

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE**

SUBJECT: **GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE**
30TH JANUARY, 2023

REPORT OF: **DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER**

PRESENT: MS JOANNE ABSALOM (CHAIR)

Councillors S. Behr (Vice-Chair)

W. Hodgins

C. Smith

Mr M. Veale

WITH: Chief Officer Resources
Audit & Risk Manager
Interim Corporate Director of Social Services
Corporate Director of Environment & Regeneration
Service Manager Development & Estates
Interim Head of Children's Services
Head of Democratic Services, Governance & Partnerships
Professional Lead – Internal Audit
Finance Business Partner
Senior Auditor
Information Security Officer
Data Protection & Governance Officer

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u>	

	<p>Apologies for absence were received from:-</p> <p>Councillor T. Smith Councillor J. Wilkins Charlotte Owen - Audit Wales</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no Declarations of interests and dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The decisions of the Governance & Audit Committee held on 16th November, 2022 were submitted.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the decisions be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 16TH NOVEMBER, 2022</u></p> <p>The Action Sheet arising from the meeting held on 16th November, 2022 was submitted.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Action sheet be noted.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE</u> <u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2022-23</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Scrutiny and Democratic Officer.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Resources informed Members that the Statement of Accounts 2021/22 would not be available for the next Committee meeting scheduled for 8th March, 2023. A briefing note outlining the current position would be forwarded to Members.</p> <p>A Special Governance & Audit Committee meeting be convened if the Statement of Accounts 2021/22 becomes available before the scheduled meeting on 26th April, 2023.</p>	

	<p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and the Forward Work Programme for the Governance and Audit Committee be approved.</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Professional Lead Internal Audit.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Committee noted the findings within the attached Appendices and noted progress on activities for the period 1st October to 31st December 2022.</p>	
No. 8	<p><u>EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF BLAENAU GWENT INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Audit & Risk Manager.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Committee agreed that the report reflected their understanding of the Internal Audit Service, and that the proposed action plan be agreed and forwarded to Carmarthenshire to finalise the report.</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>BLAENAU GWENT COUNCIL'S POSITION IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS IN AUDIT WALES' REPORT 'LEARNING FROM CYBER ATTACKS'</u></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 14 and 18, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).</p>	

	<p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources & SIRO and the Chief Information Security Officer.</p> <p>A Member requested that further IT training be arranged for Members.</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and the Committee considered the information provided in the report and gained assurance that the Council had (or intended to put in place) appropriate measures to minimise the risk of cyber attacks.</p>	
	<p><u>APPENDIX B2 AND B4 – INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT</u></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 13 and 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).</p> <p>A verbal update was received from the Service Manager Development & Estates regarding Appendix B2 and B4 deferred from the previous Governance & Audit Committee held on 16th November, 2022.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the verbal report be accepted and the Service Manager Development & Estates refer Appendix B4 to the relevant Scrutiny Committee for consideration.</p>	