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General Purposes & Audit Committee

Meeting of held on Monday, 26 April 2021 at 6.30 pm

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Karen Jewitt (Chair);

Councillors Jamie Audsley, Jan Buttinger, Mary Croos, Steve Hollands, Bernadette Khan, Stuart Millson, Tim Pollard and Joy Prince

PART A

76/21 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 January 2021 were agreed as a true record and the Committee authorised the Chair to sign them.

77/21 **Disclosure of Interests**

No disclosures were made.

78/21 **Urgent Business (if any)**

There were no items of urgent business.

79/21 **Presentation on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence**

The Committee received a report detailing the risks around domestic violence.

Malcom Davies, Head of Risk and Insurance introduced the item. Alison Kennedy, Local Authority Strategic Lead for Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, delivered the presentation.

The following matters were raised by the Committee:

- a) Number of reported cases: Members noted a high number of reported cases. The Officer noted that it was encouraging to see an increase, as this suggests positive outreach among the community and any referrals.
- b) Funding sources: Following a question from a Member, the Officer confirmed that local authority funding delivered the services which they had

commissioned; whereas FJC services fund training and consultation as well as the service itself

c) Cross-functional approach: Members highlighted the current approach which included involvement from staff from a number of different service areas. The Officer noted that complex problems benefited from having a range of expertise to assist.

The Committee gave its thanks to the Alison and her team for all of the work completed and ongoing, with a request that it be Minuted.

80/21 **Implementation of the Finance Review Phase 1 Report**

The Committee received a report detailing the implementation of Phase 1 of the Council's Finance Review.

Ian O'Donnell, Finance Consultant, and Chris Buss, Director of Finance and Risk introduced the report.

The following matters were raised by Members:

a) Red/Amber/Green (RAG) Column: Following a question from a Member, the Officer explained that the items listed with no RAG rating were awaiting commencement of works, and therefore the responsible officer had not yet awarded its rating

b) Abbreviations: Following a question from a Member, the Officer explained the following abbreviations. SME: Subject Matter Expert; BI: Business Intelligence

c) Budget setting process: The Officer noted that in the run up of 2021/2022 there was a large degree of change, changing the way executive members met and disclosed budget opportunities and options. The Priority 1 items were completed to a very tight deadline, therefore some of the work could be improved upon

d) Percentages in Appendix 1: Following a query from a Member, the Officer made an amendment to the Appendix to include the previously reported percentage in brackets below so the reader can see what figures have moved.

Following consideration, it was resolved that the Committee:

1. Agreed to note and comment upon the progress in implementing the recommendations of Phase 1 of the Croydon Finance Review.

81/21 **Internal Audit Update Report**

The Committee received a report noting the work completed by the Internal Audit up to February 2021.

Simon Maddocks, Head of Internal Audit introduced the report.

The following matters were raised by Members:

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- a) Budget: Following a question from a Member, the Officer explained that effectively the Council did less and paid less in 2021, and was expected to do more and pay more in 2022, suggesting that budget accrued from the previous year would cover the full year plan
 - b) Fairfield Halls: Following a question from a Member, the Officer noted that the External Auditor had written to the Council at the start of the month with detailed questions regarding the structure of Fairfield Halls' arrangements. The Council was in the process of responding to these questions.

Following consideration, it was resolved that the Committee:

- 1. Agreed to note the Internal Audit Report to February 2021 (Appendix 1).

82/21

General Purposes and Audit Committee Draft Annual Report of 2020-2021

The Committee received the draft report noting the work completed by the Committee 2020-2021.

Simon Maddocks, Head of Internal Audit introduced the report.

The Committee noted the draft report.

The meeting ended at 9.18 pm

Signed:

Date:

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