

# AUDIT COMMITTEE - 10 February 2021

## MINUTES

Present: Councillors: Mr T Beirne (Chairman), Mbajah, Mr D Page, A Adeyemo, M Gough (Vice-Chairman) and M McLoughlin

Officers: David Acton – Democratic services  
Julie Cooper – Head of Financial Operations  
Olly Dodds – Audit Manager  
Amanda George – Head of ICT and Information Governance  
John Gregory – External Auditor  
Jahnvi Jagadish – Governance and Risk Management  
Paul Johnson – Director of resources and Deputy Chief Executive  
Adam Patterson – Finance Manager  
Neil Preece – External Auditor  
John Robinson – Treasury and Corporate Accountant  
Steve Sparkes – Head of Audit

### 1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

### 3. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

No questions or deputations submitted.

### 4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2021 were confirmed as a true record.

### 5. VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

The External Auditor advised:-

- That the Annual Audit Letter had been completed;
- on progress of the pooling of Housing Capital Receipts;
- that initial planning for 2020/21 had begun and that audits could be conducted remotely benefitting from improved means of technology.

### 6. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT PREPARATION FOR 2020/21

The Audit Manager reported the preparations for the production of the Council's Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21. The officer took Members through the proposed timetable, highlighting key dates, and the proposed assurance gathering process.

### RESOLVED

The Committee:-

- Noted the proposed timetable for production of the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21;
- Endorsed the proposed assurance gathering process; and
- Confirmed that the process will provide the assurance needed to effectively review and challenge the Annual Governance Statement when presented in June 2021.

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### 7. 2020/21 QUARTER 3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT

The Treasury and Corporate Accountant updated Members on the Quarter 3 Treasury Management activities. He explained how the Council was maintaining an under borrowing position in order to minimise investment risk, and how internal borrowing had proved an effective strategy in delivering a number of savings to the Council over a number of years. The Officer also explained the current prudential and treasury indicators and confirmed that no amendments were proposed to the Treasury Management Strategy.

#### **RESOLVED**

The Committee noted the Treasury Management activities for quarter 3 of 2020/21.

### 8. THE ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER FOR SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The External Auditor explained that the Annual Audit Letter summarised the key findings arising from work undertaken at Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and its subsidiaries for the year ended 31 March 2020. He explained that working remotely had presented a number of challenges for auditors and officers but, although taken longer than initially planned, they had managed to give audit opinion before the publication deadline.

#### **RESOLVED**

The Committee noted the Annual Audit Letter.

### 9. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC **RESOLVED:**

The Chairman did move that the press and public be now excluded from the remainder of the business to be transacted, on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.