

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held in COUNTY CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN AND BY VIDEO CONFERENCE on Wednesday, 25 January 2023 at 9.30 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Ellie Chard, Justine Evans, Carol Holliday and Mark Young

Lay Members Paul Whitham, Nigel Rudd and Dave Stewart

Cabinet Members – Councillor Gwyneth Ellis – Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets.

Councillor Julie Matthews – Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities.

Observer – Councillor Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director: Governance and Business – Monitoring Officer (GW), Head of Finance and Property Services (Section 151 Officer) (SG), Corporate Director for Communities (NS), Chief Internal Auditor (BC), Chief Accountant (RE), Interim Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services (LJ), Interim Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services (LD), Lead Business Partner - Organisation Development (AM), Committee Administrator (RTJ) (Zoom Host) and Committee Administrator (SJ).

Audit Wales representatives David Williams and Gwilym Bury was also in attendance.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Elfed Williams

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

3 URGENT MATTERS

There were no urgent items raised.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee meeting held on the 23 November 2022 were presented for consideration.

Matters of Accuracy –

Page 13 – Budget Process update – The statement ‘The proposals had included the use of cash reserves in 2024/25.’ Should read 2023/24.

Matters Arising –

Page 12 - Capital Process and The Future of the Strategic Investment Group – The Chair asked for an update if the Capital Process had been presented to Council – The Head of Finance confirmed the Capital Budget was being presented to County Council in February for approval. A report on Revenue Budget was due to be presented to County Council 31 January.

Page 9 – Corporate Risk Register – Independent Lay Member Nigel Rudd asked for an update on any progression on the use of picture diagrams or tables used within the register. The Chief Internal Auditor agreed to seek an update from the Strategic Planning Team. Mr Rudd suggested the use of a SMART reference in relation to the suggestion.

Page 8 – Minutes – Independent Lay Member Paul Whitham made a comment on the WLGA online training along with the reference to training on additional training on the Corporate Risk Register, suggesting it may be beneficial for the committee to have a training plan to identify what training has been requested, what had taken place and training due to take place. The Chair agreed that it may be beneficial for members to monitor training and make suggestions of future training areas. The Chief Internal Auditor suggested an information report on future training sessions could be included on the agenda.

Page 14 - Progress Update on Statement of Accounts 2021/22 - The Chair asked if any update was available on the Statement of Accounts. The Head of Finance confirmed there was an issue on the asset register for the Statement of Accounts. The item that was causing the difficulties was the way the authority had apportioned the spend on council houses, where it had been apportioned it to the asset type as a whole rather than individual assets. The original request had been to review the asset register to 2007/2008. The intention had been to complete that work during January 2023 to allow Audit Wales time to audit the additional work on the asset register. Following that work it was hoped the report would be completed for presentation to the committee in March 2023. Unfortunately, when commencing that work he informed members that there were no working papers to back up those records. It was explained that financial papers were not stored for that length of time.

He confirmed discussions and conversations with Audit Wales to resolve the issue had taken place. He informed the committee, it had been agreed to restate the asset register from 2016/17 to the present day. That date had been chosen as that year was the last date that all council houses were revalued. He stressed the work had started, but it may prove difficult to meet the report deadline for the March committee meeting. Finance officers thanked Audit Wales for the continued support and positive communication.

A full update meeting will be presented at the March committee meeting.

The legislation for publication of the accounts had changed over recent years, it still stated the early close down dates. Members heard if a dispensation was issued explaining why those deadlines are not met the accounts can be published at a later date. The authority had fulfilled the legal requirements needed.

David Williams the Audit Wales representative echoed the thoughts of the Head of Finance. He concurred correspondence had taken place and they were satisfied it would be the best way forward.

Audit Wales looked for assurance of the opening balances to ensure a clear audit opinion can be provided.

The Head of Finance informed the committee that currently it was only Denbighshire County Council that was in the current situation. In the previous few years 2 other local authorities had been in a similar situation. Communication with those councils and officers who have worked on those issued had been very beneficial for both Audit Wales officers and Denbighshire Finance officers.

The Chair offered the support of the committee to all officers, including the agreement for a special meetings or further discussions that may be needed if required.

RESOLVED, *subject to the above that the minutes of the Governance and Audit committee held on 23 November 2022 be received and approved as a correct record.*

5 RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND WORKFORCE PLANNING

The Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policies and Equalities introduced the report (previously circulated). She informed members recruitment and retention had been included on the corporate risk register.

The report had been produced in order to provide the committee with up to date information regarding Recruitment and Retention issues within the council and the progress on Workforce Planning activities.

The Interim Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services provided members with further information on the report. Alongside the report, 3 appendices had been provided to help support the report and its contents. Pre pandemic the authority had a number of areas which had been hard to recruit in to, these had been some of the lower paid roles and a number of professional roles. During the pandemic those areas had remained the main vacancies that had been difficult to recruit. Statistics had been provided to support the hard work on recruitment.

The main barrier the authority faced had been the level of pay. The authority pay structure compared to agency pay structures was often lower. Members heard that following the pay award agreed in April 2022 a significant increase in pay for lower paid roles would be more in line with similar roles outside the authority. It was hoped the increase in pay would aid the recruitment of these roles.

Agile working was another concern noted by officers. The pandemic saw a number of roles across the job spectrum become more accommodating with working locations. This had impacted the recruitment and retention of staff.

Members heard officers were currently in consultation on a new way of working policy. It allowed employees more choice on where they work, it was hoped it would have a positive impact on the retention of staff along with the recruitment of staff from a wider area.

Following a review, officers highlighted one reason employees moved to other employment had been due to staff development. It was stressed training was provided to all staff and the development of staff to further roles.

Members were guided to the head count statistics, the figure for 2019 looked lower than previous years, that had been due to the 660 Denbighshire Leisure staff not being included. The statistics provided a quick reference for year on year staffing levels.

In summary, members heard officers were aware of areas of concern. Work with services was on going to recruit in to vacant roles. Social care in particular social workers was a key area of concern. This area was of concern across Wales and the UK as a whole.

The Chair thanked the officers for the detailed analysis of the report. He reminded members the reason for the report had been due to a request made from members. He reminded members a report was presented to the committee in October 2022 entitled Care Inspectorate Wales - Inspection of Intake and Intervention Service 2021. The report recognised the input of a high number of vacancies across the service. The committee requested further information on the delivery of other council services impacted by staff recruitment and retention issues. Any concerns raised on the delivery of services may be a governance issue and should be included in the Council Annual Governance Statement. He also reminded members that Internal Audit will be reviewing the effectiveness of the measures put in place later in the year.

During the debate the following points were discussed in more detail:

- Within the headcount table, it was noted the Social care staff were included under the Community Support Service and Education and Children's Service. Members noted it may not be easy to read and identify for the public to identify particular areas of concerns.
- Members raised the issue of more than one authority recruiting for the same roles causing 'poaching' of staff from other areas. Denbighshire officers continued to escalate concerns at local regional and national levels. It was noted the issues discussed in the report were UK wide concerns.
- Further requests had been made through the representative bodies for consideration of a national pay structure in particular equality of pay with the NHS.
- It was stressed that all options were being explored when addressing the concerns in social care, including grow your own, career pathways and trainee pathways. Any learning from those areas explored would be shared across other service areas in the authority.
- Training and development of employees was a focus at meetings with services and work force planning. A number of different forms were reviewed. Members heard one of the five principals set by the Chief Executive was round staff development. It was hoped it would filter down to the people's strategy, which focused on staff development.
- Social care in Wales was delegated to the Welsh Local Authorities, a national pay structure would be a discussion for the Welsh Government.
- Regionally an agreement had been made to not take agency workers from other local authority. The Health Board across North Wales did not use

agency staff, it was often from a different pool of staff and did not cause any issue. An agreement from the Health Board had been to allow the authority use of bank nursing staff if required.

- Lower paid jobs such as catering and cleaning had previously been an area of concern. This had not affected the service provided. The professional roles were taking longer to recruit to. The broad turnover rate across the whole organisation was at average or just below. Recruitment of staff continued, given the current environment that was more challenging.
- The committee requested officers to inform the committee if they identified any issues of the delivery of services due to staffing.
- The action plan included in the papers, indicated the work that was being conducted through each service. The Lead Member was regularly updated and kept abreast of any concerns. Members heard a report had previously been presented to Performance Scrutiny with the intention to present an update to the committee at a later date. Any service concerns were escalated to the CET to ensure support was provided where possible.
- The Chair supported, Performance Scrutiny receiving and debating the papers and updates. Members heard the papers were due to be presented to the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs for information with the intention to discuss the method to proceed. All members of the committee were in agreement to endorse the report and papers to be presented to the Performance Scrutiny committee.
- Assurance was provided that HR performed a workforce planning exercise annually with every service. Included was succession planning and areas and roles within those services that would need to be addressed. The People Strategy will be all encompassing around workforce issues and look forwards at how the organisation develops to meet any challenges.
- Collaborative work with partners had taken place and officers were open to looking at further ways of collaborative working. Members heard along with the official collaborative working close working relationships and informal joint working did take place and was beneficial.
- The Monitoring Officer confirmed, officers would revisit the Audit Wales report on Springing Forward to look any extracts that could be presented alongside a report to Performance Scrutiny.

The Chair thanked the officers for the detailed response to members questions and concerns.

It was,

RESOLVED, that

- I. the committee noted the details contained within the report and the interventions that had been put in place in order to support and strengthen recruitment, retention and workforce planning.*
- II. The committee endorsed the report to be presented to Performance Scrutiny when discussed at the next Chairs and Vice Chairs committee meeting.*

6 INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

The Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets along with the Chief Internal Auditor (CIA) introduced the report (previously circulated). It was

highlighted to members the dates on the report header should read January 2023. Members were updated on the Internal Audit Team's progress in terms of its service delivery, assurance provision, reviews completed, performance and effectiveness in driving improvement.

He informed the committee that since the last meeting two members of the audit team had moved to different employment. Close working with HR to look at recruit as soon as possible had taken place. The CIA offered his thanks to the staff in HR for the support and guidance that had been given. It had been decided the best process would be to advertise for all 3 positions (Senior Auditor, Principal Auditor and career pathways auditor) at the same time. He informed members the adverts for those jobs had been made public over a number of different platforms including social media, internal websites and local papers. He was pleased to let the committee know a number of applicants had been received for all posts. Interviews for the posts had taken place earlier in the year and the Principal Auditor position had offered to a highly qualified individual. It was hoped he would be in post by February. Unfortunately, the applicants for the Senior Auditor post had not met the job specification. He informed members that two individuals had been appointed on to the career pathway role and would be in post as soon as possible.

The two individuals on the career pathway would create some work for the CIA to establish training courses and learning paths for the individuals. Looking forward it would create and develop staff in the audit team.

The report provided information on work carried out by Internal Audit since the last committee meeting. It allowed the committee to monitor Internal Audit's performance and progress as well as providing summaries of Internal Audit reports. Also included was a summary of the changes to the structure of Internal Audit for members reference.

Confirmation that 9 Audits had been completed since the last committee meeting. Details of 8 of the audits were included in the report. The ninth audit had been completed for Denbighshire Leisure Limited, it was an annual report presented to their governance subcommittee.

Of the 8 completed audits all received a high or medium assurance. There had been three follow up reviews completed since the last update and summaries were included for information. All three follow up reports had moved from a medium assurance to high.

Members heard additional information on external audit reports had been provided, the information had been extracted from a report that had been presented to the Chief Executive Team, Senior Leadership Team and to Cabinet briefing. The Chief Executive had requested to be made aware of all audit reports.

Progress had been made on the internal audit plan. Members heard 2 whistleblowing reports and one officer request for some additional work had been received. Over the past two years, there was two special investigations completed, this year three special investigations had been requested. These investigations put pressure on officer time and impacted the progress on scheduled audit work. Members heard the CIA would aid completion of the special investigation financial work.

It had been noted a number of reports and audits that would be completed this year. A further update on the intended work would be provided at the March committee meeting.

The Chair thanked the CIA for the detailed report, he felt the additional information on the external reports was beneficial for members to keep abreast of reports received and provide assurance to the committee that the authority was responding to those reports.

The CIA informed the committee schools had not been added to the Verto system to input data. It was agreed that was being looked at for future development. School data was received and stored on a separate spreadsheet. A request for services to update via Verto had been made. The CIA suggested he send an email to Heads of Service reminding them of the importance of using the Verto system which has been endorsed by the committee.

Members were pleased to note the audit team vacant posts had been filled. They acknowledged the time it would take to train members of the team and offered support. The CIA stated it would be a long training process to educate and train the new staff.

The audit plan was a flexible plan which could be amended if and when necessary. Members heard the CIA had planned to meet with Heads of Services to discuss audits planned and potential areas that could be added or moved over to next year's audit plan.

The Chair noted within the report it had noted a change to the position of the internal audit team within the authority and asked for further detail. The CIA explained internal audit was in consultation to be moved from under the Governance and Business Service to be included under the Finance sector of the authority. Members heard internal audit had previously been under Finance a number of years ago. Links and communication with teams and services would continue if the move did take place.

The Chair suggested an additional column be included in the audit plan of when an audit had previously been conducted. To indicate to members any potential gaps in completion of audits. The CIA confirmed he could include an additional column to illustrate when an audit was last completed.

It was noted the 2 risks that had been identified in the completion of the audit of Ysgol Melyd. Members asked if those findings were typical of other schools and if any analysis of audit findings across schools to identify any areas of concern was completed. The CIA confirmed an analysis of school findings did take place to identify any trends. Discussions with the Head of Education and his team and where appropriate meet with Head teachers to explain any concerns found.

Members were reminded the full detail of each audit completed was provided via email for members information. The report provided a summary of the findings. The review of Contract Management had been reviewed numerous times over recent years, going forward when reviews of services included contract management this would be reviewed as part of that audit. If any concern were

raised a further audit of contract management may be necessary. If no issues were identified it was likely to be scheduled for about 3 years' time.

The Chair thanked the Lead Member and Chief Internal Auditor for the report and detailed responses to members questions.

RESOLVED that, members note the Internal Audit's progress and performance and the committee note a communication via the Chief Internal Auditor will be issued to schools and Services regarding data reporting on the Verto system.

At this juncture the meeting adjourned for a 5 minute comfort break (11.15 a.m.)

The meeting reconvened at 11.20 a.m.

7 BUDGET PROCESS UPDATE

The Lead Member for Finance Performance and Strategic Assets, introduced the Budget Process Update (previously circulated). The report provided members with details of the process that had been followed to set the budget and provided details of the timeline. The budget was a standing item at Cabinet and had been discussed. The Lead Member praised the transparency of the Finance team, including Lead Members and held a number of meetings with numerous teams and individuals. In her opinion she stated she was confident that members had received an opportunity to be part of the budget process.

The Head of Finance explained the summary report had included an appendix which provided a detailed update to all members following the draft settlement. The information had been what had been in the Cabinet and Council report.

Members heard the Autumn statement from the UK Government maintained the final two years of the three-year agreement for funding that was announced last year. They also announced additional funding for social care, education and the NHS.

The Welsh Government announced its budget on the 13th December, with the draft settlement being announced on the 14th December 2022. Members were guided through the brief summary of the settlement (appendix 1). The better settlement produced an additional £8.2m funding than what was expected. This enabled the authority to fund the budget gap of £4.8m and not use any cash reserves for the 2023/24 financial year. Officers had been made aware of an increase in energy costs, a pressure budget of £2.6m had included to cover the additional costs.

He stressed demand driven statutory services would always be met.

It was stressed to the committee the 8.2% increase was still below inflation observed. The pressures identified above amount to £25.116m. A draft settlement of around 14.5% would have been required in order to fund all these pressures. The net +8.2% settlement generated £14.231m additional revenue leaving a funding gap of £10.885m. The Head of Finance guided members through the proposals to bridge the gap details of which were included in the appendix. One of the positive proposals highlighted was the impact of the triennial actuarial review of the Clwyd

Pension Fund. Which resulted in the Council finding itself in a position of a small surplus instead of a significant deficit that required repaying. This results in a saving of £3.828m.

He informed members of the proposed timetable of Budget process as detailed:

- 17th January – Full Council Briefing
- 24th January – Cabinet Budget Report
- 31st January – Council Budget Report
- 28th February – Council – Full Council Tax Report / Approval
- Early March – Final Settlement

The Early Settlement previously used to be October for the draft settlement and December for the Final settlement. Welsh Government have agreed the time difference between the draft and final settlement would be kept to a minimum.

Members heard it was hoped a report would be made available for Cabinet in April 2023 on the revised medium term strategy followed by a Council Briefing dependant on the determination of Cabinet in April.

The Chair opened the meeting for members comments and questions. The Lead Member and officers expanded on the following areas:

- Confirmation the Council Briefing held on 17th January had been supportive of the paper and proposals. In principal Cabinet members were in support of the Council Tax level and the proposals in the paper. Cabinet had formally recommended the proposals to County Council.
- Details of the consultation with SLT, Cabinet Briefing, Group Leaders and Council Briefing meetings was included in the report. It was noted the School Budget Forum had been included in the proposals through-out the year. Trade Unions had been consulted through Local Joint Consultative Committee. Consultation had been difficult due to the uncertainty of the settlements. Members heard a press release would be issued providing details of the proposals. He informed the committee he had worked with the communications team to put together a communications plan to be presented to CET and Cabinet.
- It was stressed the difficulties reported on the findings of Betsi Cadwalader Health Board did not have an impact on the authority's finances.
- Officers aimed to avoid any large increases in Council Tax. He stated some Welsh authorities have had to propose a large increase in Council Tax due to previous years' having a low tax increase. Denbighshire were slightly above what Welsh Government assumed we collect in Council Tax and with the proposed increase would remain slightly above the assumptions.
- It was stressed to members it was not possible fund the gap in the authority's finances just by increasing Council Tax. Officers felt the proposed 3.8% increase was the correct level of increase.
- It was stressed the papers had been discussed at a number of groups, political parties, committees and officer meetings. It had not been agreed by Council and could still be amended.
- It was noted by members that the challenges faced by the authority and officers would continue in to future financial years.
- It was stressed previous years had seen higher increases to Council Tax, there was no cap on the level of increase set. The financial year 2025/6 was

when the UK Government funding dropped and that would cause potential difficult decisions being required.

- Members thanked the officers for the detailed report. Thanks were given to all officers for the in-depth work and coherent information.
- Strategic pressures faced by services were presented to the budget board with details and projections of the challenges to the budget board. It was difficult to assume service costs for future years.
- It was confirmed the budget mitigation reserve was still in place to support any overspends. A report was presented to Cabinet every month detailed any actions needed.
- The Head of Finance was pleased it was proposed to bring Internal Audit under the Finance service.
- It was stressed it was difficult to predict the pressures on pay. It was based on a 4% pay increase. It was confirmed the pay settlement would have to be agreed and paid. The 4% was an estimate figure.
- Members heard work in the Education and Children's Services to review and look at ways to provide services, including joint working with partners and neighbouring authorities.

The Chair thanked the Lead Member and the Head of Finance for the responses to members questions and comments.

RESOLVED, that Members note the latest budget proposals and position for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

8 TREASURY MANAGEMENT

The Lead Member for Finance Performance and Strategic Assets, introduced the Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2023/24 Report (Appendix 1 - previously circulated) which showed how the Council would manage its investments and its borrowing for the coming year and sets out the Policies within which the Treasury Management function operate.

The Treasury Management Update Report (appendix 2) provided details of the Council's Treasury Management activities during 2022/23.

The Head of Finance thanked the Lead Member for the introduction. He concurred the paper was presented to the committee for information.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the "CIPFA TM Code") requires the Council to approve the TMSS and Prudential Indicators annually.

The Governance and Audit Committee was required to review this report before it is approved by Council on 28 February 2023.

Members were reminded of the three priorities considered when investing funds:

- keep money safe (security);
- make sure that the money comes back when it is needed (liquidity);
- make sure a decent rate of return is achieved (yield).

Members were guided to the graph diagrams of the investment and borrowing balances which illustrated the changing levels over the previous three years. The Treasury Investment Strategy provided members with a great deal of information on the guidance and rules the authority followed with any investments.

Members were guided through the list of approved borrowing sources. Long term borrowing was sourced from PWLB any short term borrowing is sourced via a broker to secure the best interest rate.

Members heard the Minimum Revenue Provision was an annual statement produced. It was noted no change had been made to the policy from the previous year.

Members were guided through the Liability benchmark, detailed within the report. The Head of Finance stressed the importance of the monitoring of this with Arlingclose. He highlighted a large increase was shown in the table. The reason for that increase was due to the flooding defence work taking place in the North of the Authority. He explained the cost for the work was having to be borrowed but Welsh Government were providing 85% funding to cover the costs.

Appendix 2 provided the in-year update for members. Members heard two loans had been secured £10m in August 2022 and £10m in September 2022 from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) in advance of further interest rate rises. Members heard the authority was required to submit annually a detailed 3 year capital expenditure plan to the PWLB with confirmation of the purpose of the capital expenditure. Officers had to confirm that we were not planning to purchase 'investment assets primarily for yield' in the current or next two financial years.

It was noted work continued on the development a medium term strategy for capital. This would help identify projects that we are planning to develop and invest in over a 5 to 10 year period, but had not yet gone through the approval process.

The Chair thanked the Lead Member and Head of Finance for the detailed summary of the report. He stressed to members how essential this area of finance was in the financial management of every Local Authority in the UK.

In response to the Chair's question the Head of Finance agreed Treasury Management was an important element for the Governance and Audit committee to receive reports regularly and be kept abreast of the finances of the authority. He stressed the rules of which the team followed were published annually along with the authority's performance measured against those rules. It was stressed to members that officers were in regular contact with Arlingclose with any questions or issues for support and guidance.

Members heard an internal audit on Treasury Management was conducted to review the processes in place.

The Chief Internal Auditor added, going forward it was hoped that internal audit would conduct a light touch review of all the financial systems in place this year with a full review of each area next year.

The council was predominantly a borrowing council, it only invested when the council had too much cash to hold to limit risk. Any investments the authority did have were on a short term basis.

The Head of Finance confirmed the spike in the debt maturity profile in 2056 was due to the HRA buy out that the authority completed. It had been a requirement that any authorities with HRA had to reschedule the debt, a loan had been taken out to cover the costs.

A loan would be taken out to cover the cost of the flood defence scheme. Borrowing specifically for that scheme would be needed, members heard that consultation with Arlingclose would be sought when the funds were required.

RESOLVED, that the Committee note the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2023/24, the Prudential Indicators 2023/24 to 2024/25 and 2025/26. The Committee note the Treasury Management Update Report and confirm it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment as part of its consideration.

9 GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Governance and Audit Committee's Forward Work Programme (FWP) was presented for consideration (previously circulated).

The Chair informed the committee a meeting between the Chair, Vice-Chair, Monitoring Officer and Chief Internal Auditor had taken place. The meeting had been arranged to discuss the committee's work programme.

It was pleasing to see the dates listed had been extended until the end of the year. It was decided to review the reports that are presented to the committee to ensure adequate time is given to agenda items. The committee had responsibility to receive a number of reports such as Statement of Accounts, Treasury Management and Internal Audit reports.

The Chair informed the committee the Governance and Audit Annual report was in his opinion a key report, which demonstrated how the committee accounted for those charged with governance. The annual report was method to report back to County Council the work of the committee.

The report for 2020/21 and 2021/2022 would be rolled into one report for the committee's resolution. It was a constitutional requirement for the committee to complete an annual review.

Members heard the Chair had raised the new Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance which was available for all UK Local Authorities with particular reference to Audit committees. It stressed the importance of Governance and Audit committee's completing an annual report.

The Chair suggested to the officers that the next annual report was presented to Council as had been presented previously, but when completing the report next year officers followed the CIPFA guidance.

The Chair encouraged members to contact him directly with any suggestions or amendments to the work programme.

Members thanked the Chair and Vice-Chair for raising the work programme as an area of consideration.

***RESOLVED** that, the Governance and Audit Committee's forward work programme be noted.*

10 INFORMATION REPORT - PUBLIC SECTOR READINESS FOR NET ZERO CARBON BY 2030

The Chair informed the committee the Audit Wales report on Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030 (previously circulated) was for information.

In his opinion the report was very important. The report made reference to the impact on Corporate Governance of the Council. The Chair suggested the report be deferred to the next committee meeting and be presented as an item for debate. Members were in agreement for the item to be included as an agenda report for discussion.

Lay Member Paul Whitham, made reference to paragraph 20 it was addressed to those charged with governance and scrutiny. He asked if the report was due to be shared with any Scrutiny committee. The Chair confirmed that all Councillors were charged with Governance, with the Governance and Audit Committee have the delegated role to review the Governance of the authority.

Audit Wales representative Gwilym Bury directed members to paragraph 10 of the report. The report did not include specific recommendations but more areas for consideration by public bodies. These considerations could be discussed by either Scrutiny or Governance and Audit committee.

The Climate Change Project Manager reaffirmed the reason for the information report was to ascertain where best to present the report and officers comments.

In conclusion members agreed for an agenda report on the Audit Wales paper along with the officer response be included on the agenda for the next Governance and Audit committee.

***RESOLVED** that the Governance and Audit committee note the information report. Members also resolved to include the papers and officer response on the next committee meeting.*

The meeting concluded at 13:20 p.m.