

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHORITY  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – MINUTES**

**Date:** Thursday 16 July 2020

**Time:** 14:00 – 14.50

**Place:** Virtual Meeting

**Present:** Councillors Gardener (Vice-Chairman), Gowing, Harford, Kindersley, McGuire (Chairman) and Scutt

**Officers:** Jon Anderson – Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Chris Parker – Area Commander, Suzanne Rowlett– RSM, Daniel Snowdon - Democratic Services Officer and Deb Thompson – Scrutiny and Assurance Manager and Matthew Warren – Deputy Chief Executive Officer

**80. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN/WOMAN**

It was proposed by Councillor Gardener and seconded by Councillor Gowing that Councillor Mac McGuire be elected as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2020/21.

**81. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN/WOMAN**

It was proposed by Councillor McGuire and seconded by Councillor Gowing that Councillor Ian Gardener be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2020/21.

**82. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no apologies for absence and no declarations of interest.

**83. MINUTES – 3<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd October 2019 were approved as a correct record, subject to the amendment of the final bullet point of minute 73, Internal Audit Strategy 2019/20 to the Institute of Internal Auditors.

**84. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee received the Internal Audit Progress Report. The report was first circulated in April 2020 and since then two further pieces of work had been completed relating to General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and governance. The final Internal Audit Annual Report 2019/20 would be circulated following the meeting however it was highlighted that the overall opinion was positive with further enhancements identified for risk management, governance and internal control to ensure it remained adequate and effective.

During discussion of the report Members:

- Clarified that on page 4 of the report should have stated October and not February.
- Noted the comments of the Deputy Chief Executive regarding the system challenges relating to TRaCS and CFRMIS that required time and investment to improve the quality of the information held on the system. Working groups had been established for both systems to address the issues highlighted in the audit report. With regard to assurance, all issues highlighted in the report had been addressed.
- Clarified that following the meeting, reports would be circulated that would provide details of the Fleet Management Policies and Procedures audit.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the contents of the report.

## **85. FIRE AUTHORITY INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

Members received the internal audit report regarding the governance arrangements of the Fire Authority. Members noted the outcome of the audit and its findings regarding structural arrangements following the COVID-19 pandemic and how conflicts of interest were recorded and managed during a meeting.

During discussion of the report Members:

- Drew attention to page 4 of the report regarding Fire Authority meetings being required to assume the responsibilities of the Policy and Resources Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for as long as the restrictions of the coronavirus pandemic were in place and questioned why this meeting was taking place. Officers explained that the situation had progressed since the start of the pandemic and legislative changes that permitted virtual meetings now enabled the two committees to perform their functions.
- Expressed concern regarding the reports presented to the Committee and sought assurance that the Committee was operating as it should. Officers

confirmed this was the case and that the two reports discussed by RSM would be circulated after the meeting for review and comment.

- Noted the recommendation regarding declarations of interest and welcomed it as a useful reminder not to overlook the basics of a meeting. What action, if any, is taken in relation to any declarations of interest would be recorded moving forward.

It was resolved to note the report.

## **86. COVID-18 FRAUD RISKS**

The Committee considered a report regarding COVID-19 Fraud Risks.

During discussion Members:

- Noted that the report was generic for all RSM clients and suggested that it would have been beneficial to see what steps the Fire Authority was taking to implement controls for a further report later in the year. Officers explained that the risks highlighted were contained in the Authority strategic risk register. Cyber fraud was one of the highest risks identified and as a result continued, substantial efforts were made regarding training and security.
- Requested that a report to understand the impact and additional costs to the Fire Authority of the pandemic (to date) and how it could be mitigated in the future was undertaken. Officers confirmed that discussions regarding a Member-led review of the Fire Authority's response to the pandemic had taken place and that terms of reference would be established for approval. **ACTION:** Deb Thompson
- Commented that access to virtual meetings was essential during the pandemic and suggested that further work should be considered to ensure that a proper meetings programme be maintained in the event of the internet breaking down. **ACTION:** Democratic Services

It was resolved to note the report.

## **87. COVID-19 EMAIL SCAMS**

The Committee received a report regarding emails scams arising during COVID-19.

It was resolved to note the report.

## **88. CYBER SECURITY RISKS**

The Committee received a report regarding cyber security risks that highlighted the potential issues that could arise during times of uncertainty and crisis and how criminals sought to exploit them.

It was resolved to note the report.

## **89. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme and noted the additional Member-led review of the Fire Authority's response to COVID-19.

The next scheduled meeting was due to take place on 1<sup>st</sup> October and it was confirmed that this would be a virtual meeting.

Members noted that there were currently two ongoing Member-led reviews (approach to recruitment and health and well-being), both of which had been deferred for a number of reasons outside Members control. Officers sought to widen both reviews to encompass activity during COVID-19 before bringing them back to Committee in the autumn. It was also recommended that a previous review of the Fire Authority Structure and Membership be restarted with a reporting date no later than the scheduled April 2021 meeting.

**ACTION:** Deputy Chief Executive Officer/Deb Thompson/Chairman

It was resolved to note the work programme.

**CHAIRMAN**