

Dublin City Council Audit Committee

Minutes of Meeting held on 16th March 2023 at 9.00 a.m. via MSTeams

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)
Prof. Diarmuid Hegarty Dublin Chamber (DH) from 9.20am
Councillor Naoise Ó Muirí (Cllr. NOM)
Councillor Daryl Barron (Cllr. DB) until 9.30am

Officials:

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

Apologies

Councillor Nial Ring (Cllr. NR)
Mr. Owen Keegan, Chief Executive (OPK)

Invited Attendees:

Coilín O'Reilly, Assistant Chief Executive, Housing and Community Services (COR)
Shauna McIntyre, Senior Executive Officer, Housing and Community Services (SMcl)
Frank d'Arcy, Executive Manager, Housing and Community Services (FdA)
Tara Robertson, Administrative Officer, Housing and Community Services (TR)
Ursula Donnellan, Senior Executive Officer, Housing and Community Services (UD)
James Nolan, Executive Manager, Engineering and Transportation, (JN)

1. Minutes of Audit Committee meeting held on 1st December 2022 and update on Actions arising

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

Appendix A: Actions arising from this Audit Committee meeting 1st December 2022

Action 1

CBA supporting documentation: Memo sent to CE and ACE's

Action 2

Engagement with OGP on conditions of contract: PB will circulate a further update.

Actions 3, 4 and 6: Report of the AC, Report of the Local Government Auditor, AC Charter and Work Programme 2023: noted by City Council.

Action 5: Self-evaluation questionnaire: emailed to AC.

Action 7: Planning Update: included in meeting pack.

Action 8: Miscellaneous Debtors Update: emailed to AC.

Appendix B: Actions arising from this Audit Committee meeting 15th September 2022

Action 1 - EPSO Update: included in meeting pack.

Action 2 – Risk Management Update: to future AC meeting.

Action 5- Housing update report: item 3 of this Agenda in meeting pack

2. Any Conflict of Interest of A.C. Members.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Update from Housing and Community Department on outstanding Housing Recommendations

COR provided a summary update on the progression of all the outstanding housing recommendations, noting that a number of legacy recommendations have been outstanding for a long time. Since her appointment as a dedicated resource, SMI has made good progress on the implementation of recommendations.

Action 2: Update report on recommendations from R06/14 and R02/18: to the AC before year end.

4. Update from Housing and Community Department on rent arrears and monthly targets including an analysis of under occupancy of housing units – Frank d’Arcy (Fd’A).

Fd’A advised that 70% of DCC tenancies are in compliance and he provided an update in relation to rent arrears and under-occupancy, noting the overall rent arrears figure decreased from €37.8m in 2021 to €37.6m in 2022. The target is to further reduce to €36m by end of 2023. The Housing department is engaging robustly with tenants on rent collections and continue to work closely with MABS and have allocated additional resources to early intervention in rent arrears cases and the development of IT systems.

5. Presentation on District Heating – James Nolan

JN provided a presentation on the Dublin District Heating Project. The AC were provided with an overview of the project including information on key milestones, risks and other information on the planning and development of the project.

6. Audit Reports

6a. Report no. R12/22 - Review the allocation of social housing units in DCC.

Overall rating is Satisfactory – Ten (10) recommendations, four (4) medium and six (6) low.

6b. Report no. R14/22 - Review the processes in place for the reconciliation of payments in the Parking Enforcement Section.

Over rating is Strong - No recommendations made.

6c. Report no. R11/22 - Review of payments made to suppliers across the organisation and report on compliance or otherwise with procurement thresholds.

Overall rating is Weak - 38 recommendations including 15 high. Significant levels of non-compliance with procurement rules and evidence of inadequately functioning controls in relation to purchasing and procurement in some departments. PB advised that he has presented the report to the Senior Management Team. Two additional audits arising from this report have been included on the Audit Plan for 2023 which will commence in Q4. The AC discussed a number of issues relating to the report including potential legal challenges, culture, leadership at senior levels to achieve the recommendations and areas of non-compliance. The AC requested that a report is provided to them from the CE outlining progress with the implementation of the High Level recommendations by year end.

Action 3 – Update report on implementation of high risk recommendations from R11/22: to the Audit Committee by year-end.

6d. Report no. R01/23 - Recommendation Implementation for Internal Audit Reports Quarter 4 2022 and Outstanding Legacy Items

PB advised the number of outstanding recommendations is increasing as more audits are completed. There are one hundred and two (102) recommendations outstanding in total, thirty six (36) legacy and sixty six (66) outstanding at the end of the period. Housing are making good progress and IA are reviewing the recent evidence submitted by them. Overall the implementation rate remains unsatisfactory and this has been communicated to senior management.

PB advised IA are piloting a new software system for tracking recommendations and the format of how the information will be presented is currently being reviewed to highlight the higher risk areas. This should be completed by Q3.

7. NOAC report no. 50 - Local Authority Performance Indicator Report 2021.

This report was noted by the AC.

8. Training/familiarisation sessions required by AC Members

If AC have any specific training requirements or suggestions for presentations, they are requested to let LR or KQ know.

9. AOB

Date for next AC meeting is the 15th June 2023.

The meeting concluded at 10.20am

Appendix A: Actions agreed at this meeting 16th March 2023

Action 1 – Engagement with OGP on conditions of contract: PB will circulate a further update.

Action 2 – Update report on recommendations from R06/14 and R02/18: to the AC before year end.

Action 3 – Update report on implementation of high risk recommendations from R11/22: to the Audit Committee by year-end.

Signed: 
Chairperson