

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 19 July 2022 via Microsoft Teams.

- Chairperson:** Ms B Slevin Independent Chairperson
- In attendance:
(via Teams)** **(Committee Members)**
Councillor P Byrne
Councillor D McAteer
Councillor D Murphy
- Officials in attendance:** Ms D Carville Deputy Chief Executive
(In Chamber)
Mr A Cassells Director Environment &
Sustainability
Mr C Mallon Director Enterprise
Regeneration & Tourism
Mr G Byrne Assistant Director of Finance &
Performance
Ms L Dillon Democratic Services Officer
Ms S Taggart Democratic Services Manager
- Also in attendance:** Ms C Hagan ASM
Ms D McKimm NIAO

AC/054/2022: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The following apologies were received:

Councillor C Casey
Councillor L Devlin
Councillor C Enright
Councillor M Gibbons
Councillor A Lewis
Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor K Owen

Noted: It was noted that due to insufficient attendance by Members the meeting was not in quorate therefore items requiring decision (Items 3, 4, 6 and 14) would be deferred to the Audit Committee Meeting on Thursday 22 September 2022.

AC/055/2022: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest.

**AC/056/2022: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM:
AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING: 28 APRIL 2022**

Read: Action Sheet arising from Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 28 April 2022.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: It was agreed to defer the Action Sheet for Audit Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 28 April 2022, to the Audit Committee Meeting in September 2022.

AC/057/2022: AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

Read: Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22 from Ms B Slevin Independent Chair of Audit Committee.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: It was agreed to defer the Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22 to the Audit Committee Meeting in September 2022.

AC/058/2022: MEMBERS' REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Read: Report dated 05 July 2021 from Ms D Carville Director Corporate Services regarding Members' Register of Interests. **(Copy circulated)**

Noted: Reminders have been issued to Members asking them to review and update their Register of Interest forms via Democratic Services.

Members Register of Interest forms are publicly available on the Councils website therefore it is incumbent on Members to ensure forms are up to date.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne seconded by Councillor McAteer it was agreed to note the 6 month review report regarding Members' Register of Interests.

It was also agreed to note that a `no response' from a Member indicated no change required.

CORPORATE SERVICES (OPEN SESSION)

AC/059/2022: CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

Read: Report dated 19 July 2022 from Ms D Carville, Director of Corporate Services regarding the Corporate Risk Register. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed to defer the Corporate Risk Register to the Audit Committee Meeting in September 2022.

AC/060/2022: PROMPT PAYMENT STATISTICS

Read: Report dated 19 July 2022 from Mr G Byrne Assistant Director of Finance (Acting) regarding Prompt Payment Statistics – Quarter 4. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne seconded by Councillor Murphy it was agreed to note the Quarter 4 2021-22 Prompt Payment statistics.

AC/061/2022: NMDDC ASSURANCE STATEMENT AND CODE OF GOVERNANCE

Read: Report dated 19 July 2022 from Mr G Byrne Assistant Director of Finance (Acting) regarding NMDDC Assurance Framework and Annual Governance Statement. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Byrne presented the above report stating there were no significant changes.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor McAteer it was agreed to note the Council's Assurance Framework and the Code of Governance.

CORPORATE SERVICES (CLOSED SESSION)

Items restricted in accordance with Part 3 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor Byrne it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on this matter which related to exempt information by virtue of Part 3 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information relating to the

financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during these items of business.

**AC/062/2022: PRESENTATION
RE: UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Read: Report dated 19 July 2022 from Mr G Byrne Assistant Director of Finance (Acting) regarding unaudited Statement of Accounts for year ended 31 March 2022. **(Copy circulated)**

**AC/063/2022: UPDATE
RE: AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Read: Report dated 19 July 2022 from Mr G Byrne Assistant Director of Finance (Acting) regarding an update on Audit Recommendations. **(Copy circulated)**

AC/064/2022: DIRECT AWARD CONTRACTS

Read: Report dated 19 July 2022 from Mr G Byrne Assistant Director of Finance (Acting) regarding the Quarter 1 update on Direct Award Contracts (DACs) / Single Tender Actions (STAs). **(Copy circulated)**

AC/065/2022: FRAUD & WHISTLEBLOWING

Read: Report dated 28 April 2022 from Mr G Byrne Assistant Director of Finance (Acting) regarding an update on Fraud and Raising Concerns. **(Copy circulated)**

INTERNAL AUDIT (CLOSED SESSION)

**AC/066/2022: ASM INTERNAL AUDIT
SUMMARY REPORT**

Read: ASM Internal Audit Summary Report dated 19 July 2022. **(Copy circulated)**

**AC/067/2022: ASM INTERNAL AUDIT
STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

Read: ASM Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan.

(Copy circulated)

On the proposal of Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor McAteer it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

When the Committee came out of Closed Session the Chairperson reported the following decisions had been taken on the items discussed:

AC/062/2022: Presentation re: Unaudited Statement of Accounts

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor Byrne it was agreed to note the unaudited Statement of Accounts for year ended 31 March 2022.

It was also agreed the unaudited Statement of Accounts would be revisited at the Audit Committee Meeting in September 2022.

AC/063/2022: Update re: Audit Recommendations

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McAteer seconded by Councillor Murphy it was agreed to note the update in relation to legacy audit recommendations.

AC/064/2022: Direct Award Contracts

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne seconded by Councillor Murphy it was agreed to note the Quarter 1 Update in relation to Single Tender Actions.

AC/065/2022: Update re: Fraud & Whistleblowing

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor Byrne it was agreed:

- a) To note the update in relation to Fraud and Raising Concerns cases which have been detailed at Appendix 1.**
- b) To note progress on actions arising from the NIAO Internal Fraud Self-Assessment.**

AC/066/2022: ASM Internal Audit - Summary Report

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McAteer seconded by Councillor Byrne it was agreed to note the ASM

AC/067/2022: **Internal Audit Summary Report.**
ASM Internal Audit – Strategy and Annual Plan

AGREED: **It was agreed to defer the Internal Audit Strategy and Action Plan 2022-23 to the Audit Committee Meeting in September 2022.**

PERFORMANCE (OPEN SESSION)

AC/068/2022: **2022/23 PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Read: Report dated 19 July 2022 from Ms D Carville, Director of Corporate Services regarding 2022/23 Performance Improvement Plan. **(Copy circulated)**

Noted: The Performance Improvement Plan 2022/23 has undergone public consultation and been approved by the Strategy Policy & Resources Committee and is published on the Council website in accordance with statutory requirement.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne seconded by Councillor McAteer it was agreed to note the Performance Improvement Plan 2022-23 (including the five performance improvement objectives), Consultation and Engagement Report 2022-23 and Objective Delivery Plans 2022-23.**

Ms Slevin congratulated Gerard Byrne on his recent appointment as Assistant Director Finance & Performance and wished him well in his role and she extended best wishes to Dorinnia Carville who was leaving the Council.

She extended best wishes to Josephine Kelly on her appointment as a new Director for the Council.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 2.40pm.

For consideration at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 01 August 2022.

Signed: **Ms D Carville**
Deputy Chief Executive

Signed: **Ms B Slevin**
Independent Chairperson