

CIVIC AFFAIRS

15 February 2017

6.00 - 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors McPherson (Chair), Benstead (Vice-Chair), Cantrill, Gawthrope, Holt and Robertson

Councillor Herbert attended for 17/12/Civ

Officers:

Chief Executive: Antoinette Jackson

Head of Finance: Caroline Ryba

Head of Legal Practice: Tom Lewis

Head of Human Resources: Deborah Simpson

Head of Internal Audit: Steve Crabtree

Democratic Services Manager: Gary Clift

Electoral Services Manager: Vicky Breeding

Committee Manager: Emily Watts

Others Present:

Ernst & Young External Auditor: Suresh Patel

Deputy Independent Person: Rob Bennett

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**17/1/Civ Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Sean Brady- Independent Person

17/2/Civ Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Cantrill	17/12/Civ 17/13/Civ	Personal- Standing as a candidate in the Mayoral election.

17/3/Civ Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17/4/Civ Public Questions

There were no public questions.

17/5/Civ External Audit 2015/16 Audit Letter

The Committee received an Annual Audit Letter from Ernst & Young (EY) summarising the key issues arising from their 2015/16 audit.

The Deputy Independent Person commented that the letter reflected very well on the City Council, it gave assurance to the work being carried out and as such collective credit was due.

Resolved (unanimously) to note the contents of the Annual Audit Letter.

17/6/Civ External Audit Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2015/16

The Committee received the Certification of claims and returns annual report produced by Ernst & Young (EY), the Council's external auditor.

Councillor Robertson commented that the report was very positive and credited the work of Officers.

Resolved (unanimously) to note the contents of EY's Annual report.

17/7/Civ External Audit 2016/17 Audit Plan

The Committee received an Audit Plan from Ernst & Young (EY) which summarised their approach to the audit of the financial statements and the value for money (VFM) conclusion for 2016/17. The Plan also highlighted what EY considered to be the most significant audit risks.

Suresh Patel summarised the audit plan and confirmed that they had increased resource and capacity to ensure no repetition of the delay to completion which had occurred in 2016.

In response to a question, the Head of Finance explained that the council would not be required to consolidate subsidiaries associated or joint ventures into its 2016/17 Group Accounts where these entities are not material.

Resolved (unanimously) to note the contents of the external audit plan.

17/8/Civ Internal Audit Plan & Strategy 2017 / 2018

The Committee received the draft Internal Audit Annual Plan and Strategy for 2017 / 2018 for consideration. The plan had been subject to consultation with all Directorates, the Chief Executive and a copy shared with the External Auditor, Ernst and Young.

In response to members' questions, the Head of Internal Audit explained that the shared waste service would be undergoing audits in three separate areas lead by South Cambridgeshire District Council during 2017/2018. Trade waste, shared service outcomes and quality assurance. Recognising this as a critical city service it was agreed that Members would be provided with those reports following their conclusion.

The Deputy Independent Person referred to external assessments (pg86). In response the Head of Internal Audit confirmed that the new Head of Service would determine how this would be arranged.

Resolved (unanimously) to

- i. Approve the draft Audit Plan and Strategy for adoption
- ii. Note the internal documents on Internal Audit provision – the Audit Charter and the Code of Ethics – as identified in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

17/9/Civ Draft Pay Policy Statement 2017/18

The committee received a report from the Head of Human Resources which set out a draft Pay Policy Statement as required under the Localism Act.

Resolved (unanimously) to

- i. Recommend to Council the draft Pay Policy Statement 2017/18.

- ii. Recommend to Council to delegate authority to the Head of Human Resources to implement the change of designation of the grade JNC 2 to Band 11.

17/10/Civ Interim Review of Polling Districts Polling Places and Polling Stations

The Committee received an interim review of the polling district boundaries which considered the effect of any changes to the register of electors arising from changes made to the county council division boundaries. The three elements to this review were: polling districts, polling places and polling stations.

In response to members' questions the Electoral Services Manager said the following:

- i. Plans were in place to publicise the polling place changes to all the affected electors. A letter would be sent to each individual elector explaining why the changes had taken place. A wider campaign involving social media, online and printed publications would also be issued in the run up to the poll. For all those who would be impacted, their previous polling station would still be operational so if they turned up on polling day they could be redirected.
- ii. The Electoral Services Manager undertook to email all members' listing the street information within each new polling district.

The Chief Executive took the opportunity to advise the Committee about the count venue for May. The original intention was to move the election count venue to the University Sports Centre. Although the change in venue is still contemplated for future years, in light of 2017's combined poll it has been decided not to move the venue this year.

Resolved (unanimously) to

- i. Adopt the proposed polling districts from 1 March 2017 and the polling place for each be designated as the boundary for that polling district.
- ii. Keep the polling districts, polling places and polling stations under review.

17/11/Civ City Council Ward Boundaries

The Committee received a report from the Democratic Services Manager which provided an update on the Council's position regarding the electoral boundaries for the City Council.

Resolved (unanimously) to

- i. Note that one city ward (Trumpington) had met one criteria which would instigate a review by the Local Government Boundary Commission and requested that the Chief Executive writes to the Commission to seek clarification of the likely timing of a review
- ii. Receive an update at the September Committee alongside a review of the May 2017 County Council and Mayoral elections.

17/12/Civ Proposed City Council Scrutiny of its Representative on the Cambridgeshire And Peterborough Combined Authority

The Committee received a report from the Chief Executive which explored a workable scheme for politically balanced scrutiny by City Council members of decisions taken by its representative on the Combined Authority might be achieved.

Councillor Cantrill suggested that the authority was in a very different shape compared to the past as in recent years there had been an increase in joint ventures/partnerships. Therefore, the City Council's approach to scrutiny needed to reflect this without the principles changing. He proposed that a review of the scrutiny structure took place.

The Leader agreed in principle with the idea of a review. He accepted the Chief Executive's assertion that this needed to be cost and resource neutral. Councillor Cantrill agreed to a review within existing resources. The Leader also said that opportunities for joint scrutiny with South Cambridgeshire District Council should be explored.

The committee agreed to an additional recommendation to set up a working party.

Resolved (unanimously) to

- i. Recognise that pre-scrutiny of each decision made by the Council's representative to the Combined Authority was unlikely to be achievable.
- ii. Agree that the Council's representative on the Combined Authority should be scrutinised at Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee meetings.
- iii. Agree that this should be pre-scrutiny where this can be achieved within planned meetings but may be post-scrutiny where timescales did not align.
- iv. Agree that Group Leaders and members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be provided with copies of the Combined Authority's forward plan and agendas as a matter of course so they have the opportunity to feedback to the Council's representative in between meetings and that briefings to discuss issues of concern could be arranged at their request.
- v. Agree that a procedure reflecting the arrangements is reported to Committee in May 2017 for approval.
- vi. Note the arrangements for scrutiny of the Combined Authority, set out in section 4.
- vii. Agree to a review of the Council's scrutiny structure and function convened by the chair of the Civic Affairs Committee.

17/13/Civ Appointment of Returning Officer for Combined Authority

The Committee received a report regarding the Combined Authority (Mayoral Elections) Order 2017 which required that each constituent council of a combined authority area must appoint an officer of the council to be the Returning Officer for the election of a combined authority mayor.

Resolved (unanimously) to

- i. Appoint the Chief Executive (and Head of Paid Service) as the Returning Officer for Cambridge in respect of mayoral elections to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.
- ii. Authorise the Returning Officer to appoint, if required, a Deputy or Deputies to undertake those responsibilities in their absence

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm

CHAIR