

Dublin City Council Audit Committee

Minutes of Meeting held on 9th June 2022 at 9.00 a.m. via MS Teams

Attendance:

Members

Ms. Louise Ryan, Trinity College Dublin, Chairperson (LR)
Mr. Johnny McElhinney, Docklands Business Forum (JMCE)
Mr. Nathy Walsh, Institute of Public Administration (NW)
Councillor Nial Ring (Cllr. NR)
Councillor Naoise ÓMuirí (Cllr. NOM)

Officials:

Ms. Kathy Quinn, Head of Finance (KQ)
Mr. Paddy Brennan, Head of Internal Audit (PB)
Ms. Ailish McCarthy, Staff Officer, Internal Audit (AMcC)

Invited Attendees:

Ms. Marina Hennelly A/Executive Manager - (Engineering) – Environment and Transportation (MH)
Mr. Gerard O’Connell – Project Manager - (Engineering) – Environment and Transportation (GOC)
Ms. Antoinette Power – Executive Manager – Finance Department (AP)

Apologies

Professor Diarmuid Hegarty, Dublin Chamber (DH)
Mr. Owen Keegan, Chief Executive (OPK)

1. Minutes of Audit Committee meeting held on 10th March 2022 and update on Actions arising

- a. The minutes were agreed.
- b. Update on Actions:

Appendix A: Actions Agreed at AC meeting 10th March, 2022

Action 1: Update on Review Round Room 200 Exhibition covered under item 1c on this Agenda.

Action 2: Correspondence with Minister O’Brien regarding working group and deduction of Housing rents at source covered under item 1d on this Agenda.

Action 3: Housing Rents to attend the December 2022 AC meeting to provide an update in relation to rent arrears and monthly targets.

Action 4: Housing Rents to submit a comprehensive report on rent arrears and monthly targets including an analysis of under occupancy of housing units, by year-end.

Action 5: Parking Enforcement to submit a one-page update on status of the recommendations in relation to the Parking Meters audit to the AC December meeting.

Action 6: The Chief Fire Officer to attend the AC meeting in December to update the members in relation to procurement.

Action 7: The eight (8) outstanding recommendations for Dublin Fire Brigade forwarded to Cllr Naoise Ó'Muirí.

Action 8: EU funding presentation scheduled for September 2022 Audit Committee meeting.

Action 9: AC meetings remain remote for the moment.

Appendix B

Actions agreed at Audit Committee meeting held on the 23rd September 2021

Action 6

Presentation on EU funding will be provided in 2022.

Actions agreed at Audit Committee meeting held on the 3rd June 2021.

Action 4

Meeting with Head of Internal Audit, Mr Paddy Brennan, directly after Audit Committee meeting deferred to September 2022.

1c: Action 1- Update on Round Room 200 Exhibition

At March AC meeting PB provided a list of proposals to advance the review of Round Room which included assigning risk ratings and a staff member from CRES to look after the implementation of recommendations. The Executive Manager in CRES has provided an updated management response and a timeframe for implementation. All the recommendations and risk ratings are included in the Recommendation Tracker. Internal Audit (IA) will monitor and follow up on the recommendations. IA will include a review of spending on events in the next audit plan.

The AC noted the Management response in relation to Recommendation 4 regarding monitoring the implementation of branding and promotional conditions associated with funding applications. It was noted that the Management response stated that "As a standard DCC could also insert the term that failure to demonstrate requirements in the post event report may result in non-payment of 50% of agreed funding".

The AC stated that they agreed with this proposal and recommended that management implement this as a condition of events funding in the future. Cllr Ring queried the relevance of the social media engagements figures provided and commented that, for future exhibitions, the company running the exhibition should be required to clearly demonstrate engagement with the public and it was suggested by the AC that it would be very beneficial to define criteria for measuring this engagement with the public. PB to communicate this CRES to be implemented for future events.

Action 1 - PB to communicate the Audit Committee's recommendations that the condition outlined above is implemented for events funding in the future to CRES management, along with the requirement for definition of criteria for measuring engagement with the public for future events.

1d: Action 2 - Letter to Minister O'Brien and Response from Minister.

Copy of correspondence in Info Pack relating to direct deduction of Housing rents at source and request for representation of a member of Finance SPC on the working group.

The AC expressed disappointment with the response received from the Minister. KQ advised that the Finance SPC have agreed to write back to the Minister to further advocate for deduction at source and representation on the working group.

AC will follow up with the Housing Department in December regarding their use of more targeted measures to drive down arrears and will keep a focus on the issue of arrears to ensure targeted measures are in place and being followed up to reduce arrears.

2. Standing Item on the agenda – Any Conflict of Interest of A.C. Members

No conflicts of interest were declared

3. Membership of Audit Committee - Resignation of Cllr De Róiste

Cllr De Roiste submitted his resignation to the Lord Mayor in May which was raised at the Corporate Policy Group meeting in May and is on the Agenda for the June meeting of the City Council. The responsibility lies with the Fianna Fáil (FF) party leader to nominate a replacement.

4. Presentation on Flood Alleviation by Marina Hennelly, Acting Executive Manager, Environment and Transportation Department

(MH) gave a detailed presentation on the Flood Alleviation programme for Dublin City Council and (GOC) provided information on projects costs, flood damage and funding.

There was a discussion between the AC , (MH) and (GOC) around Clontarf flood defences, residential development in flood zones, leaves blocking drains, use of tarmac on driveways and European funding. All queries raised were answered at the meeting by MH and GOC.

5. Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy - Antoinette Power - Executive Manager - Finance Department.

AP gave an overview of Dublin City Council's new Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy which follows a review and update of DCC's 2014 policy. The policy applies to all employees, elected members, contractors and consultants and covers internal and external fraud. The purpose of the policy is to minimise the incidence and impact of fraud and promote awareness and understanding and it will be reviewed every three years. Internal Audit (IA) will be responsible for ensuring that its audit plans and methodologies take into account the possibility of fraud. IA will assist in the deterrence of fraud by examining and evaluating the adequacy and effectiveness of the systems of internal control.

IA will report to the AC on an annual basis in relation to the number of frauds, the type of frauds and the outcome of any fraud investigations as part of the policy. The policy has been approved by Senior Management and endorsed by the Chief Executive.

The policy has been noted by the Corporate Policy Group and is before the AC for noting now also.

Cllr. NR asked if training can be provided to the Councillors. AP confirmed they will work on a training programme specific to DCC with Irish Public bodies insurance and it can be rolled out to councillors also as the policy is applicable to Councillors.

6. Audit Reports

6a Report no. R03/2022 - Review of Parking Permit applications.

A weak rating was given for this report, with six (6) recommendations made, three (3) high and three (3) medium.

LR advised there was a delay with completing this report as issues had been raised relating to documentation retention due to GDPR concerns. The Law department have now confirmed the required documentation should be retained.

PB said that although the recommendation has been accepted there is still some legal uncertainty and debate around GDPR requirements. The departments may need to revisit the issue in the future.

Cllr. NOM asked had E&T confirmed anything in relation to manpower in respect of recommendation 6. "The Parking Policy and Enforcement Section should consider a designated resource in the unit to investigate residential parking permit issues, conduct random compliance checks and report on findings to help improve Governance of the overall system"

PB advised that the due date for this recommendation has passed and he will follow up with E&T.

Action 2 - PB will follow up on recommendation 6 with E&T

6b Report no. R05/2022 - Review Orders of the Chief Executive in relation to delegations to employees.

The AC noted that a satisfactory rating was given for this report, with six (6) recommendations made, five (5) high and one (1) medium.

6c Report no. R06/2022 To examine and review Business Continuity measures in place in Dublin City Council

The AC noted that a satisfactory rating was given for this report, with five (5) recommendations made, one (1) high, three (3) medium and one (1) low.

6d Report no. R04 /2022 Recommendation Implementation for Internal Audit Reports Quarter 1 2022 and Outstanding Legacy Items

PB advised in Q1 2022 there were ten (10) recommendations due, six (6) out of ten (10) were implemented therefore 60%. There was a reduction of four (4) recommendations from 2019 but an

overall increase in the total of outstanding recommendations to forty nine (49) as the 2021 recommendations are now included in the outstanding category. PB has been dealing with the Housing ACE and EM of the Area Offices in respect of the 2014 outstanding recommendations. IA are following up on the outstanding recommendations.

7. Training/familiarisation sessions required by AC Members.

EU funding presentation scheduled for September 2022 Audit Committee meeting. LR asked if anyone has any training requests to email herself or KQ.

8. A.O.B.

LR asked the AC members if they are happy with hybrid meetings going forward. The AC agreed that remote meetings work very well and should continue, with the potential to meet once a year in person to be considered.

The meeting concluded at 10.35am.

The separate meeting with PB Head of Internal Audit and the AC will be held after the September 2022 meeting instead of today's meeting.

Appendix A: Arising from this AC meeting 9th June 2022

Action 1 - PB to communicate the recommendations of the Audit committee to CRES management.

Action 2: PB will follow up on recommendation 6 with Parking Permits, E & T.



Chairperson