

LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES 23 JUNE 2022

Members
in remote presence: David Gardner (Chairman) Lesley Greensmyth
Suzanne Rutland-Barsby (Vice Chairman) Terry Wheeler
John Bevan

Apologies Received From: Mike Garnett

Officers
In remote presence: Beryl Foster - Deputy Chief Executive
Dan Buck - Corporate Director
Keith Kellard - Head of Finance
Victoria Yates - Head of Human Resources
Vince Donaldson - Senior Contracts & Quality Manager
Jon Carney - Corporate Director
Lindsey Johnson - Committee Services Officer

Also in remote presence: Neil Harris – Ernst & Young
Sam Lowe – Mazars
Joe Ryan – RD Health & Safety Consultancy Ltd

Part I

231 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

232 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2022 be approved and signed.

233 PUBLIC SPEAKING

No requests from the public to speak or present petitions had been received for this meeting.

234 EXTERNAL AUDIT 2020/21

The Head of Finance reminded Members that due to the limitations of staff time, it was agreed that the completion of the 2020/21 audit would be moved to after April. The audit began in May and it should be completed by the end of July with a backstop of August. Whilst this is not an ideal situation, the Authority is not unique with 50% of London local authorities still to conclude their 2020/21 audit.

Neil Harris from Ernst & Young added that there are still some enquiries to resolve with substantive further work around our community assets of £34million and whether their classification is historic and therefore needs re-evaluation. There are only a couple of our assets that are being questioned as to whether they can still be classified as community assets, the balance, however, will be material.

AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES 23 JUNE 2022

Neil Harris continued to add that up to date records on capital grants, which have been received upfront will also be required. There are also a few questions around the Ice Centre Project. He is working with the Head of Finance to ensure staffing to complete the audit by the end of July.

Neil Harris concluded that he will be leaving Ernst & Young on 12 September and would like to be able to conclude this audit before his departure. His replacement will be confirmed by mid-July. There will be a comprehensive handover and hopefully an introductory meeting with the Head of Finance and the Chief Executive before he leaves.

235 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF INTERNAL AUDIT 2021/22 AND AUDIT PLAN 2022/23 Paper AUD/127/22

Sam Low of Mazars informed Members that their level of assurance is 'moderate'. HR Processes – Leave/Absence have received Priority 1 with limited assurance overall. The Chairman asked if this was due to staff transferring between the Authority and GLL. Sam Lowe replied that it was, along with a few other housekeeping points.

The Chairman asked if 'moderate' was a typical score and if we should be concerned about it. Sam Lowe replied that there was no cause for concern and that they like to pick out key risk areas and set challenging yet achievable targets. He believes that our long term trajectory for substantive assurance was likely.

The Chairman asked if 10 days was sufficient for LSC Contract Management. Sam Lowe replied that they needed to make a holding entry and that there are contingency dates if necessary. The Corporate Director added that we are particularly keen to look at how we are administering to the early part of the contract to make sure we are doing everything that we should be and if 10 days is not enough, more time can be added for this work.

The Corporate Director informed Members that he has asked Mazars to look at the Corporate Risk Register for next year, in particular looking at areas that had either changed significantly and those that have not changed in a long time.

Sam Lowe offered his thanks to all staff who had assisted him in his internal audit.

- (1) the annual report of the Internal Auditors for 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix A to Paper AUD/127/22 was noted; and**
- (2) the annual Audit Plan for 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix B to Paper AUD/127/22 was approved.**

236 ANNUAL REPORT ON HEALTH & SAFETY 2021/22 AND HEALTH & SAFETY AUDIT PLAN 2022/23 Paper AUD/128/22

The report was introduced by the Corporate Director informing Members that this has been a challenging year with Covid, the re-opening of venues after Covid and handing over venues to GLL.

Joe Ryan of RD Health & Safety gave a summary of his report, key points included:

AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES 23 JUNE 2022

- We have strong and effective systems in place and he is able to offer a high level of assurance.
- The Covid-19 Focus Group has now stopped, however, we are still monitoring the risk of Covid.
- Health & safety resourcing remained available throughout 2021/22.
- Safety leadership meetings were held to discuss key topics in the health and safety strategic plan along with reactive issues.
- Staff wellbeing surveys will be released in June 2022.
- Staff competency – class based sessions back to pre-pandemic levels, however, e-learning modules are significantly down from previous years.
- The health and safety management system is strong and has been updated from April 2021.
- Legislation change following on from Grenfell phase 1 enquiry will take place with a new fire safety bill in force from 23 January 2023, which will affect materials of external buildings and taller buildings.
- There have been more incidents of fly tipping, unauthorised swimming in open water and BBQs in open spaces.
- Accidents have increased significantly due to venues re-opening, although not as high as pre-pandemic levels.
- One accident has been reported to the Health and Safety Executive, which involved a collision with a golf buggy at Dobbs Weir.
- Overall compliance is at over 90% for both LSC and non-LSC sites which is close to previous years. It is good to note that the Waterworks have increased significantly.
- Improvements to focus on include staff competency, record keeping for training and management of contractors.
- Audit targets for both LSC and non-LSC sites will be 95% with stretch targets of 98% for LSC and 96% for Non-LSC sites.

The Chairman asked why Picketts Lock Golf Course had dropped 5% in compliance levels. Joe Ryan responded stating that this was due to changes of staffing levels due to the pandemic and is a focus for this year.

- (1) the annual report of RD Health & Safety Consultancy Ltd for 2021/22 detailed in Appendix A to Paper AUD/128/22 was noted;**
- (2) the aims and objectives for 2022/23, set out in Appendix A to Paper AUD/128/22 in the annual report of RD Health & Safety Consultancy Ltd; and**
- (3) the signing of this years' Health & Safety Policy Statement attached as Appendix B to Paper AUD/128/22 was approved.**

237 RISK REGISTER 2021/22

Paper AUD/126/22

The report was introduced by the Corporate Director who informed Members that following on from the Risk Management Workshop a report would go to Executive Committee detailing decisions made at Audit Committee. He also advised that following on from a query on 9x9 risk matrix, independent advice has concluded that a larger matrix allows for more detail. He further added that numbers in red on the residual risk score are ones that have changed since the last meeting.

**AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES
23 JUNE 2022**

A Member asked if we are testing our waters for Polio following on from the contamination discovered in London. The Corporate Director responded that we are not. There is a Pandemic Group which has prepared a note for Senior Management Team regarding this, we are considering advising staff to make sure they are up to date with their Polio vaccinations. We will also follow any government advice regarding this.

- (1) the Corporate Risk Register included at Appendix A to Paper AUD/126/22 and the sub-registers at Appendices B and C of Paper AUD/126/22 was approved; and**
- (2) amendment of the reporting process outlined in Review of the Risk Management Workshop section as detailed in paragraph 9 of Paper AUD/126/22 was noted.**

238 NEXT MEETING

The Chairman advised that if the 2020/21 audit is completed in July there will be a special Audit Committee for the end of July, if not it will be in September.

Chairman

Date

The meeting started at 1.03pm and ended at 1.53pm