



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - Decision Summary

Meeting: 30th November 2018

Minutes: [Audit & Governance Committee Decision Summary](#)

Chair: John Pye (Chair and Independent Person)

Summary of decisions taken at this meeting

Item	Topic	Decision <i>[None of the decisions below are key decisions]</i>
1.	Apologies and Declarations of Interests	No apologies were received. No declarations of interest were made.
2.	Minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2018	The minutes of the meeting held on the 28th September 2018 were agreed as a correct record.
3.	Combined Authority Board Update	The Chairman invited the Mayor for the Combined Authority to provide the committee with an overview of the Combined Authority activities. The following points were made:-

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		<p>The Combined Authority had been in existence for 18 months but was now a very different organisation than originally planned as the LEP had now been taken on and this had also led to an increased budget for the next year. The Combined Authority had been hampered by the number of schemes that had needed to be worked up from scratch which had taken longer than previously thought.</p> <p>After the resignation of the Chief Executive Officer over the summer the Mayor had realised that the authority needed to be looked at structurally and so the Mayor had brought in John Hill an experienced Chief Executive from East Cambridgeshire to carry out a review of the existing structure and governance arrangements.</p> <p>The Mayor confirmed that the Interim Chief Finance Officer had been dismissed from his position that morning due to presenting misleading facts to the Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Committee members raised concerns around the news of the Interim Chief Finance Officer's dismissal.</p> <p>The Chair raised a concern that this was the fourth Section 151 officer for the Combined Authority and asked if the Mayor could offer any reassurance around this high turnover in this role and was advised by the Mayor that he was frustrated that the Authority had not secured a permanent Chief Finance Officer yet but that the process to do so was underway and in the meantime Noel O'Neil, the Deputy Chief Finance Officer was more than capable of covering the role. The Mayor confirmed that the decision to terminate the Interim Chief Finance Officers role had been taken unanimously by himself, the Deputy Mayor and the two interim Chief Executive Officers that morning.</p> <p>In response to a question about the Ely bypass the Mayor advised that in his previous role as Leader of East Cambridgeshire District Council he had ensured that the project was delivered and had pushed officers to get it delivered as</p>

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		<p>quickly as possible. The Mayor felt that infrastructure always took far too long to deliver, and it was right to look at alternative options to try to speed up the process. The cost to the economy if there was a delay or if it failed to deliver would be greater.</p> <p>Currently the Combined Authority had not delivered a project on a scale that required a gateway review but once they did the Mayor would ensure that there would be a gateway review process in place – Kings Dyke would be the first project of this scale for the authority.</p> <p>Funding for larger projects would come incrementally over future years and it was important for the authority to be realistic on the delivery timescale for these projects.</p> <p>The Committee thanked the Mayor for attending to answer the committee’s questions.</p>
4.	Treasury Management Update	The Committee received and noted the report from the Head of Finance which provided the Audit and Governance Committee with an update on the Combined Authority (CPCA)’s Treasury Management and requested that the cost of the strategy be factored into the next report.
5.	External Audit – Outline Audit Plan	The Committee received and noted the report from the External Auditor which provided the 2018/19 Outline Audit Plan as prepared by Ernst & Young LLP (EY).
6.	Chief Executive Resignation	The Committee received the report form the Interim Monitoring Officer which outlined provided them with the factual background relating to the circumstances of the resignation of the former Chief Executive. The following points were made:-

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The External Auditor reported that the Interim Monitoring Officer had provided requested information relating to the Chief Executive's departure and subsequent severance. Based on this information the external auditor had concluded that the Combined Authority had acted lawfully and reasonably. • The Committee were advised that the Mayor had the authority to get external legal advice and commit the authority to expenditure as he had the general power of competence which was set out in the legislation. • Under the Localism Act 2011 the Mayor like other local authorities had to work within the budget set by the authority. • The Committee were assured by the external auditors that the severance package provided to the Chief Executive Officer was reasonable. <p>The Committee discussed their concerns around the termination of the most recent two senior officer roles and the impact such decisions could have on the reputation of the Combined Authority.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that they would like to recommend to the Combined Authority Board that a review be undertaken on the procedures for the termination of the employment of senior officers as the Committee were concerned that recent events surrounding officers leaving the Combined Authority were creating reputational damage.</p>
7.	Corporate Risk Register Review	The Committee received and noted the report from the Assurance Manager which asked the committee to review the Combined Authority Corporate Risk Register and suggest any changes they would like to put forward as a recommendation to the Board.
8.	Internal Audit – Progress Report	The Committee received and noted the report from the Group Auditor which provided details of the progress made in delivering the approved Audit Plan for 2018 / 2019.

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9.	Audit Committee Self-Assessment Actions and Review	<p>The Committee received the report which requested the Audit and Governance Committee to review the proposed actions from the Committee's first annual self-assessment exercise.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that they would like to consider the draft accounts in a public forum and therefore they would like the May informal meeting to be rearranged to a later date in June.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to note the progress of the actions in the report.</p>
10.	Staffing Structure	<p>The Committee received and noted the report from the Interim Monitoring Officer which explained the situation and timelines regarding a permanent senior staffing structure and to provide assurance about how good governance is being maintained in the interim.</p>
11.	Work Programme	<p>The Committee received and noted the report which provided the draft work programme for Audit and Governance Committee for the remainder of the 2018/19 municipal year.</p>
12.	Date of Next Meeting	<p>The Committee agreed the next meeting shall be held on 29th March 2019 at Huntingdonshire District Council.</p>

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