

Council

Elaine Speed

613423

elaine.speed@e-lindsey.gov.uk

13 December 2022

To All Members of the Council,
Internal and External Circulation and
Press

Dear Councillor,

Re: Council Agenda - Wednesday, 14th December, 2022

Further to the compilation of the above Council Agenda, please find enclosed the following report which was detailed to follow on your Agenda:

Agenda Item 16. Draft Open Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee:
(Pages 1 - 16)

To receive the draft Minutes of the Audit and Governance
Committee held on 23rd November 2022.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours sincerely,



Senior Democratic Services Officer

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Minutes of a Meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee held in the Council Chambers, Tedder Hall, Manby Park, Louth on Wednesday, 23rd November, 2022 at 10.15 am.

PRESENT

Councillor Will Grover (Chairman)

Councillors Adrian Benjamin, Danny Brookes, Colin Davie, Rosalind Jackson, Terry Taylor and Graham Williams.

Mr George Krawiec and Mr Walter Leschenko attend the Meeting as Independent Co-Optees.

Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders attended the Meeting as an Observer.

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Richard Fry - Portfolio Holder for Finance

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christine Marshall - Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Development) and S151 Officer
Sean Howsam - Treasury and Investment Manager, PSPS Limited
Jon Machej - Mazars LLP, External Auditors
Martin Steele - Data Protection Officer (ELDC and BBC)
Martin Gibbs - Procurement and Contracts Manager, PSPS Limited
Rebecca James - Procurement Officer
Lynda Eastwood - Democratic Services Officer
Elaine Speed - Democratic Services Officer

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Andrews.

Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders attended as an Observer.

28. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY):

At this point in the meeting, Members were invited to declare any relevant interests.

- Councillor Colin Davie asked it to be noted that he was a Member of the Towns Fund Board.

29. MINUTES:

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 October 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

A Member queried why the Invest East Lindsey (IEL) had not been presented to Committee, Minute No. 20 of the Meeting held on 5 October 2022 refers. It was highlighted that IEL would form part of the budget setting process, therefore it must be presented to Committee in January 2023.

The Section 151 Officer advised Members that the report was still with Internal Audit, however would chase this up.

30. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE:

The Chairman advised Members that the briefing on Towns Fund Non-Deliveries Team would not be delivered at the close of the Meeting as arranged. The Assistant Director (Economic Growth) had advised that the presentation with information pertinent to an update on external Town Fund projects was not yet complete. This would be presented at the next meeting to be held on 25 January 2023.

31. ACTION SHEET

The actions from the Meeting held on 5 October 2022 were confirmed as in hand or completed.

Action No. 19 'Work Programme', page 11 of the Agenda refers.

The Section 151 Officer advised Members that with regards to the Council's position to Carbon Reduction, this was an item to be considered for future scrutiny by Overview Committee at its meeting to be held on 29 November 2022.

Action No. 25 'Work Programme', page 11 of the Agenda refers.

The Section 151 Officer advised Members that with regards to the Annual Safeguarding Report, this had been followed up and would circulate an update to Members after the meeting.

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that a copy of the Work Programme be added as a standard item to the Agenda moving forward.

32. AUDIT PLANNING UPDATE AND PROGRESS REPORT - NOVEMBER 2022:

John Machej was in attendance on behalf of Mazars LLP, External Auditors, to present the Audit Planning Update and Progress Report - November 2022, pages 13 to 30 of the Agenda refer. The report provided the Audit and Governance Committee with an update on progress made by Mazars LLP in delivering its responsibilities as East Lindsey District Council's external auditors.

Members noted that the Audit Completion Report for 2020/21 had been presented to Committee at its meeting held on 15 September 2021,

Minute No 28 refers which noted a number of areas of work as remaining outstanding at that point in time. On 29 November 2021, Mazars issued its Follow Up Letter to this report setting out its progress against these matters. The current position was summarised on the key elements of Mazars' work that still remained outstanding and was set out at page 16 of the Agenda.

With regards to 2021/22, Members were advised that work was progressing well and Mazars was approximately 80% of the way through and no new risks had been identified since the audit plan was issued in April 2022. Members were referred to the outstanding work set out at page 17 of the Agenda, however noted that some of this work had progressed since the report was written.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- A Member referred to the report where it related to the timeliness of local government audits in general and queried how ELDC compared with other local authorities in relation to this, page 28 of the Agenda refers. Mr Machej advised Members that ELDC compared very favourably compared to some Local Authorities even though it was late in the process and nationally there were still audits for 2020/21 that were still outstanding and had not yet been signed off.

No further questions or comments were received.

Following which it was,

RESOLVED:

That the Audit Planning Update and Progress Report - November 2022 be noted.

33. MID TERM TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2022/23:

The Chairman welcomed Sean Howsam, Interim Treasury Investment Manager, PSPS Limited to the meeting to present Members with the Mid Term Treasury Management Report 2022/23 on the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for the period ending 30 September 2022, pages 31 to 36 of the Agenda refer.

The Interim Treasury Investment Manager detailed and highlighted pertinent information to Members from the Treasury Management Update at Appendix A, pages 37 to 56 of the Agenda refer. Members were advised that the Council's Investment Policy and Strategy was kept under constant review with the aim of balancing risk and reward. Currently, the Council had a higher level of surplus funds available for investment following receipt of New Towns funding and in addition to this there were less counterparties currently available to the Council resulting in an

increased difficulty to invest short-term funds for longer durations at higher rates.

This would require approval from Council, therefore it requested that Committee noted the contents of the report and Members recommended to Council that the Sovereign Country Limit be increased from £5m to £10m (excluding the UK that had no limit), full details were set out at Paragraph 3.9 of the report, page 33 of the Agenda refers.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- A Member highlighted the Icelandic banking crisis that occurred in 2008 and stated that it was the £5m sovereign limit that prevented the Council from losing a higher amount of money at that time and although a lot of the money was recuperated it tied the Council's money up for a long period of time. It was acknowledged that the Council was quite constrained on how to best invest for its residents, therefore an increase in the sovereign credit limit was required but it was not considered appropriate to increase the sovereign country limit to £10m, particularly due to the current volatility of the worldwide economic crisis and the war in Ukraine.
- Concerns were further raised on the treasury strategy as it had no consideration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria on the way the Council invested. It was further highlighted that the Council had received negative publicity with regards to investment in Qatar and other middle eastern countries and considered that this was an insult to East Lindsey LGBT residents. It was also considered that the way the Council determined its investment criteria and judged the countries to invest in was not divided by the size of those economies when it should be. Following which, it was considered that the sovereign country limit be set at £8m for larger countries and £6m for smaller countries.

The Interim Treasury Investment Manager advised Members that following the situation in 2008, the majority of the funds invested in Icelandic banks had been received back. With regards to investment criteria advice, this was taken from Link Asset Services and as a result of the Icelandic banking situation it had amended its counterparty criteria and how this was assessed. This included maximum durations and now considered the cost of default in the markets where they could insure against defaults from banks, therefore in line with this criteria would recommend in accordance with the current market conditions.

The Interim Treasury Investment Manager advised Members that with regards to the comments made relating to ESG, this would be taken into consideration in the treasury strategy for future years and in other Council documents moving forward. Discussions had taken place with the external treasury advisors who were currently sourcing this information from organisations that considered how

banks and countries were doing in relation to ESG issues. Following which, consideration would be given to how it would be possible to change the counterparty criteria to take that type of information into consideration.

With regards to comments made to Council investments in Qatar, Kuwait and Abu Dhabi, the Section 151 Officer had given consideration that the Council should not be investing in these countries at the current time due to ESG concerns. It was confirmed that the Council currently had £5m invested with each of those countries or banks and these would not be renewed. Currently, there was £5m that needed re-investing to maximise the returns for the Council whilst keeping security liquidity and yield in consideration and confirmed that the Council relied on credit rating agencies for their assessment of strengths of financial institutions.

- A Member queried the decision not to further invest in middle eastern countries and queried whether this was a decision that was arbitrarily made by the Section 151 Officer or from officers of the Council in general. The Section 151 Officer advised Members that the propositions went to the Interim Treasury Investment Manager from the market in terms of what were the best rates on the day for the particular banks, whereby the yield would be considered along with the longer and shorter-term investments, when the investment was due to be redeemed and other factors in the mix at that time. It was further highlighted that the views of Members were very important and Committee was giving a clear steer on their views in relation to this. In addition, when making a choice from propositions coming forward ESG would be helpful in assisting on that particular point as well as other factors to be taken into consideration, for example climate change.

It was highlighted that currently the Council had a lot of cash that ideally needed investing to get the best return possible, whilst bearing in mind all factors that needed considering and was the reason to propose that the sovereign country limit be increased as the current limits were constraining the Council's ability to place funds. The Section 151 Officer advised Members that compared to a lot of other councils, ELDC was in a good position as it had cheap debt locked in and cash to invest.

- A Member referred to the proposed increase to the sovereign country limit from £5m to £10m however stated that the report referred to the bank group or individual limit remaining at £5m. The Interim Treasury Investment Manager clarified that by raising the £5m limit to £10m would allow the Council to invest in individual banks if in the same country.
- A Member commented that the start dates on the table of investments were all in the current year and asked if this was correct, page 51 of the Agenda refers. The Interim Treasury

Investment Manager confirmed that this was correct and prior to the current financial year the Council was in a very low interest environment and little value to be obtained on a long-term investment basis so funds were being held on a relatively short-term basis. However, now interest rates were rising there was considerable benefit to be obtained by maximising the investment period to obtain higher rates of interest achievable before those rates started to go down. Furthermore, the Council was now trying to ladder the maturity dates to get a good spread over the year. It was confirmed to Members that the term deposits were invested at a fixed rate, with the short-term cash accounts being at a variable rate.

- A Member referred to the Capital Programme 2022/23/Q2 Forecast Outturn, pages 56 to 57 of the Agenda refer. It was highlighted that £7.231m had been spent out a total budget of £69.535m and it was queried how realistic it was whether the forecast of £43.397 for 2022.23 would be met.
- A Member queried that if there was a further £20m of proposals for lending at a rate circa 2% whether the Council should be borrowing rather than using its own sums as the Council was at a deficit in terms of what it would receive in returns. The Section 151 Officer advised Members that the Council took the debt out a number of years ago to further invest and currently in terms of investments for ELDC and aspirations for the longer term, the debt referred was very good value debt although this needed to be balanced. However, at some future point and after discussion with the auditors on how to use that to finance future potential capital expenditure there was a choice to be had around whether the Council kept the debt or let it go by seeking to redeem debt at a premium.

With regards to the Capital Programme, Members were informed that this was a matter for the Executive Board in terms of its monitoring of the financial management of the authority and advised Members that the Q2 report would be circulated shortly that detailed some of those underspends which would mainly be slippage in relation to the Towns Funds through to the next financial year. Members were advised that in terms of the amount of grant funding involved it was not unusual to have slippage and the end date should always be taken into consideration, which was 2024 for those funds and this would be the job of those areas of the Council to manage those funds.

A Member queried what oversight of governance and scrutiny there would be on the various departments delivering those projects and asked for clarification on the viability and delivery of these as he was concerned that the day to day business may overtake the work on the projects. The Section 151 Officer assured Members that there was a huge amount of scrutiny ongoing internally, particularly

in relation to the points made about inflationary impacts and funding available with a large amount of involvement from Members and officers. Negotiations were underway with other parties and various issues were in the mix, furthermore those officers overseeing the work were project managers who were specifically focussed on the projects. It was further highlighted that some of the projects were being developed by external parties, therefore the Council had to follow their pace on this.

It was highlighted that the report presented was a backwards look whereas the Q2 report took a forward look in terms of where the Council would be at year end. Therefore, at Q3 it would be proposed to formally slip at that point and the capital programme would be adjusted to formally say that the funds would not be spent in that financial year.

A Member added that there had been massive inflationary costs, particularly in the construction sector and highlighted that if the projects were delayed the Council would be increasing its costs and considered that it was important to have the minimum amount of slip in the capital programme. The Section 151 Officer responded that the teams involved were very cognizant of this, however some of the projects had a certain pace to them.

- A Member referred to cryptocurrency investments and the recent collapse of FTX, whereby losses could not be quantified as yet and was concerned that there were a number of investment houses that needed to be checked out in relation to crypto to ensure they were safe to place investments. It was further considered that although investment in European banks was considerably safer, there needed to be a cautious and realistic approach to this as the German economy was likely to suffer a severe collapse in 2023. It was therefore considered that the sovereign country limits proposed were sensible.
- A Member asked that the Interim Treasury and Investment Manager provide an update to Members on anything pertinent since the report was written, particularly since significant changes had occurred in central government.

The Interim Treasury and Investment Manager advised Members that from the Council's perspective the key was getting inflation down to try and cause a stabilisation in the interest rates and then hopefully a reduction in interest rates so that inflation came down and costs were reduced. It was highlighted that it was extremely difficult from the Council's perspective to create a balanced budget with inflation running at double figures.

- With regards to the capital programme a Member highlighted the recent IT problems across the three councils of outages for approximately a week and queried whether the recent investment

that increased from the original forecast of £794k to £1.187m would be sufficient to address such issues.

- A Member referred to the traveller site purchase and raised a concern that a recent assessment undertaken by external consultants concluded that there was no need for a traveller site and queried why there was £690k allocated in the budget for this.
- A Member highlighted the original land purchase for the Horncastle Hub and the original budget of £2.088m which was now £4.006m, page 55 of the Agenda refers and asked for clarification on the figures.
- A Member referred to the Towns Fund projects where there appeared to be considerable jumps from the original to the revised budget and queried whether this was due to the increase in construction costs, pages 55 to 56 of the Agenda refer. A concern was raised that if the projects were considerably delayed, considering the current rate of inflation which was unlikely to decrease there was going to be a financial gap to plug.

The Section 151 Officer advised Members that in terms of the capital programme the reason for the revised budget was due to the slippage in 2021/22 and this had been referred by Executive Board as a result of the year-end report and was approved at Full Council and further clarified that the capital programme was fully funded. Any further project that was not fully funded would have to go to Executive Board and then to Full Council for those funds to be approved and allocated.

- A Member highlighted that labour shortages were a significant challenge for many and referred to the 60+ age group that had now left the labour market. With East Lindsey being noted as a retirement area, it was becoming more difficult to find people looking for work with vacancies across all sectors, but in particular it was important to get health workers back in the NHS.

The Section 151 Officer thanked Members for the questions, however highlighted that the Q2 report was due to be presented to Overview Committee for scrutinising and it would be more appropriate for some of the questions raised to go there.

- A Member referred to the investments and highlighted that it was not obvious which country the accounts were held in and requested that the table be annotated, following which it was agreed that the Interim Treasury and Investment Manager would add a column for the country and whether the rate was fixed or variable.
- A Member highlighted that the Council would see a significant wage settlement for public sector workers that would have an impact on the budget for 2023/24 and considered that as it would be likely

that the Local Government settlement would be flat, looking at inflationary pressures it would result in a 10% cut in terms of its value. Following which a query was raised on what ELDC was factoring in, in terms of wage inflation. The Section 151 Officer responded that the budget process was still ongoing, but with regards to pay inflation this was around 4% across all staff although only 2% had been budgeted for as last year the Council was in a completely different financial era versus where it was now. In terms of 2023/24, a figure of 4% was likely to be fed in as a pressure rather than having a significant adverse variant which would be seen in the 2022/23 Q2 report. This was being offset against the improvement investment income in the first instance, however in 2023/24 another view would have to be taken. It was highlighted that a lot of other pressures were coming through, for example there had been costs incurred by the pension fund review, and was looking at 300% type increases in fuel and power costs. Further conversations had also been held with the Internal Drainage Boards (IDB).

A Member responded that the IDBs was a massive part of the Council's budget and agreed with the Portfolio Holder that the levy should be separate and the government needed to address this, although this was not likely to happen in the short-term for the 2023/24 budget. It was anticipated that the IDBs ask would be for a significant increase, however assuming the cap would be set at 5% it was likely that the Councils would have no option but to go to the ceiling with this. A Member responded that due to the prudent management by officers and Members the Council was in a much better position than many other local authorities.

- It was further highlighted that Councillors in the three authorities across the Partnership had different allowance levels and queried whether the Independent Remuneration Panel would be looking to harmonise this. It was considered important for this to be undertaken, particularly as the district elections were being held in 2023 and people wishing to stand needed to know what they were signing up for to take on the role. The Section 151 Officer responded that she was aware that the Monitoring Officer was currently looking at this as he picked up the independent review process and the point had been made. Members were advised that this would be added onto the list of officer questions as a point to be revisited.
- A Member commented that Committee had had a good discussion with regards to investment and by taking greater caution during volatile times as long as that process was followed it was considered that the limits set out within the officer recommendation for a single investment of £5m and £10m for investment in a single country should be accepted, subject to a greater level of due diligence than previously taken, particularly as the Council was looking to move away from investing in areas that posed a greater

risk. It was proposed that this should be moved, together with a note to Council to accept the recommendation stating that a greater deal of due diligence was undertaken before any decisions were made.

No further comments or questions were received.

Following a brief discussion, contrary to officer recommendation a Member proposed that the sovereign country limit be set to a maximum of £7.5m for investment into one country due to the volatility worldwide with the caveat that a greater level of due diligence be undertaken.

The proposal for the limit to be set to a maximum of £7.5m was seconded.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment to the original recommendation was lost.

VOTE:

2 In favour 5 Against.

A Member asked it to be noted that this vote was not unanimous.

Upon being put to the vote, the proposal that the Sovereign Country Limit approved by Council on 2 March 2022 be increased from £5m to £10m was won.

VOTE:

5 In favour 2 Against.

Following which it was,

RESOLVED:

1. That Members of the Audit and Governance Committee review and note the contents of the report attached at Appendix A.
2. That Audit & Governance Committee recommend to Council that the Sovereign Country Limit approved by Council on 2 March 2022 be increased from £5m to £10m, subject to a greater level of due diligence to be undertaken.

34. ANNUAL UPDATE INFORMATION GOVERNANCE:

Richard Steele, Data Protection Officer (ELDC and Boston Borough Council) presented Members with the Information Governance Annual Update, pages 101 to 106 of the Agenda refer.

The report provided Members of the Audit and Governance Committee with an overview of activity in relation to information governance, including data protection for the Authority and highlighted any changes or risks for the forthcoming year.

Key information was highlighted to Members at Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, pages 58 to 60 of the agenda refer.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- A Member referred to the level of detail contained within the report at Section 2 and did not consider that this was sufficient to be presented to an Audit and Governance Committee. It was highlighted that transparency was very important and the information must be presented so that it could be scrutinised in a careful way and contained within a report that was available to members of the public and other Councillors.

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the report would be brought back to the next meeting to contain a greater level of detail.

- A Member referred to Section 3.3 relating to the difficulties in controlling data and how this was managed across the three councils operating with different systems. It was requested that some assurance be provided that this issue was being tackled and what steps were being put in place to address this problem. The Section 151 Officer agreed that this should be provided, however assured Members that a lot of work was being undertaken from an IT perspective to ensure that the information was suitably partitioned.
- The Chairman highlighted that there had been a fairly significant increase in the requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations, Page 59 of the Agenda refers and queried whether there was a specific incident that had caused this. The Data Protection Officer responded that there had been a similar increase at Boston Borough Council and was consistent with other local authorities.

No further comments or questions were received.

Following which it was,

RESOLVED:

That the Information Governance Annual Update be brought back to Audit and Governance Committee in January 2023 to provide more detail in Sections 2 and 3.

35. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS OF THE COUNCIL'S CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES AND FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULES:

Martin Gibbs, Head of Procurement & Contracts, PSPS Limited presented Members with a report that detailed proposed amendments to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure rules, pages 65 to 102 of the Agenda refer.

The purpose of the report was to present to the Committee a revised draft set of Contract Procedure Rules with appropriate delegations that provided additional clarity around the procedures to be followed and reflected the Council's management structure. There was also a recommended change to the Financial Procedure Rules which would allow alignment with the new finance system used across all 3 councils when authorising payments.

Members were invited to review the revised set of Contract Procedure Rules and to consider recommending them for adoption to Council.

The Head of Procurement & Contracts referred Members to the background and expected benefits to the Partnership and referred to the specific proposed amendments to the contract procedure rules and financial procedure rules set out in Appendices 1A, 1B, 1C, 2 and 3, pages 71 to 102 of the Agenda refer.

Questions and comments were received as follows:

- In relation to 'local' being referred throughout the report, a Member asked for clarification as to whether this related to East Lindsey or Lincolnshire as a whole. It was highlighted that if a larger contract was awarded out of the area as the service could not be procured locally, it was important that any sub-contracting went to local businesses. It was further queried whether sufficient engagement was being undertaken with business with regards to the approved contractors list and how they could be added to the list to work with and provide a service to the district council.

The Head of Procurement & Contracts agreed that a definition of 'local' was definitely required and would look to propose this as part of the draft procurement strategy that was currently being drafted. With regards to the larger contracts, Members were advised that social value clauses looked to include a weighted award criterion, for example whether the supply was locally sourced and if local apprentices would be engaged as part of a big contract.

The Head of Procurement & Contracts informed Members that there was not an approved contractors list in place as it was considered that this became more prohibitive rather than inclusive. A solution would be in place for the new procurement contract service which was currently being procured and would be implemented shortly. This would be made widely available on websites and at 'meeting buyer event' opportunities for local suppliers to offer advice to

those who may have difficulties in submitting an open tender, for example.

- A Member queried whether there should be a necessity in terms of contract award to look at the carbon impact of the decision to those companies that may be adding to the carbon footprint, particularly as the Council had a responsibility to reduce this. The Head of Procurement & Contracts advised Members that with regards to the carbon impact of a decision this could be incorporated as part of the evaluation criteria.
- A Member referred to the number of levels involved within the process to approve a contract via an exemption and raised a concern regarding the impact the timescales associated with this may have. The Section 151 Officer informed Members that contract awards via an exemption could be made very quickly by way of an executive decision notice or a S151 of portfolio holder decision and as long as all of the information was available to consider a decision could potentially be turned around in 24 hours.
- A Member referred to the Internal Auditors low assurance report on procurement and asked what plans were in place to communicate and educate and train staff in the new procedure. The Member also asked for assurance as to what steps were being taken to ensure there had been some form of integration testing between the new procedures, the new financial rules and the new finance system to make sure it worked smoothly.

The Head of Procurement & Contracts informed Members that training had been arranged commencing in February 2023 for officers initially to gain an understanding of how the new procurement team would work, particularly as there would be nuances and culture changes moving forward.

With regards to the low assurance report, as part of the process a further report would be presented to Committee in approximately 6 to 12 months' time to look at the processes underway, how they were being checked and an update on how the new procurement service was running. The Section 151 Officer added that by aligning the procurement process across the Partnership this would be a lot simpler from an officer perspective as the Unit 4 Finance system would be the same across all three councils.

- A Member considered that it would be helpful for Committee to receive a short report on exemptions, particularly the larger exemptions so that there was transparency if for example, a contractor raised this locally and it would make it clear why an exception had been made. The Section 151 Officer advised Members that currently these were presented to Executive Board as an agenda item, therefore consideration needed to be given on how this process would link up and feedback. The Head of Procurement

& Contracts was asked to provide a regular update on these as part of the new process moving forward.

Following a query on the process of the exemptions being presented to Executive Board, the Procurement Officer clarified that as the exemptions had already been approved as part of the procurement process they were presented for noting and were not for discussion or approval and this was how they became available in the public domain. The Section 151 Officer advised Members that she was agreeable for a summary sheet to be produced that would set a context for the exemptions and also would consider where to include this information to give it more transparency and an opportunity to ask questions.

- A Member asked that once the proposed amendments to the Council's contract procedure rules and financial procedure rules was in place that a report should come back to Committee detailing the number of contracts awarded, the volume and categories of contracts that they were awarded in and how the process worked in order for Committee to monitor whether the recommendation to support the decision had worked in practice. The Section 151 Officer confirmed that this would be added to the Forward Plan.

No further comments or questions were received.

The Chairman referred Members to the recommendations contained within the report.

The recommendations were proposed and seconded for approval.

Following which it was,

RESOLVED:

That the Audit & Governance Committee:

1. Recommend to Council that the revised Contract Procedure Rules at Appendix 1 to the report be adopted, without amendment, as the Contract Procedure Rules (CPR).
2. Agree that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make the necessary changes to update the Council's Constitution, accordingly, including delegation to amend where inconsistencies arose, noting that the CPR would take primacy.
3. Approve the revised financial procedure rule for Banking arrangement and cheques as detailed in Paragraph 1.12 of the report.

36. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The date of the next Meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 25 January 2023.

37. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS:

It was proposed and seconded that the public and press be excluded from the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that, if they were present, there could be disclosed exempt information as defined at paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

N.B. Rebecca James, Procurement Officer and Martin Gibbs, Head of Procurement and Contracts left the Meeting at 12.07pm.

38. PROPERTY FUND UPDATE:

A confidential report was submitted by the Interim Treasury and Investment Manager, PSPS Limited which enabled Members to consider an update on property fund matters.

The Interim Treasury and Investment Manager set out the background to the report and the matter was duly considered by Committee Members.

RESOLVED:

That the information contained within the exempt minute be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.28 pm.

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