

**Minutes of the Meeting of GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE  
held remotely via video-conference on Thursday, 25 November 2021**

**PRESENT;** Councillor Elizabeth Evans (Chair), Councillors Gareth Davies, Peter Davies, Keith Evans and Prof Ian Roffe

**Also in attendance:** Councillor Rhodri Evans, Catherine Hughes, Gareth Lloyd and Ray Quant (Cabinet Member)

**Officers in attendance:** Mr Eifion Evans, Chief Executive, Miss Lowri Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer- Democratic Services, Ms Elin Prysor, Corporate Lead Officer-Legal and Governance & Monitoring Officer; Mr Stephen Johnson – Corporate Lead Officer – Finance & Procurement, Mr Justin Davies – Corporate Manager – Core Finance, Mr Mark Bridges- Service Manager – Projects & Accounts, Ms Nia Jones, Corporate Manager – Democratic Services, Mrs Amanda Roberts, Corporate Manager- Internal Audit, Legal and Governance Services, Ms Hannah Rees- Governance Officer, Mrs Dana Jones, Democratic Services and Standards Officer

(9:30 am- 11:00am)

**1 Apologies**

Councillor Rowland Rees-Evans together with Mr Jason Blewitt; Audit Wales apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.

**2 Personal Matters**

The Chair reported that this was the last meeting for Mrs Amanda Roberts, Corporate Manager- Internal Audit as she was retiring from the Council following 36 years service. All present thanked the officer for her work and support and stated that she would be sorely missed within the Council. It was reported that Mrs Alex Jenkins had been appointed to her post, and all congratulated the officer.

**3 Disclosure of Personal/ Prejudicial Interest**

None.

**4 Annual Governance Statement – update**

Consideration was given to the Annual Governance Statement – update. It was reported that the draft 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement was approved by Council on 18 March 2021.

Members were informed that there had been two minor amendments made to the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement on pages 3 and 13, to correct the reference to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (previous omission of 'Wales'/reference to 2020).

No suggested amendments had been recommended by Audit Wales to the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement. However, amendments had been made to reflect those actions that were anticipated to be taken, when the Annual Governance

Statement was last presented to Council in March 2021, that have now been actioned/completed.

Following question from the floor, it was AGREED to recommend that Council approve the amended 2020-2021 Annual Governance Statement.

**5 ISA260 Report**

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mrs Eleanor Ansell from Audit Wales to introduce the report.

It was reported that this again was an unique year and they congratulated the Corporate Lead Officer, Finance and Procurement and his Officers on their work in completing the audit.

Ms Eleanor Ansell highlighted the information contained in the Report to Members.

It was RESOLVED:-

- (i) to note the content of the report;
- (ii) to congratulate the service on this excellent report and also for their additional work in distributing covid grants to businesses and the third sector service; and
- (iii) to thank officers in the Estates Service on their action in addressing the issues raised in previous ISA260 reports

**6 Report of the Head of Finance upon the Ceredigion County Council and Ceredigion Harbour Authority Statements of Accounts 2020/21**

The Corporate Lead Officer, Finance and Procurement and the Corporate Manager Core Finance presented the Ceredigion County Council and Ceredigion Harbour Authority Statement of Accounts 2020/21 highlighting both procedural and presentational matters and also issues raised during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Members thanked the Corporate Lead Officer, Finance and Procurement and Corporate Manager Core Finance and their staff for their hard work in producing the Statement.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Council that the Statement of Accounts for Ceredigion County Council and Ceredigion Harbour Authority Statements of Accounts for 2020/21 be approved as presented and that the Chairman would report the Committee's recommendation to the Council that afternoon.

**7 Minutes of the meeting held on the 09 September 2021**

It was AGREED to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 09 September 2021.

**Matters arising**

**Minute 5-** Audit Wales Work Programme Update- The Chair and the Governance Officer reported that they had met to discuss the format of the agenda. It had been agreed that after the minutes there would be presented an action log to inform the Committee and reader of who was responsible officer to address any actions specified and to provide updates regarding any actions arising from the Committee minutes. Also, the Audit Wales Progress Item would be presented near the top of the

Agenda and separated into 2 Reports, the first on the Regulatory Reports received, and the second to include Council Responses to Regulatory Reports. The Governance Officer confirmed that Management Response Forms for responses to Audit Wales Reports, in addition to the historical Reports, would also be presented. Minute 12 - Councillor Keith Evans had written to the Monitoring Officer with reasons of his request for the Committee/Council to view the declarations of interest of Chief Officers. The CLO – Legal and Governance stated that work was ongoing in relation to possibly providing the business interests of Chief Officers, limited to interests associated with their post. A draft Data Protection Impact Assessment was being submitted to the Data Protection service), and an update would be provided at a future meeting on this work. Councillor Evans stated that he had suggested that this information was provided in order that Chief officers were open and transparent as Councillors. However, it was noted that the publication of Councillors' declarations of interest was a statutory requirement in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Members which was not the case with Chief Officers.

**Confirmed at the Meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held on 19 January 2022**

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

