



Notes of the Meeting of the Internal Audit Task and Finish Group held on Wednesday 21st September starting at 10 am and held in the Council Offices.

Present:

Cllr Smith; Cllr Parry; Cllr Darmon

Agenda Item 1 - Welcome

Cllr Smith welcomed all to the meeting

Agenda Item 2 - Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr L Edwards -Shea; Cllr Offer; Cllr Thomas as well as from Cllr Oates. Cllr Oates had informed the Group Lead that, with the demands upon him of the Neighbourhood Plan, he felt he wasn't able to continue on this Group and had withdrawn. **NOTED**

Agenda Item 3 - Review of the Notes from the last Meeting.

Notes of the meeting held on 6 Sep 22 were reviewed and agreed.

Agenda Item 4 - Outstanding Actions from the last Meeting

Internal Audit Checklist No 15.

- GDPR Policy Cllr Smith advised that a link on the Town Council Homepage had been moved further down the page **ITEM CLOSED**
- Cllr L Edwards-Shea (post her meeting with our website provider) to establish if staff training is required. It was agreed that further staff training would be a good thing and Cllr L Edwards-Shea would propose a solution. Cllr L Edwards-Shea advised that she may have a solution to this involving a local individual with Town Council IT experience who was willing to provide training - she will report back. **ONGOING with Cllr L Edwards-Shea.**

Internal Audit Checklist No 62.

- Cllr L Edwards-Shea to was to establish when the HR Advisors current contract started/expired and if our HR Advisor can support a full review of all posts, a time-frame, recommendations and at what additional cost. **ONGOING with Cllr L Edwards-Shea.**
- Who fulfils the role of HSE Officer, First Aider and Fire Marshal? This was also the Dep Clerk and therefore new individuals were sought, possibly from the Office Staff or Services Team. Cllr L Edwards-Shea would continue to investigate and report back. **ONGOING with Cllr L Edwards-Shea.**
- HSE as an Agenda Item for Full Council. In response to a suggestion from Cllr Parry, Cllr Smith would email Melanie and ask for HSE to be included as an Agenda item for the next Full Council. **ITEM CLOSED**

Medium Risk Items

Internal Audit Checklist No 2

- Financial Regulations to have a Full Comprehensive Review - Cllr Smith would discuss this matter with the Temporary RFO. The Temp RFO is currently looking at the Financial Regs to make sure it meets the Council's needs, formally documents current practices (e.g., internal transfer of the Precept monies (£300,000+) - Regs currently limit transfers to £25,000), and annotates which roles are done with the RFO 'hat on' and which are under the Clerk 'hat'. We need to do this as it's currently 2 separate roles but also makes it easier for everyone to understand the responsibility of the roles (and helps if different people are covering the 2 roles during absences/holidays/sick, etc).

Cllr Smith asked the Temp RFO. This might be a significant piece of work, but as a group we are keen to NOT leave everything to the new Town Clerk - it would simply be overwhelming and take too long. In your view, could this be achieved by a small group - supported perhaps by either you, Mel or both?

Response: Tasks like reviewing the Financial Regs and Standing Orders should ideally be up to date when the new Clerk starts (so that they know what they need to do and can/can't do). It's the responsibility of the Council to have up-to-date documents in place and deferring everything to when the new Clerk is in post isn't a valid excuse in the eyes of the Auditors (and possibly the public). Aside from keeping them up to date with the latest legislation, reviewing these documents would be something the Clerk would look at during their first year or ahead of Council Review. **Cllr Smith advised that a full review/amendment of the Financial Regulations was underway by the Temp RFO with the intention to present to Full Council in October 2022 for agreement. ONGOING with Temp RFO**

Internal Audit Checklist No 3

- TORs for Panels to have a Full Comprehensive Review - *It was noted that the first item a Panel Lead would address is the Panels TORs so there was confidence that these are accurate. Nevertheless it was suggested that the latest edition of each Panel TORs should be sent to the former Lead for review and proposed amendments. Agreed - **ONGOING now with Cllr Smith.***

Internal Audit Checklist No 11

- Staff Pay Policy - No actual Pay Policy exists for staff pay . Staff employed under NJC contracts and salaries considered (amounts only) as part of the budget process - *with the HR Committee.*

Internal Audit Checklist No 59

- Backup of files currently to 'O' Drive, to be discussed with the IT provider - *Cllr L Edwards-Shea would discuss this matter with staff. This was partly resolved but Cllr L Edwards-Shea would finalise and report at the next meeting - including where our data was actually stored (on site, web developer, cloud etc).*

Internal Audit Checklist No 62

- Chairman is also the Acting Proper Offer and there may be an issue in respect of signing the AGAR 2021/22 - *Cllr Smith would discuss with the Temp RFO. This item is now resolved and forms part of the amendment to our Financial Regulations for presentation to the Full Council in October 2022. **ITEM CLOSED***

Internal Audit Checklist No B2

- Burials - last review of fee 2018 - *Any changes would need to be presented for approval to Full Council. Cllr Smith would seek to obtain an 'average' cost from local authorities in Lincolnshire and update. Cllr Smith advised this would be covered by the Services Panel once re-started and diarised. **ITEM CLOSED.***

Agenda Item 5 - Review of Risk Register

The Risk Register was reviewed, specifically items - 3b, 6d, 7a, 7b, 7c, 12d, 13, 15a, and from Significant Risks - 5a, 6b, and updated. The Risk Register would be ready for presentation to the Full Council for approval in the October 2022 meeting.

Cllr L Edwards-Shea advised that very shortly, parts of 'Handley Chase' development 'Public Spaces' would be handed over to Council. It included trees. The Group considered the following was required:

- Approach NKDC to ascertain if the 'Tree Officer' could support to ensure trees were in good condition prior to handover. The Council considered creating (if it doesn't exist) a Register of Council Trees. **Cllr Smith advised that a NKDC full survey of all trees was about to be received and that this would be used as a 'Tree Register' with Handley Chase, amongst others, added when handed over. It would be held by the Services Team Lead. ITEM CLOSED**

Agenda Item 6 - AOB

There was no AOB.

Agenda Item 7 - Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on 12 October 2022 starting at 1000 am. The meeting closed at 1040am.