

# AUDIT AND CORPORATE SERVICES REVIEW COMMITTEE

22 November 2017

Present: Councillor M Williams (Chair)  
Mr A Archer, Mrs G Hayward, Dr R Heath Davies and Councillor R Owens.

*[Councillor M James arrived during consideration of the budget performance report, Minute 7 refers.]*

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 11.00am – 12.50pm)

## 1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Baker, Councillor D Clements, Councillor M James and Councillor P Kidney. It was suggested that if, in future, Members were not able to attend a meeting they attempt to find a substitute to attend in their place.

## 2. Disclosures

Councillor M Williams disclosed an interest in the element of the Performance Report which referred to investigation of alternative delivery mechanisms for the provision of information to visitors as he had an involvement with Tenby Museum, but he remained in the room and took full part in the discussion thereon.

## 3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 19 July 2017 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2017 be confirmed and signed.

## 4. Health and Safety Group: report of meeting

Members considered the report of the meeting of the Health and Safety Group held on 13 July 2017.

Members noted from the appendix to the minutes that two aggression incidents had been recorded in 2015. The Chief Executive questioned why only two incidents had been reported as he did not expect either staff or Members to be the subject of aggression. He believed that the number of incidents increased when the subject was highlighted, and he therefore encouraged reporting. Another Member asked about lone working procedures and the Chief Executive confirmed that these were in place, and training on personal resilience and safety had been held previously, however one of the Members noted for future reference that excellent training was carried out by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust.



It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the meeting of the Health and Safety Group held on 13 July 2017 be received.

#### **5. Internal Audit Report 2017/18**

The Chair welcomed Mr Robin Pritchard from the Authority's Internal Auditors, Gateway Assure. Mr Pritchard explained that the report before Members was the outcome of work completed against Block 2 of the 2017/18 Operational Audit Plan previously approved by the Committee and this covered Communications, income generation and an IT health check. A substantial assurance had been provided in all areas, with the findings, conclusions and any recommendations set out in the report.

With regard to income generation, the Chief Executive updated Members that the External Funding Manager had recently started in post. Members acknowledged the importance of this role, having heard about the large income stream that this source generated in other National Park Authorities.

Mr Pritchard explained that the IT Health Check had focussed on the General Data Protection Regulations which came into effect in May 2018. Members asked about the recommendation to update the IT Strategy and questioned why this had not been completed previously. The Internal Auditor explained that he was aware that work was in progress and as the deadline had not been exceeded this was not an area of concern. With regard to business continuity, where targets had slipped, officers acknowledged that the Authority was not as resilient as it had been or would like to be, but this was a result of the reducing budget. However the Chief Executive expressed his confidence that any incidents could be dealt with appropriately.

**NOTED.**

*[Councillor R Owens was not present for all of the following discussion]*

#### **6. Performance Report for the Period Ending 30 September 2017**

The Performance and Compliance Coordinator reminded Members that the structure of the Authority's Corporate and Resources Plan for 2017/18 reflected that of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, with seven well-being objectives. The performance report had also been modified to follow these objectives, with an additional section providing general governance information. The report presented the performance to 30 September 2017, and highlighted some of those indicators where the RAG indicator was red.

Members asked whether it was possible to report the number of retrospective applications received by the Authority to a future meeting of



the Committee. With regard to the enforcement figures on page 41 of the report, officers acknowledged that this was a challenging area for every planning authority. Recruitment of an Enforcement Officer had recently been successful and it was hoped this would bring staffing levels back to capacity. There was some discussion regarding the number of conditions imposed on applications and the Authority's ability to enforce them. It was suggested that a workshop for Members would be helpful when all these issues could be discussed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the performance report be received.

*[Councillor M James arrived during consideration of the following report.]*

#### **7. Budget Performance Report – 6 months to September 2017**

In the Finance Manager's absence, the Chief Executive took Members through the budget performance report. This showed that the net revenue expenditure was £1,944,000, 15.2% under the profiled budget for the 6 month period, and the main reasons for the variance were set out. Details of the Capital Programme and Usable and Earmarked reserves were also given.

He added that having recently met the new Minister for Environment, the indication was that there would be a 5% cut in the Authority's budget for 2018/19 together with a similar reduction likely for 19/20.

Members praised the way that the reduction in funding had been managed in recent years, but noted that this could not continue. The Chief Executive added that the project based approach to funding adopted by Welsh Government meant it was difficult for officers and Members to plan, however a variety of different projects had been submitted in the current year. It was suggested that the health and wellbeing sectors, as well as culture and heritage, were further areas that could be explored for additional funding.

**NOTED.**

#### **8. Risk Register**

The Chief Executive presented the latest risk register which had recently been reviewed by both the Authority's Management and Leadership Teams when progress and changes had been noted. These included increases to risk 1 due to a potential reduction in funding from Welsh Government, and risk 28 on the delivery of the new document management system, and a decrease in risk 35 on the failure to meet the delivery of the Local Development Plan on the agreed time frame.

It was acknowledged that the decisions taken by Members had consequences, particularly with regard to planning matters, and the risk of



the Authority being awarded costs when an appeal was lost was one such issue. The risk of reputational damage resulting from the closure of the Visitor Centre in Newport was another example they highlighted.

With regard to the Authority's Cilrhedyn site, the Chief Executive added that a report on its future would be brought to a future meeting of the Authority.

**NOTED.**

**9. Legislative Changes in Data Protection**

It was reported that it had been necessary to postpone this presentation until the next meeting of the Committee.

**NOTED.**

**10. Delegation of any issues for consideration by the Continuous Improvement Group**

It was **RESOLVED** that there were no issues of concern that the Committee wished to delegate to the Continuous Improvement Group for consideration.

