council Chamber, on Thursday 10th November, 2022 with Committee Members meeting in private session at 2pm and the Executive joined at 2.30pm

PRESENT: Noreen Fahy, Penelope Kenny, Justin McCarthy, Conor O'Brien, Councillor Ann Colgan, Councillor Jim O'Leary, Councillor Tom Kivlehan

OFFICIALS: Stephen Brady (Acting Director of Services, Corporate Affairs), Therese Langan (Temporary Director of Service, Community and Cultural Development), Ruairí Ó'Dúlaing (Senior Parks Superintendent, Parks Department), Dermot Nolan (Administrative Officer, Parks Department), Adele O'Connell (Management Accountant, Finance Department), Eileen Fox (Administrative Officer, Finance Department), Mary Murtagh (Administrative Officer, Internal Audit), Ciara Mulcahy (Senior Staff Officer, Internal Audit), Eoghan Carrigg (Staff Officer, Communications)

1. Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 29th September 2022 and Friday, 21st October

The adoption of the Minutes of Thursday 29th September 2022 was proposed by Councillor Tom Kivlehan and seconded by Penelope Kenny.

The adoption of the Minutes of Friday 21st October 2022 was proposed by Justin McCarthy and seconded by Councillor Anne Colgan.

Penelope Kenny requested the October Minutes be updated under the Item on Overdue High-Level Audit Recommendations to note that members discussed their dissatisfaction with the overdue recommendation from the GDPR audit report and noted they will continue to review progress of GDPR audit report recommendations. M. Murtagh confirmed she would follow up on this. (Action No. 1)

2. Matters arising from Minutes

It was noted that all actions from the September meeting were completed.

It was noted that Action Item Nos 1, 6, 7 and 8 from the October meeting were completed.

Regarding Action No. 2 to prepare a summary report for dlr, it was noted that the Executive are waiting on publication of the NOAC Performance Indicator's Report for 2021. (Action No. 2)

Regarding Action Item No. 3, members noted they were aware of the reason for the delay in carrying out the GDPR awareness training due to take place in Q1 or Q2 2023.

Noreen Fahy advised that, in relation to Action No. 4, she is still working on finding the template for scoring risks and will forward by email as soon as received. (Action No. 3)

It was noted that Action No. 5 is still outstanding but Housing will be contacted to decide on a timeline to bring a report to the Audit Committee on the Housing Transformation Programme. (Action No. 4)

3. Conflict of Interest Procedure

No items were raised under this heading.

4. Update on Fraud Prevention and Reporting Policy

The report was noted as read.

The committee thanked Stephen Brady for his work on this policy.

A discussion took place during which Stephen Brady and Noreen Fahy responded to members queries. Queries were raised about the investigation into an allegation of fraud being carried out by both the Council and by An Garda Siochána as outlined in Section 6.2 and 6.3 in the policy; the wording of the Scope and Definition in Section 2 and 3 and making it clear the fraud referred to is against the Council; the referring of the Terms of Reference for an investigation to the Chairperson of the Audit Committee in 6.3; informing the Audit Committee as well as the Chairperson of the Audit Committee under Section 6.1 on reporting.

Stephen Brady will carry out agreed amendments to the policy arising from discussions and bring back to the Audit Committee for further discussion. (Action No. 5)

It was agreed to adopt the policy and keep it under regular Audit Committee review.

5. Presentation of Parks Risk Register - Ruairí Ó Dúlaing, Therese Langan, Dermot Nolan,

Ruairí Ó Dúlaing, Senior Parks Superintendent, presented the Parks Risk Register. He outlined that there were 49 risk areas in total, including 1 high-level risk, 43 medium-level risks and 5 low-level risks. These risks fall under the following categories, Personnel, Legal and Regulatory, Stakeholder, Operational, Economic, Policy, Budgeting and Finance, and Societal. It was noted the high-level risk relates to risk of injury to persons/damage to property from trees and the importance of having a tree care programme to mitigate this risk.

A discussion took place where Therese Langan, Director of Community and Cultural Development, and Ruairí Ó Dúlaing responded to members queries. Queries were raised about the high-level risk, contracts with clubs, commercial leases, measures to deal with impact of retiring staff; the impact on service due to budgetary/financial risks.

Parks Department referred to the Public Sector Duty and look forward to the benefit of having it embedded in Council activities/operations.

Parks Department noted that injury to staff is significant risk and there are controls in place to mitigate this, including a safety committee.

Noreen commended the Parks Department for identifying the various challenges they face and thanked staff for the presentation.

6. Report of the Audit Committee on the review of the 2021 Annual Financial Statement and Statutory Audit Report

It was noted that Noreen Fahy would circulate this document to members for their comment. (Action No. 6)

7. Audit Committee Charter

It was advised that the updated Audit Committee Charter was read and adopted without change.

8. Audit Committee Annual Work Programme for 2023

The Audit Committee Annual Work Programme for 2023 was noted.

9. Internal Audit Charter

The updated Internal Audit Charter was noted and adopted.

10. Audit Committee Training and Development

The Audit Committee discussed their training and development programme for 2023. Noreen Fahy and Stephen Brady will work a programme of T&D and bring to the Audit Committee in Q1 2023. (Action No. 7)

11. Draft List of Audit Reports for inclusion in the Internal Audit Plan 2023

Mary Murtagh presented the proposed audits for the 2023 Internal Audit Plan. She advised there are eleven reports on the plan which includes the PSC In-depth check. Five of the audits are carried forward from the 2022 Plan. She advised four of these five audits are at different stages of progress and one, due to be carried out by Internal audit staff, has not started. She confirmed the new audits are SICAP 2022, capital projects audit, overtime payments, payment of employees travel and subsistence expenses and revenue grant funding.

Members noted their concern at the level of audits being carried forward. It was agreed that Mary Murtagh and Stephen Brady will discuss the audits for inclusion on the Internal Audit Plan 2023 with Noreen Fahy in advance of the next meeting. (Action No. 8)

12. Schedule of Audits

There was no discussion under this item.

13. Report on High-Level Overdue Audit Recommendations

The report was noted. The risk of non compliance with GDPR was referred to. Stephen Brady advised about a proposal to transfer GDPR functions from Legal Services to Corporate Affairs.

14. Progress Update: Title-Deeds Audit Recommendations

It was noted that the recruitment of the resource to implement tasks related to the Council's Title Deeds is expected to take place by year end with the advertising of the position. The earliest this resource will be in place is end of Q1 2023.

It was also outlined that an option to outsource the Title Deeds position would place a burden on the Legal Services Department as staff oversight would still be required to engage with the resource.

It was advised that the Legal Services Department have a number of vacancies which is impacting on their service. The Audit Committee noted their support for the filling of vacancies in Legal Services.

It was agreed that an update on arrangements to ensure staff continuity in the Legal Services Department would be brought to the December meeting. (Action No. 9)

15. Progress Report on Audit Recommendations

There was no discussion under this item.

16. AOB

A discussion took place around the agendas for Audit Committee meetings and time management at meetings going forward.

17. Actions of Meeting of Audit Committee – 10th November 2022

ACTION NO.	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	PROGRESS OF ACTION
1	Mary Murtagh	Amend the October Minutes under Overdue High-Level Audit Recommendations to note that members discussed their dissatisfaction with the overdue recommendation from the GDPR audit report and that they will continue to review progress of GDPR audit report recommendations.	The October Minutes have been updated as requested.
2	Stephen Brady/Mary Murtagh	When the NOAC Performance Indicator Report is published, produce a summary report on the findings in the NOAC Performance Indicators Report related to dlr to focus on activities where dlr performance has disimproved against its previous results or performance results were located in the bottom half of overall local authority national results.	M. Murtagh will liaise with Communications Department and the LGMA beginning the first week in December to discuss the summary report.
3	Noreen Fahy	Forward IPA template for scoring risks which Eileen Fox will circulate to seniors.	N. Fahy will email template when found.
4	Stephen Brady	Liaise with Housing Department to agree a timeline to present a report to the Audit Committee on the transformation programme in Housing.	S. Brady contacted Housing. A presentation will be given to the second Audit Committee meeting in 2023.
5	Stephen Brady	Carry out agreed amendments to the Fraud Prevention and	The updated policy is included

		Reporting Policy and bring to Audit Committee for further discussion.	in the December Audit Committee meeting pack.
6	Noreen Fahy	Circulate the Report of the Audit Committee on the review of the 2021 Annual Financial Statement and Statutory Audit Report to members for their comments.	Report will be circulated in advance of December meeting.
7	Stephen Brady/Noreen Fahy	Work a programme of Training and Development for Audit Committee members and bring to meeting in Q1 2023.	Work is Ongoing.
8	Noreen Fahy, Mary Murtagh, Stephen Brady	Discuss the proposed list of audit reports for inclusion in the Internal Audit Plan 2023 in advance of the December meeting.	Discussion will take place before the December meeting
9	Stephen Brady	Bring update on planning for staff continuity in the Legal Services Department to the December meeting.	Update will be given at the December meeting.

Signed: Dorne Faly

Date: 8/12/22