



Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP

Telephone 01572 722577 Email governance@rutland.gov.uk

Minutes of the **MEETING of the AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, LE15 6HP on Tuesday, 27th September, 2022 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor A Walters (Chair) Councillor E Baines (Vice-Chair)
Councillor D Blanksby Councillor A MacCartney
Councillor R Payne

ABSENT: Councillor W Cross Councillor J Fox

OFFICERS PRESENT: Angela Wakefield Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Andrew Merry Head of Finance
Rachel Ashley-Caunt Chief Internal Auditor
Andy Nix Head of IT and Customer Services
David Ebbage Governance Officer

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor K Payne Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Performance, Change and Transformation

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors W Cross and J Fox

2 MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings held on 6 April and 28 June 2022.

It was moved by Councillor A Walters and seconded by Councillor A MacCartney that the minutes of the 6 April meeting be approved.

It was then moved by Councillor A Walters and seconded by Councillor D Blanksby that the minutes of the 28 June meeting be approved.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meetings held on 6 April and 28 June 2022 be **APPROVED**.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No petitions deputations or questions had been received.

5 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

No questions with notice from Members had been received.

6 NOTICES OF MOTION

No notices of motion had been received.

7 EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Andrew Merry, Head of Finance, introduced Paul Harvey of Grant Thornton, the Council's External Auditors. Mr Harvey then provided a verbal update of their work on the Council's accounts for 2021-22.

8 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA)

The committee received a verbal update from Angela Wakefield, Director of Legal and Governance, confirming that there had been no use of the RIPA provisions since the last update to the Committee.

9 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Report No. 154/2022 was introduced by Rachel Ashley-Caunt, Chief Internal Auditor, the report updated the Committee on the progress made in delivering the 2022/23 Annual Audit Plan and outcomes from those audit assignments completed since the last Committee meeting. It was confirmed that the Internal Audit team remained on track and within budget for the current year.

RESOLVED

- a) That the Committee **NOTED** the Internal Audit Update Report at Appendix A

10 INFORMATION GOVERNANCE ANNUAL REPORT

Report No. 152/2022 was introduced by Angela Wakefield, Director of Legal and Governance, the annual report provided an overview of the Council's activity in respect of how it had discharged its responsibilities in matters relating to Information Governance, including information regarding Compliments, Comments and

Complaints over the financial year from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, it was noted these included complaints that had progressed to the Local Government Ombudsman. It was confirmed the Council's Data Protection Policy had been updated and approved by Cabinet since the Committee's last consideration of the annual report.

In response to a question on the seriousness of those complaints referred to the ombudsman, the Director for Legal and Governance agreed to provide a more detailed breakdown outside of the meeting.

Action: Angela Wakefield

Although it was noted the report stated council staff working from home had contributed to the reduction of data breaches as staff processed less data through hardcopy, it was also noted there also was a risk of electronic communications being sent to the wrong recipient and it was confirmed data protection training for all staff was due to be commence in the near future. It was requested for data on the level of staff working from home to be queried about and provided if available.

Action: Angela Wakefield

RESOLVED

- a) That the Committee **NOTED** the information contained in the report.

11 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was agreed the meeting would remain in a public session and Members were reminded not to disclose the specific contents of the exempt appendix.

12 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Report No. 153/2022 was introduced by Angela Wakefield, Director of Legal and Governance. The report presented the Strategic Risk Register to the Committee and provided assurance that strategic risks were being adequately managed in line with the recently updated Risk Management Policy.

Andy Nix, Head of IT and Customer Services then updated Members on measures the Council was undertaking in relation to cybersecurity, in particular following the pandemic and increase in staff working outside of the office.

During questioning to the Head of IT and Customer Services the following points were made:

- Although the Council being smaller than most other authorities meant a relatively lower number of computers at risk of ransomware, this also meant a lower budget and IT team to secure these.
- The Council's unitary status meant a large level of personal data from children's and adults services were held.
- It was confirmed that the Council operated a filter system design to block phishing emails but it was not recommended to block certain key words in case a legitimate email was then blocked.
- It was confirmed staff computers were unable to access unauthorised websites even when working from home.

- It was identified that the single biggest risk to the Council remained internal staff as they would automatically be past the barrier of getting access to the Council network.

RESOLVED

- a) That the Committee **NOTED** the content of the updated Strategic Risk Register (Appendices A and B to the report) and the actions underway to address the risks.

13 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business for consideration. It was noted a suggestion around the future number of Audit days would be discussed at a future date, but the Committee were reminded of the need to ensure sufficient audit days were provided to allow sufficient assurances to be given by the Chief Internal Auditor.

14 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 6th December 2022.

---oOo---

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.41 pm.

---oOo---

Summary of Actions

Action No.	Agenda Item	Action	Person Responsible	Outcome
1	10	It was requested for detail on those complaints upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman.	Angela Wakefield	This has been circulated to the Committee outside of the meeting.
2	10	It was requested for data on the numbers of staff working from home to be provided if available.	Angela Wakefield	This data is not available because staff are working a hybrid model as opposed to a model of defined days in the office and at home. Working location is a topic in the recently launched all-staff survey.