

Audit and Governance Committee

Held at:	Zoom Virtual Meeting
Date	Thursday, 30 July 2020
Present	Councillors Mrs Ann Berry (Vice-Chair), Laura Davison, Philip Martin (Chairman), Terence Mullard and Rebecca Shoob
Apologies for Absence	
Officers Present:	Kate Clark (Case Officer - Committee Services), Cheryl Ireland (Lead Accountant), Amandeep Khroud (Assistant Director), Sue Lewis (Committee Services Officer), Mrs Christine Parker (Head of Audit Partnership), Mr Chris Parker (Deputy Head of Audit) and Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services)
Others Present:	Paul Dossett and Mark Chang, Grant Thornton

Note: Due to technical issues at the start and during the meeting for Councillor Philip Martin, the vice-chair, Councillor Mrs Ann Berry took the chair for the meeting.

38. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Rebecca Shoob declared a voluntary announcement in that she is a Director of Otterpool which is mentioned in a number of the reports being presented. She remained in the meeting during the discussions and voting on all items.

39. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2020 were submitted, approved and signed virtually by the Chairman for the evening.

40. **Grant Thornton - Audit progress report**

Paul Dossett and Mark Chang, Grant Thornton, updated members on several changes in approach to the report, particularly that of the changed deadlines

and audit of accounts for the year from the end of May 2020 to end of August 2020, this is to reflect the Covid 19 pandemic. The Council is on target to meet this deadline.

It was noted that a response from Council to the 18/19 accounts is due and will be reported to Grant Thornton in the next two weeks with a report back to committee.

Proposed by Councillor Rebecca Shoob
Seconded by Councillor Laura Davison and

Resolved: To receive and note the Audit Progress Report.

(Voting: 4; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

41. **Internal Audit Annual report 2019-20**

The report provides the summary of the impact of the work of the East Kent Audit Partnership for the year to 31st March 2020.

Particular attention was paid to the changes in respect of East Kent Housing and the transfer to the four councils from October 2020. The Housing Regulator is monitoring progress in issues related to East Kent Housing, it is anticipated that the follow up on Fire Safety can now be undertaken, with an update coming to the next meeting of the committee.

A number of items have been pushed back, it is not unusual to vary the agreed plan, the projects pushed back were as a result of management requests, largely due to the transformation programme, and audits not being able to be accommodated. In any ordinary year the days would have been delivered in the year following, however due to the pandemic and staff being deployed elsewhere for the first quarter of 20/21 it will now be necessary to bring a revised plan to committee in September.

Proposed by Councillor Laura Davison
Seconded by Councillor Terrence Mullard and

Resolved: To receive and note Report AuG/20/02.

(Voting: For 5; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

42. **Internal Audit Progress report from the Head of the East Kent Audit Partnership**

The report included the summary of the work of the East Kent Audit Partnership (EKAP) since the last Audit and Governance Committee meeting together with details of the performance of the EKAP to the 31st May 2020.

Particular attention was paid to:

- East Kent Housing – Tenant Health and Safety (lifts) – it was noted that the assurance level covers all 4 councils but Folkestone and Hythe do not have any issues relating to lifts.
- Civic Centre Security - work in progress, information will be provided after the meeting.
- Homelessness Review – the reason for not commencing this review in Quarter one was explained as the service was busy assisting the community and the auditors had been redeployed, The importance of this review was noted by members and it will be considered at the next meeting as part of the revised plan.

Proposed by Councillor Rebecca Shoob
Seconded by Councillor Terrence Mullard and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note Report AuG/20/01.**
- 2. To note the results of the work carried out by the East Kent Audit Partnership.**

(Voting: For 5; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

43. Statement of Accounts 2019/20

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 the council must consider and approve its Statement of Accounts no later than 31 July 2020. However guidance has been issued in relation to the 2019/20 Statement of Accounts to provide greater flexibility in the preparation and audit of accounts due to the impacts of the global pandemic. Therefore Local Authorities are expected to publish draft Statement of Accounts by 31 August and have Audited Accounts available by 30 November 2020. The Accounts presented are subjected to audit which is ongoing at the time of drafting this report.

Proposed by Councillor Rebecca Shoob
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Ann Berry and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note Report AuG/20/04.**
- 2. To approve the draft Statement of Accounts 2019/20.**

(Voting: For 5; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

44. Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

Under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 (as amended), local authorities are required to produce an Annual Governance

Statement. This report describes the process followed and seeks approval for the Annual Governance Statement for the year 2019/20.

Proposed by Councillor Philip Martin
Seconded by Councillor Terrence Mullard and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report AuG/20/03.**
- 2. To approve the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20.**
- 3. To approve the council's corporate action plan outlined in Appendix 1 for 2020/21.**

(Voting: For 5; Against 0; Abstentions 0)