



## **Notes of the Meeting of the Internal Audit Task and Finish Group held on Tuesday 9th August starting at 2 pm and held by Zoom**

Present:

Cllr L Edwards -Shea; Cllr Darmon; Cllr Smith; Cllr Suiter; Cllr Fernandes; Cllr Parry;  
Cllr Adrian Snookes; Cllr Alison Snookes.

### **Agenda Item 1 - Election of Task and Finish (T&F) Group Lead**

Cllr L Edwards-Shea agreed to be the Group Lead

### **Agenda Item 2 - Apologies for Absence**

Apologies received from Cllr Oates and Deputy Clerk to the Council

### **Agenda Item 3 - Appointment of Note Taker**

Cllr Smith agreed to be the Group note taker

### **Agenda Item 4 - Terms of Reference**

The following was agreed as the Terms of Reference for the Internal Audit T&F Group:

***"To look at all recommendations in the 2021 - 2022 Internal Audit Report, including matters not yet dealt with from earlier Internal Audit reports, and resolve those issues that could be dealt with under the Council's Constitution without further Full Council approval as soon as possible, and report back to Full Council on those matters that required Full Council approval to resolve"***

### **Agenda Item 5 - Business to Discuss**

The Group Lead suggested that we look at the Internal Audit Checklist 2021 - 2022 and deal with the 'High Risk' items first. Subsequent meetings would try to address the Medium and Low Risk items. Agreed by all.

### Internal Audit Checklist No 15.

"The hyperlink to the adopted GDPR Policy is broken"

Following discussions the Group agreed:

There are many problems with our website and we need to clarify whether it remains fit for purpose. We need to establish who is responsible for the website's effectiveness. The following **Actions** were agreed:

- **Cllr L Edwards-Shea** to check if there is a maintenance agreement in place then contact the website provider.
- **Cllr Suiter** to review the Council GDPR Policy
- **Cllr L Edwards -Shea** (post her meeting with website provider) to establish if hyperlink issues are the result of human error requiring staff training or a website issue.
- **Cllr Smith** to call Justin our IT support to establish his role and responsibility (if any) and his availability if required to support.
- In addition, **Cllr L Edwards-Shea** would discuss with Deputy Clerk to the Council who fulfils the role of Data Protection Officer.

### Internal Audit Checklist No 62.

"Annual Appraisals undertaken - Evidence

Job Evaluation / reviews undertaken"

Following lengthy discussions the Group agreed that:

Annual Appraisals had not been completed for some time - Cllr Suiter, as HR lead, believed not since 2018, or if they have been completed, no evidence was available. This is clearly a situation that needs addressing immediately, Staff should not only have Annual Appraisals, but also a set of Objectives, mutually agreed at the start of each reporting cycle, as well as at least a 6 month mid-term appraisal update.

In order to address this urgently, and provide a level playing field for any new Town Clerk appointed, the following **Actions** were agreed:

- **Cllr Suiter**, together with at least two other HR Panel members and supported, as required, by our HR Advisor, are to carry out Annual Appraisals of the Deputy Clerk to the Council and Services Team Leader - by the 30th September 2023 latest.
- Following which the Deputy Clerk to the Council would carry out Annual Appraisals for Office Staff and the Services Team Lead for other staff aiming to complete the exercise by 30 November 2023.

This would allow any appointed Town Clerk to produce their own Objectives for staff timely for 2023.

In terms of Job Evaluation, it was noted that the previous HR Panel had sought to start a comprehensive review of all posts through our HR Advisor but, as a result, Cllr Suiter advised that nothing had subsequently been started.

The following additional **Actions** were agreed:

- **Cllr L Edwards-Shea** was to establish when our HR Advisors current contract started/expires - and report back.
- Depending upon an answer to the above, **Cllr L Edwards-Shea** was to establish if our HR Advisor can support a full review of all posts, a time-frame, recommendations and at what additional cost.
- Post the review any proposals would be submitted to Full Council for approval

The following additional points were raised at the meeting:

Who fulfils the role of HSE Officer?

Who are our First Aiders?

- **Cllr L Edwards-Shea** would discuss the matter with our Deputy Clerk to the Council.

#### **Agenda Item 6 - Items for Next Meeting**

It was agreed that at the next meeting, as well as 'Matters Arising' from these meetings, the group would review 'Medium Risk' items raised in the Internal Audit Checklist. It was noted that there are a lot of Medium Risks listed but the Group would start the process of prioritising and then addressing each item.

#### **Agenda Item 7 - Date of Next Meeting**

To try to maintain momentum, the next meeting would be held - in person - on Fri 19 August starting at 10 am. The meeting closed at 3.50 pm