

AUDIT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 6
13 SEPTEMBER 2021	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Peter Carpenter, Corporate Director Resources	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Coles, Cabinet Member for Finance	
Contact Officer(s):	Peter Carpenter, Corporate Director Resources	Tel. 452520

USE OF CONSULTANTS – UPDATE REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Corporate Director Resources	Deadline date: N/A
<p>It is recommended that Audit Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> consider the update report on the use of Consultants for the 2021/22 period for the first four months of the financial year (April 2021 - July 2021). 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to Audit Committee following a referral from Sustainable Growth Committee on 6 March 2012

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to update Audit Committee as to the level of spend on external Consultants.

The report is presented to enable review of the consultancy and interim policy adopted on 26 March 2012.

- 2.2 This report is for Audit Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No.

- 2.2.1.11 To review any issue referred to it by the Chief Executive or a Director, or any Council body; and
- 2.2.1.15 To consider the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and agreeing necessary actions to ensure compliance with best practice.

3. TIMESCALES

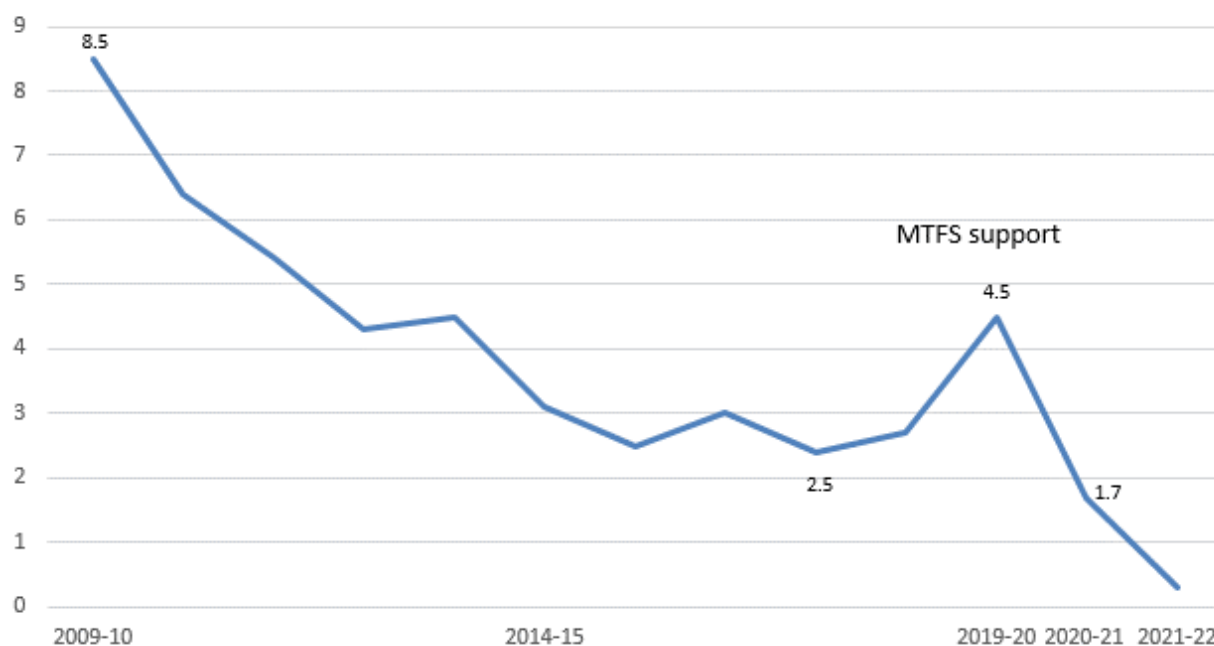
Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	n/a
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 In March 2010, the Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee requested a review into Peterborough City Council's use of consultants. A cross-party review group was established to undertake this work on behalf of the Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.2 The report from the Consultancy Review Group was issued in March 2011. Scrutiny also recommended that on-going monitoring of the use of consultants should fall to Audit Committee. Audit Committee considered this role at their meeting of 26 March 2012.
- 4.3 A further report, outlining the information requested, was discussed at the meeting of 5 November 2012. Further updates have been considered at subsequent meetings, continuing the regular reporting to Audit Committee.
- 4.4 The expenditure for the last ten full years is shown below.

	Total £m
2011-12	5.4
2012-13	4.3
2013-14	4.5
2014-15	3.1
2015-16	2.5
2016-17	3.0
2017-18	2.4
2018-19	2.7
2019-20	4.5
2020-21	1.7
2021-22 (first four months)	0.1

Consultancy spend £m



4.5 The chart above shows the reducing trend of expenditure on consultancy, with an upswing during 2019/20 primarily resulting from the external support for the Council's financial improvement programme. The final outturn for 2020-21 shows costs of £1.7m, and cost from April 2021 to July 2021 are £0.1m. Costs for the current financial year are detailed in Appendix 1.

4.6 The Council also employs Agency staff through a number of Contracts. The spend for the past 5 financial years on Agency has been:

- 2016/17 - £6.3m
- 2017/18 - £6.5m
- 2018/19 - £8.8m
- 2019/20 - £6.4m
- 2020/21 - £3.6m
- 2021/22 - £0.9m (first four months)

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Audit Committee considered options for how they wish to monitor use of consultants in the future at their meeting of 26 March 2012. Subsequent discussions at the meetings referred to have refined the information they wish to monitor.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

6.1 That Audit Committee consider the update report on the use of consultants.

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

7.1 The recommendations are in line with the recommendations of Scrutiny, and the view of Audit Committee in undertaking this role.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 Audit Committee considered options for how they wish to monitor use of consultants in the future at their meeting of 26 March 2012.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

9.1 The report sets out the costs of consultants and agency staff.

Legal Implications

9.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equalities Implications

9.3 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Carbon Implications

9.4 There are no carbon implications arising from this report.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- Consultancy Review Report, March 2011;
- Report to Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee, 8 November 2011;
- Report to Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee, 6 March 2012;
- Reports to Cabinet and Audit Committee 26 March 2012;
- Reports to Audit Committee of 5 November 2012; 4 February 2013;
- Report to Audit Committee of 4 November 2013;
- Report to Audit Committee of 3 November 2014 and supplementary report to Audit Committee of 2 February 2015;
- Report to Audit Committee of 9 November 2015
- Report to Audit Committee of 22 November 2016
- Reports to Audit Committee of 19 November 2018; 11 February 2019
- Reports to Audit Committee of 15 July 2019; 16 September 2019; 18 November 2019; 27 January 2020
- Reports to Audit Committee 14 September 2020; 16 November 2020; 25 January 2021

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 - list of companies used during the period 1 April 2021 to 31 July 2021 with summary of purpose of engagement.

**Appendix 1 - List of companies with Summary
2021/22 (April – 31 July 2021)**

Supplier Name	Initiative	Amount
Airey Consultancy Services Ltd	CTR Annual Update Service	695.00
Allen Lane	Housing Accountant	35,713.80
Cambridgeshire County Council	ICT staff resources	12,296.94
Grant Thornton UK LLP	Financial Improvement Programme, Lean Cost Structure	10,680.00
Idox Software Ltd	Technical consultancy for Uniform (planning) system upgrade	2,850.00
Inform CPI Ltd	RV Finder	200.00
Kings Hedges Educational Federation	Secondment to School improvement team	7,760.72
Liz Holmes Consultancy	Delivery of training at Literacy Subject Leader Meeting	545.00
Mark Stephen Land Management	Soil Testing	750.00
Shelton Development Services Ltd	NSAP Grant claim	910.00
The Sports Consultancy	Feasibility study on New Leisure Development for Werrington	10,325.00
Valuation Office Agency	Viability Advice for Planning Application	324.74
Vero HR Ltd	HR Support	683.85
ZELLIS UK LIMITED	Resourcelink (HR/Payroll) system Cloud migration	1,099.80
2021/22 Total for April 2021-July 2021		£84,834.85