

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee held on
Thursday, 23 March 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Michael Atkins – Chair
Councillor Peter Sandford – Vice-Chair

Councillors: Geoff Harvey Mark Howell
Helene Leeming Dr Lisa Redrup (substitute)
Heather Williams

Officers: Peter Maddock Head of Finance
Rory McKenna Monitoring Officer
Ian Senior Scrutiny and Governance Adviser

Auditor: Jonathan Tully Head of Shared Internal Audit

Councillor John Williams (Lead Cabinet Member for Resources) was in attendance, by invitation.

1. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Richard Stobart sent apologies and Councillor Dr. Lisa Redrup attended as his substitute.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Peter Sandford declared an interest as a non-remunerated director of South Cambs Ltd trading as Ermine Street Housing.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Audit & Corporate Governance Committee authorised the Chair to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2023 subject to an amendment being made to Minute 2 (Declarations of interest) to show Councillor Richard Stobart's interests as being a Director of both the South Cambridgeshire Investment Partnership LLP and South Cambridgeshire Projects LLP rather than a non-remunerated director of South Cambs Ltd trading as Ermine Street Housing.

The Audit & Corporate Governance Committee authorised the Chair to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2023.

4. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) Policy and Update on Use of RIPA

The Audit & Corporate Governance Committee **considered** a report on the use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Members noted that the Council had not used surveillance powers between December 2022 and February 2023.

The Committee paid tribute to Rory McKenna, who would be leaving South Cambridgeshire District Council at the end of March 2023 to become Monitoring Officer at the Greater London Authority.

The Committee **noted** the report and **approved** South Cambridgeshire District Council's Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 Corporate Policy & Procedures attached thereto, subject to a few minor typographical changes relating to linguistics and consistency.

5. Governance Risk and Control Update

The Audit & Corporate Governance Committee **received and noted** a report updating Members about topical news items intended to further their understanding of Corporate Governance.

In response to questions from Committee members, the Head of Shared Internal Audit

- Agreed that, with regard to whistleblowing, it should be made clear to whom reports should be made.
- Confirmed that South Cambridgeshire District Council corporate governance was broadly comparable with that of similar local authorities.
- Explained the value of sharing legal and fair information with other local authorities in areas such as Right To Buy fraud.
- Clarified the importance of human input into the National Fraud Initiative, notwithstanding ever-improving algorithms.

6. Matters of Topical Interest

At the Chair's invitation, the Head of Finance

- Reported that South Cambridgeshire District Council had secured a reduction of £3,500 in the level of fees charged in respect of the 2018-19 Audit of Accounts.
- Expressed confidence in becoming up-to-date in terms of audited accounts given the impending change of external auditor.

The Chair

- invited Members to give some thought to what the role might be of an 'independent member' were one to be appointed to the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee.
- Said that he would consider publishing an Audit & Corporate Governance Committee Annual Report.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee meeting had been scheduled for 26 July 2023 at 10.00am.

The Meeting ended at 10.50 a.m.
