

LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES 19 JUNE 2025

Members Present: David Gardner (Chairman) Clive Souter
 John Bevan Steven Watson
 Mike Garnett Terry Wheeler
 Richard Thake (Deputy for Lesley Greensmyth)

Apologies Received From: Lesley Greensmyth

Officers Present: Shaun Dawson - Chief Executive
 Dan Buck - Corporate Director
 Keith Kellard - Head of Finance
 Michael Sterry - Senior Accountant
 Julie Smith - Head of Legal
 Simon Clark - Head of IT & Business Support
 Victoria Yates - Head of Human Resources
 Sandra Bertschin - Committee & Members' Services Manager

Also present: Kevin Bartle - S151 Officer (London Borough of Enfield)
 Andy Waters - Right Directions Ltd (H&S service provider)
 Claire Mellons - Ernst & Young (external auditors) (remote)
 Robert Garnett - Ernst & Young (external auditors) (remote)
 Sam Lowe - Forvis Mazars (internal auditors) (remote)
 Robert Grant - Forvis Mazars (internal auditors) (remote)

Part I

307 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

308 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2025 be approved and signed.

The Chairman remarked that he hoped EY representatives would be able to attend the next meeting in person as they were unable to do so today.

309 PUBLIC SPEAKING

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

310 EXTERNAL AUDIT 2024/25 – AUDIT PLAN

Paper AUD/160/25

The report was introduced by the Head of Finance, including:

- the draft Financial Statements 2024/25 had not been included on the agenda. The Accounts and Audit Regulations do not require that the draft accounts be approved

- by Committee, however it was required that the draft accounts be published for the “exercise of public rights” by 1 July;
- the Financial Statements 2024/25 are substantially finished with just a small number of asset valuations awaited;
- a copy of the Financial Statements 2024/25 as they currently stand has been circulated to Audit Committee outside of the meeting;
- any changes to the Financial Statements 2024/25 prior to publication are expected to be small and not material to the accounts;
- EY have recently provided a breakdown of their additional fees for the 2023/24 audit which will be discussed with them and Public Sector Audit Appointments.

Claire Mellons (EY) advised:

- apologies for not being able to attend the meeting in person;
- additional risk assessment procedures to assess the likelihood of material misstatements in the opening reserve position would be undertaken;
- a few control deficiencies had been identified last year around IFRS16;
- work continues on the ‘Value for Money’ assessment;
- an area of focus will be the readiness of accounts for audit as last year some information was not available;
- to aid readiness management will be advised of initial sample areas;
- valuation work will be issued to the EY Real Estate team in the summer.

In response to a Member, Claire Mellons (EY) advised that as the last 3 years accounts were subject of a disclaimed opinion and the Property, Plant & Equipment (PPE) valuation couldn’t be completed, it was likely that the 2024/25 audit would result in a disclaimed or qualified opinion.

In response to Members it was advised:

- early liaison between the Authority, auditors and valuer had been undertaken to ensure timely availability of certification to complete the PPE valuation for the 2024/25 audit;
- the value of leases falling within IFRS16 was approx. £1m.

The Chairman advised that EY’s additional fees would be discussed at the next meeting.

- (1) the External Auditors’ Audit Plan for 2024/25 attached as Appendix A to Paper AUD/160/25;**
- (2) the proposed annual audit fee for 2024/25 as set out in the financial implications of Paper AUD/160/25; and**
- (3) the External Auditors’ Annual Report for 2023/24 was noted.**

311 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF INTERNAL AUDIT
2024/25 AND AUDIT PLAN 2025/26

Paper AUD/161/25

The report was introduced by the Senior Accountant, highlighting that the overall audit opinion of ‘Moderate’ was the second highest rating.

Sam Lowe (Forvis Mazars) advised:

- the overall audit opinion of 'Moderate' was in keeping with the previous 2 years and reflected a good level of stability;
- there had been a big improvement in implementation of recommendations to 91% which was above best practice of 85%;
- thanks to the Senior Accountant and management team in closing down issues effectively and promptly.

In response to Member concerns regarding the 'Limited' assurance for cyber security, Sam Lowe (Forvis Mazars) advised that a risk based approach was adopted with regard to the areas of focus for each audit plan.

In response to a Member, it was advised that of the 11 HR Onboarding and Offboarding recommendations, 8 had been implemented. The recommendations had been split into central HR control and delegated responsibilities where line managers needed to actively implement procedures and policies.

- (1) **the annual report of the Internal Auditors for 2024/25 detailed in Appendix A to Paper AUD/161/25 was noted; and**
- (2) **the annual Audit Plan for 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix B to Paper AUD/161/25 was approved.**

312 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25

Paper AUD/162/25

The report was introduced by the Head of Finance.

The Chief Executive highlighted the paragraph in the Annual Governance Statement regarding the development of a longer term financial strategy to cover the next 10 to 15 years.

The Chairman endorsed the importance of a long term asset maintenance programme to maintain venues and parklands to their current high standard.

- (1) **the Annual Governance Statement attached at Appendix A to Paper AUD/162/25 to be included within the Accounts, subject to any comments received from Members was approved.**

313 ANNUAL REPORT ON HEALTH & SAFETY 2024/25 AND HEALTH & SAFETY AUDIT PLAN 2025/26

Paper AUD/163/25

The report was introduced by the Corporate Director.

Andy Waters (Right Directions) advised that work had been undertaken in a number of specialist areas including noise and vibration risks and protection of people from risks associated with fires and explosions caused by dangerous substances in the workplace.

In response to Members it was advised:

- under the Leisure Services Contract (LSC) Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) were responsible for health and safety at the LSC venues and were required to inform the Authority of claims over a set level and provide an annual record;

- considerable work had already been undertaken and would continue in preparation for implementation of 'Martyn's Law';
 - this new legislation would make it harder to achieve the stretch target of 95% which had been set with the aim of regaining a 5 star health & safety rating;
 - any concerns raised in the staff consultation survey are notified to line managers for action to be taken. Usually none of the issues raised are serious and were more to do with individual comfort;
 - the 2024/25 short term sickness absence per FTE was 2.56 days and 98% of respondents to the staff consultation survey said that they felt that Lee Valley was a safe place to work;
 - defibrillator cabinets were being purchased and defibrillators registered on a national database. Defibrillators could be accessed by the public in an emergency by obtaining an access code;
 - lower level security protection works had been completed at Lee Valley Hockey & Tennis Centre and Lee Valley White Water Centre to stop accidental vehicle incursions. Further security protection works would be undertaken following risk assessment by accredited consultants.
- (1) **the annual report of Right Directions Ltd for 2024/25 detailed in Appendix A to Paper AUD/163/25;**
 - (2) **the forthcoming 'Protect Duty' legislation known as 'Martyn's Law' was noted;**
 - (3) **the aims and objectives for 2025/26, set out in the annual report of Right Directions Ltd, Appendix A to Paper AUD/163/25; and**
 - (4) **the signing of this years' Health & Safety Policy Statement attached as Appendix B to Paper AUD/163/25 was approved.**

314 RISK REGISTER 2025/26

Paper AUD/164/25

The report was introduced by the Head of IT & Business Support.

The Chairman welcomed the overall downward movement of risks and remarked that it was noteworthy that the only increased risk related to the issuing of a disclaimed audit opinion on the 2024/25 Financial Statements.

In response to the Chairman it was advised that a pragmatic approach had been adopted for management of the Lee Valley Ice Centre snagging works and the administration of Buckingham Group Contracting Ltd.

- (1) **the Corporate Risk Register included at Appendix A to Paper AUD/164/25 was approved;**
- (2) **the addition of three new risks (SR1.3, SR6.3 & SR6.4) to the Risk Register;**
- (3) **the removal of four risks (SR2.9, SR4.3, SR9.1 & SR11.1) from the Risk Register;**
- (4) **that risks SR2.9 and SR5.3 have moved to the Issues Log; and**

(5) there are currently no High Risks on the Risk Register was noted.

The Chairman thanked Lesley Greensmyth and Terry Wheeler for their contributions throughout their appointments to the Authority.

Chairman

Date

The meeting started at 12.57pm and ended at 1.56pm