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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, 20th February, 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, Malcolm Lane,
Phil Murphy, Peter Strong and Ann Webb

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Peter Davies	Acting Chief Executive
Jan Furtek	Acting Chief Internal Auditor
Wendy Barnard	Democratic Services Officer
Jonathan Davies	Head of Finance
Steve Wyndham	Audit Wales Officer
Gemma Ellis	Ardal Interim Head of Procurement
John Paxton	Ardal Strategy & Development Manager
Kathy Buckley	Chief Information Security Officer
Sian Hayward	Digital and Technology Manager

APOLOGIES:

County Councillors David Jones

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Public Open Forum

None present.

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

The Action List from the previous meeting was noted.

https://youtu.be/dNQTC-ktyxY?si=XRUYJla_yBY1K6v&t=2

1. Dates of Meetings: The dates were shared with the Chair and approved: CLOSED

4. Update of Contract Procedure Rules

Gemma Ellis and John Paxton, Ardal (procurement partners) presented a report providing an update of Contract Procedure Rules. Following their presentation, Committee Members were invited to ask questions:

<https://youtu.be/dNQTC-ktyxY?si=BT2yFLphoflNYrjH&t=12>

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As in the report recommendations, the Committee:

1. noted and considered the draft Contract Procedure Rules, and raised relevant comments or queries during the Committee meeting.
2. noted that the CPR's are subject to subsequent approval by full Council at its meeting on 6th March 2025.

ACTION: The Leader of the Council to be advised that whilst generally supportive of the draft document, the Committee raised some points as follows:

- The Committee identified some tension between ensuring transparent purchasing versus the need to have a Value for Money process which doesn't overly constrain the council's agility; also
- Concerns over the absence of a de minimis value in respect of the need for one quotation.

The Committee was unwilling to accept the document in its current form and requested that consideration was given to some adjustments.

5. 2024/25 Q3 Treasury report

The Head of Finance presented the 2024/25 Q3 Treasury Report. Following presentation of the report, Committee Members were invited to ask questions:

<https://youtu.be/dNQTC-ktYxY?si=Y9tdF3yT1jDCBFo6&t=1449>

As contained in the report recommendations, the Governance & Audit Committee reviewed the results of treasury management activities and the performance achieved in quarter 3 as part of their delegated responsibility to provide scrutiny of treasury policy, strategy and activity on behalf of Council.

6. 2025/26 Capital Strategy and Treasury Strategy

The Head of Finance presented the 2025/26 Capital Strategy and Treasury Strategy Report. Following presentation of the report, Members were invited to ask questions:

<https://youtu.be/dNQTC-ktYxY?si=JYcR9L58mnIjAgKz&t=2902>

As per the report recommendations:

1. The Governance & Audit Committee considered the draft Capital strategy for 2025/26 as found at **Appendix 1** and endorsed it for onward circulation and approval by full Council.
2. The Governance & Audit Committee considered the draft Treasury management strategy for 2025/26 as found at **Appendix 2** and endorsed it for onward circulation and approval by full Council. This includes the:
 - 2025/26 Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement, and;
 - 2025/26 Investment & Borrowing Strategies

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3. The Governance & Audit Committee noted the requirement to review the Council's treasury management activities on behalf of the Council by continuing to receive quarterly treasury management activity updates during 2025/26 as per the requirements of the updated CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice.

7. Internal Audit Quarterly Progress report (Q3)

The Acting Chief Internal Auditor presented the Internal Audit Quarterly Progress Report for Q3. Following presentation of the report, questions were invited from Members:

<https://youtu.be/dNQTC-ktyxY?si=PGSWKeCIIDJzsVZP&t=4139>

As per the report recommendations:

1. The Committee considered and noted the audit opinions issued.
2. The Committee noted the progress made by the Section towards meeting the 2024/25 Operational Audit Plan and the Section's performance indicators at the 9 month stage of the financial year.

8. Governance and Audit Committee Forward Work Plan

The Forward Work Plan was noted.

It was decided to cancel the meeting of the 13th March 2025.

<https://youtu.be/dNQTC-ktyxY?si=re97xmmRRCj4DUQI&t=5139>

9. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

<https://youtu.be/dNQTC-ktyxY?si=nsaxJ-5FrpsBMFwi&t=5341>

10. Date of Next Meeting: 13th March 2025

11. **To consider whether to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, that it involves the information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act (proper officers view attached)**

https://youtu.be/dNQTC-ktyxY?si=b_nLhH3eR3EQvXfF&t=5353

12. Cyber Security

The Head of Information Security and Technology and Chief Information Security Officer presented a report on Cyber security.

The following points were covered:

- Infrastructure
- Staff training
- Cyber security and resilience

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- Role of Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)

Members noted the report and the cyber security arrangements outlined for MCC and confirm that they have assurance over the arrangements in place

Meeting ended at 3.35 pm