

<u>MEETING</u> AUDIT COMMITTEE
<u>DATE AND TIME</u> WEDNESDAY 31ST JANUARY, 2018 AT 7.00 PM
<u>VENUE</u> HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, LONDON NW4 4BG

Dear Councillors,

Please find enclosed additional papers relating to the following items for the above mentioned meeting which were not available at the time of collation of the agenda.

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.	PUBLIC QUESTION AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)	3 - 6

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AUDIT COMMITTEE
Wednesday 31 January 2018

ITEM 5 – PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Note

At the meeting a total of 30 minutes is available for public questions and comments. The questioner may ask one supplementary question at the meeting which will be answered without discussion. The supplementary question must be relevant to the original question put to the Chairman.

Qn No	Agenda Item No	Raised By	Question Raised	Answer
1.	Item 7: Internal Audit Progress Report, Oct-Dec 2017	Mr John Dix	Capita are failing to deliver an adequate pensions service. How many more failures will it take before the council either moves the contract to another pension service or brings the service back in house?	A Service Improvement Plan has been agreed with Capita which is being monitored closely by senior officers and through the Local Pensions Board. The Improvement Plan has been shared with The Pensions Regulator and discussions are ongoing with The Regulator to ensure that agreed improvements are being achieved. The implementation of recommendations from the Internal Audit, which will also form part of the Improvement Plan, will also be monitored by the Local Pensions Board.

2.	Item 7	Mr John Dix	<p>The report states that there is a “need for better training in benefits management for project managers at the Council and within the CSG Project Management Office (PMO). Issues were identified in relation to the management of the whole cycle of benefits identification, monitoring and realisation: it is not being delivered in line with this aspect of the toolkit and therefore does not support effective benefits realisation. There is a need to upskill project managers to enable them to embed the Council’s benefits management tools effectively into business as usual project and programme management”.</p> <p>We are paying expensive consultancy rates for CSG project managers yet the report seems to suggest they lack key skills to ensure benefit realisation can be quantified. Is this acceptable and should we be seeking compensation from Capita for these failings.</p>	<p>The report relates to 3 historic projects. Since this time, we believe that good progress has been made in ensuring that project staff understand what is required of them in relation to the Benefits Management cycle. Barnet has delivered several training sessions relating to the whole cycle of benefits for both council and partner staff delivering projects since the projects referenced in the audit report were delivered.</p> <p>Not all projects delivered in the Council are done so with the support of CSG project resource. For example, of the 3 projects considered in this audit, 2 were delivered without CSG input.</p> <p>It should also be noted that almost all of the CSG project resource delivering Barnet’s transformation programmes are not paid for under a consultancy rate card model. Instead, CSG have agreed a model that provides permanently based project resources at a cost that is approximately half the cost of the contractual rate card.</p>
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3.	Item 7	Mr John Dix	If benefits aren't being defined how can we have any confidence we are getting value for money?	We are confident that all of the council's current in-flight key-projects now have the right level understanding and tracking of benefits.
4.	Item 9: Accounts Closure Improvement Plan	Mr John Dix	In November the Director of Resources said that an interim audit would take place in January/February which would highlight any risk areas in advance. Has this taken place yet and if not when is it scheduled for?	The interim audit is currently underway. To date, no matters of concern have been raised by the auditors.
5.	Item 9	Mr John Dix	The report talks about an interim Director of Finance. Can you clarify if this is interim Director of Resources?	Essentially, yes.
6.	Item 9	Mr John Dix	If the Interim Director of Finance is unable to assess whether progress has been achieved why can't we have the opinion of the Head of Finance (Deputy 151 Officer) given they have continuity on this project?	Both the interim Director of Finance and the Head of Finance are in the same position in this regard. Although both officers are receiving regular reports from CAPITA colleagues signifying that they are confident the accounts will be delivered on time and without material error, insufficient time has elapsed to fully evaluate that the deadline is definitely on track to be achieved. Equally the statutory officers have not seen anything to concern the Council that the deadline won't be achieved. Monitoring and transparent reporting of progress will continue. Council officers do recognise that CAPITA are prioritising improvements and are dedicating additional resources to the achievement of the Council's deadlines.

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