

## **GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**26 JUNE 2024**

Minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a remote attendance meeting on Wednesday, 26 June 2024

**PRESENT:**                    **Brian Harvey (Chair)**

Co-opted Members:        Sally Ellis and Allan Rainford

Councillors:                Ted Palmer and Andrew Parkhurst

Substitutes:                Councillors: Ryan McKeown (for Teresa Carberry); Allan Marshall (for Andy Hughes); and Jason Shallcross (for Linda Thew)

**ALSO PRESENT:**        Councillors: Linda Thew attended as an observer

**APOLOGIES:**            Councillor Ian Roberts (Leader of the Council); Councillor Linda Thomas (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services); Lisa Brownbill - Internal Audit, Performance and Risk Manager; Charles Rigby and Mike Whiteley from Audit Wales

**CONTRIBUTORS:**        Councillor Paul Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value); Chief Executive; Chief Officer (Governance); Corporate Manager - Capital Programme and Assets; Strategic Policy Advisor; Strategic Performance Advisor; Principal Auditor; and Service Manager - Enterprise and Regeneration (for minute no. 6)

Carwyn Rees and Lora Williams from Audit Wales

**IN ATTENDANCE:**        Democratic Services Officer

**1.    APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR ([Link to recording](#))**

**RESOLVED:**

That Brian Harvey be appointed Chair of the Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year.

**2.    SUBSTITUTION**

In line with Constitutional requirements, the Committee agreed to allow Councillors Ryan McKeown, Allan Marshall and Jason Shallcross (who had undertaken the requisite training) to substitute for Councillors Teresa Carberry, Andy Hughes and Linda Thew.

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillors McKeown, Marshall and Shallcross be permitted as substitutes for the meeting.

3. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR** ([Link to recording](#))

**RESOLVED:**

That Sally Ellis be appointed Vice-Chair be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

**RESOLVED:**

None.

5. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the [minutes](#) of the meeting held on 10 April 2024 be approved as a correct record.

6. **'TOGETHER WE CAN' COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND SELF-RELIANCE**  
([Link to recording](#))

The Service Manager (Enterprise and Regeneration) presented a [report](#) to seek assurance on the Council's response to the audit undertaken by Audit Wales.

The recommendations were supported, noting that Cabinet had already received the report and recognised the contribution of the voluntary sector to the communities of Flintshire.

**RESOLVED:**

(a) That the Committee notes the findings and recommendations of the Audit Wales "Together we can' Community resilience and self-reliance" report;

(b) That the Committee notes the recommended response in relation to Audit Wales' recommendations and supports this being reported to appropriate Committees in June 2024; and

(c) That the Committee recognises the work of numerous voluntary organisations and individuals across the County.

7. **DIGITAL STRATEGY - AUDIT WALES REVIEW, RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED ACTIONS** ([Link to recording](#))

The Chief Officer (Governance) presented a [report](#) to seek assurance on the Council's response to the findings of the audit undertaken by Audit Wales.

The recommendation in the report was supported, subject to a request that particular focus is given to the implementation of actions relating to Audit Recommendations 3 and 4 when the report is considered by the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee notes the proposed action plan and requests that the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee gives particular focus to the implementation of actions relating to Audit Recommendations 3 and 4.

**8. AUDIT WALES - USE OF PERFORMANCE INFORMATION: SERVICE USER PERSPECTIVE AND OUTCOMES ([Link to recording](#))**

The Strategic Performance Advisor presented a [report](#) to seek assurance on the Council's response to the findings of the audit undertaken by Audit Wales.

In response to comments, the Chief Officer advised that an earlier milestone to approve the Consultation and Engagement strategy would be included in the action plan.

Due to concerns about the robustness of the action plan and data verification, a revised recommendation was agreed, also reflecting the comments made by the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee which had been forwarded to Cabinet.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee endorses the amended action plan in response to the recommendations for improvement.

**9. AUDIT WALES: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS: MORE THAN A TICK BOX EXERCISE ([Link to recording](#))**

The Corporate Manager - Capital Programme and Assets and Strategic Performance Advisor presented a [report](#) to seek assurance on the Council's response to the findings of the audit undertaken by Audit Wales.

The recommendation was supported.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee notes the progress to meet the recommendations of Audit Wales "Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise?"

**10. ANNUAL AUDIT SUMMARY FOR FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL 2023 ([Link to recording](#))**

The Chief Executive presented a [report](#) on audit and regulatory work completed by Audit Wales, since the last annual report, which was published in March 2023.

The recommendation was supported.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee is assured by the content and observations of the Auditor General for Wales' Annual Audit Summary Report 2023.

**11. INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER ([Link to recording](#))**

The Principal Auditor presented a [report](#) on the updated Internal Audit Charter which included minor amendments following its recent review. She agreed to feedback to the Internal Audit Manager comments on whether the Charter should reflect information on first and second lines of defence.

The recommendation in the report was supported.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee approves the updated Internal Audit Charter.

**12. ACTION TRACKING ([Link to recording](#))**

The Principal Auditor presented a [report](#) on progress with actions from previous meetings of the Committee.

The recommendation in the report was supported.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee accepts the report.

**13. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME ([Link to recording](#))**

The Principal Auditor presented the current [Forward Work Programme](#) for consideration.

The recommendations were supported, subject to the following requests:

- That reports for the July meeting be shared as early as possible, in particular the CIW Performance Evaluation report.
- That the Audit Wales report on financial sustainability be scheduled accordingly when available.
- That consideration be given to a future item on the 'three lines of defence' model.

**RESOLVED:**

(a) That the Forward Work Programme be accepted, as amended; and

(b) That the Internal Audit, Performance & Risk Manager, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

**14. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**

None.

(The meeting started at 10am and ended at 12.15pm)

**Chair**

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