

## LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

### AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES 22 JULY 2021

Members Present: David Gardner (Chairman) Ian Kemp (Deputy for Suzanne Rutland-Barsby)  
John Bevan Dilip Patel  
Mike Garnett Terry Wheeler  
Lesley Greensmyth

Apologies Received From: Suzanne Rutland-Barsby

Officers Present: Shaun Dawson - Chief Executive  
Beryl Foster - Deputy Chief Executive  
Keith Kellard - Head of Finance  
Vince Donaldson - Senior Contracts & Quality Manager  
Sandra Bertschin - Committee & Members' Services Manager  
Lindsey Johnson - Committee Services Officer

Also Present: Graeme Clark - Mazars (Internal Auditors)  
Sam Lowe - Mazars (Internal Auditors)  
Matt Bowmer - Director of Finance, London Borough of Enfield (S151 Officer)

#### Part I

213 The new Chairman, David Gardner took the opportunity to thank the previous Chairman, Frances Button for her wonderful Chairmanship of the Audit Committee and her ability to ensure that all Members understood the business. He wished her the best for the future.

#### 214 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 215 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

**THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2021 be approved and signed.**

#### 216 PUBLIC SPEAKING

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

#### 217 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF INTERNAL AUDIT 2020/21 AND AUDIT PLAN 2021/22 Paper AUD/121/21

The report was introduced by the Chief Executive who informed Members that Mazars, our internal auditors have given a level of assurance as 'moderate'. Two priority 1 areas with limited assurance included 'disaster recovery and business continuity plan' and 'induction and performance management of staff'.

A Member asked if we had plans in place for both of these priority 1 areas. Graeme Clarke responded that the Authority has accepted their recommendations and they will revisit them to

## **AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES 22 JULY 2021**

see that the recommendations have been implemented. The Chief Executive added that our previous Director of Finance worked very closely with Mazars to ensure we received substantial assurance. With his retirement, there was a period of transition, which was further undermined by the pandemic, we now have a more structured approach.

A Member asked about the benchmarking diagram on Page 12 of the Internal Audit Annual Report and asked if there was a trend in the decline of assurance levels. Graeme Clarke responded stating that different years are not always comparable so content and context should be considered. The pandemic has also affected the last two years.

The Chairman asked, with our audit opinion as moderate, how do we compare with other local authorities. Graeme Clarke responded stating that generally most of his clients are also moderate.

- (1) the annual report of the Internal Auditors for 2021/21 detailed in Appendix A to Paper AUD/121/21 was noted; and**
- (2) the annual Audit Plan for 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix B to Paper AUD/121/21 was approved.**

218 DRAFT UNAUDITED FINAL ACCOUNTS 2020/21

Paper AUD/122/21

The Report was introduced by the Head of Finance who informed Members that recent conversations with Neil Harris from Ernst & Young have revealed that they will not be able to commence their audit until November due to capacity issues. Whilst this is disappointing it is consistent with all other Ernst & Young audits and we would prefer the audit to be done in one go rather than stopping and starting and changes in the audit team. As we will miss the 30 September deadline for our audited accounts to be published, we will need to publish a statement detailing the delay.

A Member asked about an outstanding insurance claim from the White Water Centre which was discussed at the last Audit Committee meeting. He asked how the Lee Valley Leisure Trust could still have responsibility for this claim if they no longer exist. The Senior Contracts & Quality Manager responded stating that the insurers that the Lee Valley Leisure Trust had retain responsibility for this claim.

A Member asked about holding investments on Page 69 and why £2.2million was 'not rated'. The Director of Finance responded stating that the money is held with West Bromwich which is one of the larger banks. He would be looking into the reason why it is not rated.

The Chairman stated that he was concerned about missing the 30 September deadline for publishing the audited final accounts and how this might impact upon the reputation of the Authority. He trusted that the published statement will be clear that it is due to capacity issues with the auditors.

A Member asked if we have an overall value for the Authority's assets. The Director of Finance responded that the balance sheet was around £225million which largely related to properties. We also own a lot of land, which is considered a community asset which cannot be disposed of, therefore its actual monetary value is very low and not market rate.

**AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES  
22 JULY 2021**

- (1) the draft Statement of Accounts for 2020/21; and
- (2) that any changes recommended by the Auditor at the conclusion of the Audit will be incorporated into the revised Financial Statements for approval by the Audit Committee was noted.

219 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next meeting of the Audit Committee will be 23 September at 1.30pm.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

The meeting started at 1pm and ended at 1.45pm