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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Governance and Audit Committee held
at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 16th January, 2025 at 2.00 pm**

PRESENT: Andrew Blackmore, (Chairman)
County Councillor Tony Easson, (Vice Chairman)

Lay Members: Colin Prosser, Martin Veale, Rhodri Guest

County Councillor: Sara Burch, John Crook, David Jones,
Malcolm Lane, Phil Murphy, Peter Strong and Ann Webb

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jan Furtek	Acting Chief Internal Auditor
Wendy Barnard	Democratic Services Officer
Charlotte Owen	Audit Wales Officer
Richard Jones	Performance and Data Insight Manager
Jonathan Davies	Head of Finance
Emma Tapper	Governance & Assurance Officer
Gareth Lucey	Audit Wales Engagement Director
Elinor Hallett	Audit Wales Officer
Jemma Trivett	Audit Wales Officer

APOLOGIES:

None

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

2. Public Open Forum

No members of the public were present.

3. To note the Action List from the previous meeting.

The Action List from the previous meeting was noted.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/ViMsZa0GS68?si=KNpdlaZ4PZpoJloU&t=47>

1. Treasury Report: Details of the 3 charters that organisations can voluntarily sign up for to ensure that the minimum level of Environmental, Social and Governance responsibility are being met will be circulated following. CLOSED

4. 2023/24 Welsh Church Fund and Monmouthshire Farm School Endowment Trust Statement of Accounts (Final)

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The Head of Finance presented the Statement of Accounts for the Charitable Trust Funds, and the Audit Wales Financial Audit Manager presented the ISA260. In doing so, the work and co-operation of the Finance Team and Audit Wales officers was recognised. Following presentation of the reports, questions were invited from Committee Members:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/ViMsZa0GS68?si=OsxWW7osmZHDhvXy&t=94>

The recommendations were agreed, and the Committee agreed the Chair should sign the Letter of Representation:

- 1.1 That the audited 2023/24 statement of accounts for The Welsh Church Act Fund (**Appendix 1**) are approved in light of the Audit Wales ISA260 Audit of Accounts report for The Welsh Church Act Fund.
- 1.2 That the independently examined financial statements for The Monmouthshire Farm School Endowment Trust Fund for 2023/24 (**Appendix 2**) are approved in light of the Independent Examination Report for The Monmouthshire Farm School Endowment Trust Fund.

ACTION: Head of Finance was requested to circulate information in relation to the land assets owned by the Welsh Church Fund (WCF) , and during the meeting confirmed the below is the full list of assets and value as at 31st March 2024. These are all owned outright by the WCF and are located in both Newport and Monmouthshire. CLOSED

Land Asset	Value
Christchurch (a) Glebe	22,000
Christchurch (b) Glebe	6,500
Llandewi Skirid (a) Glebe	55,000
Llanmartin (a) Glebe	84,000
Penallt (a) Glebe	142,500
Rogiet (e) Glebe*	8,000
St Brides Netherwent (b) Glebe	95,000
Whitson (b) Glebe	80,000

5. ISA260 for Trust Funds

This item was considered at the same time as the previous item.

6. Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Risk Assessment

The Acting Chief Internal Auditor presented the Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Risk Assessment report. Following presentation of the report, Members were invited to ask questions:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/ViMsZa0GS68?si=yRUVh7A9TImVwPVk&t=1075>

As per the report recommendations,

1. The Governance and Audit Committee commented on and endorsed the Council's Counter Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Risk Assessment.
2. The Governance & Audit Committee recognised the Council's commitment to a zero-tolerance approach to Fraud, Corruption and Bribery and requires that all Members, Lay Members and Officers of the Council complete the required e-Learning in this area as soon as possible and at the latest by the end of June 2025; and

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3. The Governance and Audit Committee will receive an updated report and assessment during the 2025/26 financial year (September 2025).

7. Audit Wales Review of Performance Management Arrangements

The Audit Wales Officer presented the Audit Wales Review of Performance Management Arrangements report. The Performance and Data Insight Manager presented the Management Response to the report. Following presentation of the report, Members were invited to ask questions:

https://www.youtube.com/live/ViMsZa0GS68?si=jmPvN3Ta_06NNHDI&t=2359

The Audit Wales report and the Management Response were noted.

8. Governance and Audit Committee Forward Work Plan

The Governance and Audit Committee Forward Work Plan was noted.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/ViMsZa0GS68?si=vjfm-Fgn5EcfsfRA&t=2974>

9. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th November 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th November 2024 were confirmed as an accurate record.

https://www.youtube.com/live/ViMsZa0GS68?si=wT2y3m1hFUmc_ls&t=3019

10. Date of Next Meeting: 20th February 2025

ACTION: The Chair requested that the Lay Members have sight of meeting dates proposed for 2025/26 before the Council Calendar is considered by Council on 23rd January 2025.

Meeting ended at 2.50 pm

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