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| AUDIT COMMITTEE | AGENDA ITEM No. 8 |
| 21 FEBRUARY 2022 | PUBLIC REPORT |

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|--------------------------------|---|-------------|
| Report of: | Cecilie Booth, Interim Corporate Director Resources | |
| Cabinet Member(s) responsible: | Cllr Andy Coles, Cabinet Member for Finance | |
| Contact Officer(s): | Cecilie Booth, Interim Corporate Director Resources | Tel. 452520 |

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| USE OF CONSULTANTS – UPDATE REPORT |
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| RECOMMENDATIONS | |
| FROM: Interim Corporate Director Resources | Deadline date: N/A |
| <p>It is recommended that Audit Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. consider the update report on the Use of Consultants for the 2021/22 period for the first ten months of the financial year (April 2021 - January 2022). 2. Agree that future monitoring is undertaken within the normal budgetary control reporting process, and brought back to Audit Committee only if requested. | |

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.

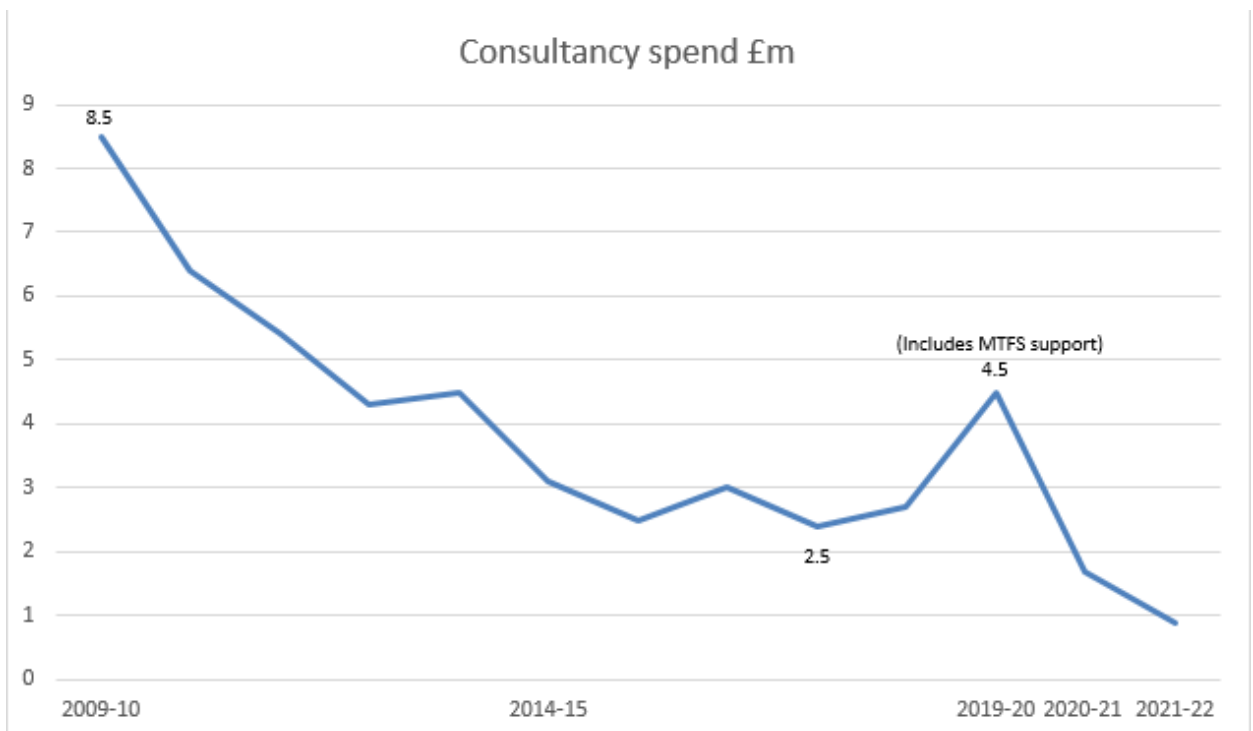
3. TIMESCALES

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| 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 10 months) | 0.8 |



- 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 January 2022 are £0.74m. 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 - £2.9m (first ten months)
- 4.7 Given the reduction in expenditure over the period, and in light of the financial controls in place, it is suggested that regular reporting of this specific spend detail to Audit Committee may no longer be the priority it once was. It is proposed that unless specifically requested, this will be the last routine report of this nature. Regular budgetary monitoring information will of course continue to be available through the budgetary control reports to Cabinet and Council.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Audit Committee considered options for how it wished 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 it wishes to monitor.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 6.1 That Audit Committee considers 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
- Report to Audit Committee 13 September 2021; 29 November 2021

11. **APPENDICES**

- 11.1 Appendix 1 - list of companies used during the period 1 April 2021 to 31 January 2022 with summary of purpose of engagement.

**Appendix 1 - List of companies with Summary
2021/22 (April – 31 January 2022)**

| Supplier Name | Initiative | Amount |
|--|---|------------|
| Airey Consultancy Services Ltd | CTR Annual Update Service | 1,895.00 |
| Allen Lane | HRA Accountant | 36,309.03 |
| Cambridge City Council | Housing sub-regional co-ordinator role | 9,948.00 |
| Cambridgeshire County Council | IT support (359k); School Standards (10k); ASC statutory returns (4k) | 372,644.73 |
| CIPFA Business Ltd | Improvement Plan: Forensic Service Reviews (91k); Interim S151 (4k) | 95,195.76 |
| Coram Voice (Formerly Voice- Child In Care) | Children's Social Care Investigations | 13,467.30 |
| Fenland District Council | Management costs for the CCTV shared service | 21,343.69 |
| Firth Consultants Ltd | Investigation into land contamination | 4,930.00 |
| Grant Thornton UK LLP | Financial Improvement Programme, Lean Cost Structure | 10,680.00 |
| Idox Software Ltd | Technical consultancy for Uniform (planning) system upgrade | 3,750.00 |
| Inform CPI Ltd | RV Finder | 6,500.00 |
| Kings Hedges Educational Federation | Secondment to School improvement team | 38,709.72 |
| Liz Holmes Consultancy | Education Training consultancy | 1,920.00 |
| Mark Stephen Land Management | Soil Testing | 1,665.00 |
| Market Curators Ltd | Planning, Analysis and Establishment of Market | 50,544.50 |
| Penny O'Shea | Barnack Neighbourhood Plan examination | 3,799.80 |
| Resource Split Cambridgeshire County Council | ICT staff resources | 12,296.94 |
| Saffer Cooper Limited | Homes England IMS | 990.00 |
| Sanham Agricultural Planning Ltd | Planning Application consultancy | 932.40 |
| Savills (UK) Ltd | HRA Business Planner retainer service | 8,000.00 |
| Sharpe Pritchard LLP | Legal Services support (Planning) | 2,250.00 |
| Shelton Development Services Ltd | Housing grant bid support | 1,105.00 |
| TerraQuest Solutions Ltd | Validation and Case Evaluation of Planning Applications | 6,474.00 |
| The Sports Consultancy | Feasibility study on New Leisure Development for Werrington | 20,650.00 |
| Valuation Office Agency | Viability Advice for Planning Application | 324.74 |

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| Vero HR Ltd | HR Support | 1,539.40 |
| ZELLIS UK LIMITED | Resourcelink (HR/Payroll) system Cloud migration | 16,547.80 |
| | | |
| 2021/22 Total for April 2021-January 2022 | | £744,421.81 |

