



GLADSTONE REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF
GLADSTONE REGIONAL COUNCIL

HELD AT THE GLADSTONE ENTERTAINMENT AND CONVENTION CENTRE
56 GOONDOON STREET, GLADSTONE

ON **WEDNESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2020** COMMENCING AT **9AM**

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PRESENT

Kerry Phillips (Chairperson)
Sandra Collins
Stephen Coates
Cr Kahn Goodluck
Cr Desley O'Grady

Officers:

Leisa Dowling, Chief Executive Officer (left the meeting following Agenda Item 9)
Mark Holmes, General Manager Finance, Governance and Risk
Jason Swemmer, Ethics, Integrity and Audit Specialist (Acting)
Theunis Mienie, General Manager People Culture and Safety
John Tumbers, General Manager Operations
Mark Francis, General Manager Strategic Asset Performance
Carly Quinn, General Manager Strategy and Transformation (via Teams)
Rob Huth, General Manager Customer Experience
Kylie Lee, General Manager Community Development and Events (via Teams)
Tanya Whalley, Acting Manager Governance
Vicky Hankinson, Governance Advisor
Rachael Millett, Executive Secretary
Nerrilynne Taylor, Team Leader Financial Operations (via Teams)
Tania Brown, Manager Asset Governance
Channa Jayasinha, Manager Strategic ICT (via Teams)
Sue-Ellen Howie, Transformation Program Lead (Acting) (via Teams)

Others in Attendance:

Will Fellowes, PwC (via Teams)
Darren Halsall, QAO (via Teams)
Cr Rick Hansen, Councillor (Observer)

1. COMMITTEE IN CAMERA

There were no matters to report from the Committee in Camera Session.

2. CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

2.1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

There were no matters to report from the Chief Executive Officer's Report.

2.2. LEGAL REPORT

There were no matters to report from the verbal update on legal matters.

3. APOLOGIES

Nil.

4. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5.1. CONFIRMATION OF AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

Purpose:

Seeking confirmation of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting Minutes of the 30 September 2020.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the Committee confirm the Minutes of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held on the 30 September 2020.

Decision:

Moved Sandra Collins
Seconded Stephen Coates

That the Officers recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

6.1. AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE OPEN TASKS REPORT

Purpose:

Standing item to update the Committee on the Open Tasks Report.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the Committee note and receive the Open Tasks Report.

Discussion:

It was noted that some items showing on the report, specifically items 9.1 and 10.2 shown on page 27 of 366 of the agenda, have been completed with clarification given that items may have been completed post production of the report and additionally the system requires all parties assigned the task to mark as completed. It was noted that a system review of the tasks will be undertaken and tasks completed will be closed out. Members enquired if a soft close (task 10.2 shown on page 32 of 366) was completed for November. Officers advised that a soft close was not done in November. It was recommended Council consider it for December 2020 or early January 2021.

An enquiry was made regarding the status of item 8.2 (page 28 of 366 of the agenda) with an update to be provided by the Manager Asset Governance and General Manager Finance Governance and Risk out of session.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the Committee note and receive the Open Tasks Report.

Decision:

Moved Cr O'Grady
Seconded Cr Goodluck

That the Officers recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

7. NOTING PAPERS

7.1. CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT REPORT

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update the committee on business improvement activities being completed across Council's contracts and procurement processes.

Discussion:

The committee reiterated the focus on continuous improvement and suggested that completing the procurement related audit recommendations would fall into the category of continuous improvement.

The Committee made a number of enquiries and comments regarding:

1. The dollar value of open purchase orders;
2. The cash flow implications associated with more timely order receivals;
3. The opportunities associated with performing accounting soft closes which will lead to better quality budget processes;
4. The positive initiative of the Executive Team investigating improvements in procurement software; and
5. Concerns were discussed regarding the low level of compliance (26%) of purchasing against the procurement plan.

The Committee was satisfied with the Officer responses to the queries raised and discussed.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the Contracts and Procurement Report be received and noted.

Decision:

Moved Cr O'Grady
Seconded Stephen Coates

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

7.2. 2019/20 ADOPTED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER

Purpose:

To present to the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee the final audited 2019/20 Financial Statements and Management Representation Letter.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the 2019/20 Adopted Financial Statements and Management Representation Letter report be received and noted.

Decision:

Moved Cr O'Grady
Seconded Stephen Coates

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

7.3. QAO FINAL REPORT

Purpose:

To present a copy of the Queensland Audit Office's 2020 Closing Report.

Discussion:

A general comment regarding the theme from the set of papers with regards to computer applications was made with some concerns expressed that the software may be limiting Council's ability for further improvement.

An enquiry was made regarding the emerging risks, specifically the valuation comment regarding travel delays as a result of COVID-19 (page 123 of 366 of the agenda). It was clarified that whilst Gladstone was not subject to travel restrictions, delays were experienced as a result of external resources being unable to visit the region as a result of restrictions applied to out of state travelers.

A comment was received regarding 20CR-1 Monitoring and assessment of indicators of impairment and the Management Response (page 132 of 366 of the agenda). The main focus of the recommendation from QAO is that Council look at all their asset impairments and not limit the focus to only the Gladstone Airport Corporation.

It was noted that the QAO report refers to the importance of early engagement of valuers for 2021 and the committee enquired if valuers had been engaged. The advice was received that the process for engaging valuers had commenced. Further enquiry was made regarding the timeframe of the works if only preparing contracts now. It was noted that an update on the asset management works would be provided at agenda item 12.2 Asset Management.

The committee enquired on the status of the outstanding matters shown in the report. It was confirmed that all the actions with exception of the '*Finalisation of Gladstone Airport Corporation audit*', which will be completed Monday following the GAC board meeting.

The committee extended its appreciation to the technical team at QAO for the thoroughness of the final review of the asset impairment and the value add in the outcome for the Council by QAO's involvement.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the Queensland Audit Office's Closing Report be received and noted.

Decision:

Moved Cr O'Grady
Seconded Stephen Coates

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

7.4. RISK MANAGMENT QUARTERLY REPORT

Purpose:

To provide an update to the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee on Council's insurances and risk management strategies for the period ending 31 December 2020.

Discussion:

The committee enquired on cyber security insurance coverage. Advice was received that the insurance policy is with Chubb and the policy has been in force for 2 to 3 years. The committee further enquired if ICT technical experts were involved in reviewing the policy to ensure adequate coverage was obtained. It was confirmed that ICT was involved in the annual renewal and are given the opportunity to specify units of applicable coverage. Council's insurer, LGM, also provide additional guidance and recommendations on the level of cover.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the Risk Management Quarterly Report be received and noted.

Decision:

Moved Cr O'Grady
Seconded Stephen Coates

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

8. COMPLIANCE AND ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES

8.1. COMPLIANCE AND ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES ARIC 2 DEC 2020

Purpose:

To provide an update on the progress of Ethics, Integrity and Audit activities.

Discussion:

The committee noted that there has been very good progress with the compliance and assurance activities.

It was highlighted that a revised and achievable audit plan has been developed and provided as requested by the committee, with it being noted that some reviews were able to be merged and the challenges with staffing has been managed. Officers are confident that the audit plan will be completed by end of the financial year.

Concerns regarding overdue high risk agreed management actions were raised and the lack of recent updates. An example on page 181 of 366 of the agenda, was cited with the current due date shown as 30 April 2020 with no update shown since then. The committee requested that updated commentary and due dates be provided against the actions to assist the committee in understanding the status of the actions.

A verbal update on each of the overdue agreed management actions was provided:

- Compliance with AS/NZS 4801:2001 - Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems by Internal Audit 29/08/2019

The action coincided with work on the risk management framework, which is now completed. Officers are in the process of setting up new Intranet pages and adding access for the employees. A schedule of documents that require development and review has been developed however a final review to ensure all documents have been captured is required and it is anticipated that this action will be closed out by next reporting.

- Internal Audit by Deloitte: Risk Management Maturity Assessment - Water and Waste Water by Internal Audit 30/10/2019

Draft business continuity plan was drafted in response to the COVID-19 event and is currently being worked on. The expectation is to bring the business continuity plan to Council for approval early next year. Additionally, the mechanical/electrical maintenance programs are occurring and review of system entry being undertaken. Expected completion for this action is April 2021.

- Delegations Review by Internal Audit 30/11/2019

This action has been completed since the report was developed. Outcome achieved was the development of eLearning (ELMO) module.

- DES - Yarwun WWTP EPO Reporting Requirements & Project Deadlines by Legislative non-compliance 23/12/2019

Currently performing a capital upgrade which will adhere to the conditions. A delay has occurred through a dispute regarding the design of the plant and Officers are currently working through this. It is expected that a final report will be completed by the end of this week with estimated construction completion date of October 2021.

- Internal Audit NHVAS Maintenance Management by Internal Audit 31/01/2020

The action items are around administration controls with reporting and managing those which have been delayed due to resourcing issues within the team. An extension of time to March 2021 was requested and received to complete the items.

An administrative error was noted on page 185 of 366 of the agenda, with the Environmental Incident table total not matching the numbers shown - total should be 43.

The committee was pleased to receive internal audit reports and additionally pleased to hear support received to progress actions. The committee thanked all those involved for the work completed to date.

Officer's Recommendation:

That:

1. The Progress Report on Compliance and Audit Recommendations be received and noted.
2. The update on Compliance and Audit activities be received and noted.

Decision:

Moved Sandra Collins
Seconded Stephen Coates

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

9. EXTERNAL AUDIT

Nil.

10. FINANCE REPORTS

10.1. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR PERIOD ENDING 31 OCTOBER 2020

Purpose:

To provide the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee with the Monthly Financial Reports for Period ending 31 October 2020 that were presented to Council on 17 November 2020.

Discussion:

The current employment vacancy rate of 4.5% was highlighted to the committee as the vacancy rate was budgeted as 7.5% which will impact on the budget if it continues on trend. However, Council are currently working to obtain savings in other areas. Additionally, it was noted that the Council resolved yesterday to proceed with the sale of land for outstanding rates. An enquiry was made on the high value of rates and charges still outstanding in the Agnes Water / Seventeen Seventy area. It was noted that number of properties with outstanding rates and charges was at a similar level as Boyne Island and Tannum Sands, however the dollar value is higher in the Agnes Water / Seventeen Seventy area.

The committee sought clarification regarding the asset sustainability ratio calculation. Officers advised that the calculation is the renewal expenditure divided by depreciation.

The committee provided an observation that Councils have an opportunity to levy additional rates and charges in the current financial year as a result of the impacts of COVID-19. Additionally, there is potential to renegotiate loans which might provide some cost savings. Officers advised that Council resolved yesterday to pass on the water price increase, however discussion on levying additional general rates has not been considered. The meeting noted that Officers are preparing a report for Council to evaluate loan refinancing opportunities.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee note the Monthly Financial Reports for Period ending 31 October 2020.

Decision:

Moved Sandra Collins
Seconded Stephen Coates

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT

Refer Agenda Item 12.2

12. OFFICER'S REPORTS

12.1. MAXIMISING DELIVERY OF WORK PROGRAMS PROJECT UPDATE

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the status of our Maximising Delivery of Work Programs project.

This is a 2020-2021 Operational Plan activity and its purpose is to identify and implement measures to improve our work program delivery and performance.

Discussion:

The committee enquired on the key deliverables shown on page 300 of 366 of the agenda. The key deliverables are showing a lot of planning, tool kits and road maps resulting in quick wins, however is the goal quick wins or workplan delivery and performance improvement to ensure a robust set of practices moving forward? Clarification was provided that both are goals, with the development of the Tiger Team and Mission Teams bringing key stakeholders and personnel throughout the business together to map the end to end project delivery. Throughout this process, quick wins have been identified and implemented. The goal is by end of the next two weeks is to have four improvement initiatives with implementation plans approved by the Executive Team before rolling them out to the business with delivery teams nominated. A significant amount of change management is to occur which will likely take 6 months and roll into the 21/22 program. Concern was raised that being a yearlong project what effect that will have on the delivery of 21/22 works programs. Advice was provided that improvements identified in the 20/21 year will set up 21/22 for success.

Clarification was sought regarding the work being underpinned by the asset management plans being refreshed. It was confirmed that the asset management plans feed into the program of work.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the report be received for information.

Decision:

Moved Cr Goodluck
Seconded Cr O'Grady

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.2. ASSET MANAGEMENT

Purpose:

To provide an update on Council's asset management activities including a summary of the current status of Council's asset data and future data improvement actions.

Discussion:

Members noted that Council will undertake a comprehensive valuation for several asset classes this year, with water and sewer packaged together and a contract awarded. A project pre-start meeting was held yesterday with an anticipated close out by the end of April 2021. Land, buildings and park furniture tenders have been evaluated and it is anticipated contract award by the end of the week, with a completion date by the end of May 2021. A review with Rockhampton Regional Council regarding the treatment of park furniture and other structures class will be undertaken in Quarter 3.

The committee thanked the Manager Asset Governance for the update provided.

Officer's Recommendation:

It is recommended that the update be noted.

Decision:

Moved Cr Goodluck
Seconded Sandra Collins

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.3. STRATEGIC ICT - ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with an annual update (2020) on the work managed by the Strategic ICT team.

Discussion:

Cr O'Grady thanked the Manager Strategic ICT for taking Councillors through a cyber security workshop.

The committee noted that the SCADA Infrastructure plan appears to be behind schedule with 25% completion with advice received that a delay has occurred with procurement. The project is on track for completion end May / early June 2021. The committee expressed disappointment in the delay.

Members noted the ICT 20/21 Work Program projects shows 12 completed with 16 yet to be completed and enquired when they were scheduled and if they will need to be rolled over into the 21/22 plan. Officers advised that the remaining projects will be completed in 20/21 and they are well underway.

An enquiry was made regarding the cyber security breach incident report and if there was any data loss and additionally what the process is if there was a data loss including notifying the relevant authorities. Reference was made to Council's Cyber Security Incident Response plan which includes the activation of a subcommittee and analysis of the data and follows the reporting guidelines as advised by the Australian Security Centre. It was noted that Australia is currently at the highest threat level for cyber security.

The committee was advised that Council currently rely on third parties for notification of a breach and in this instance the notification was received by Telstra's Threat Intelligence Unit. Council's preference would be to purchase another layer of defence and monitoring as recommended by RioT Solutions. Clarification was provided regarding the response taken when a cyber security breach has occurred with the response reliant on how the breach was reported, such as if the breach was advised by Australian Security Centre, their guidelines are to not block the breach immediately, but to gather intelligence. However, if reported by Telstra, Council is able to act as required with the security breach in this case blocked within 3 days. It was confirmed that in this case, the server was accessed and tracking files changed however no data was lost.

The committee requested feedback on the RioT Solutions Recommendation item 1 with advice received that Council already undertakes this action on a monthly basis and follow Microsoft's patch cycle.

The committee requested feedback on the monitoring of RioT Solutions 13 recommendations post 6 months on how Council is tracking. Officers provided updates.

The committee enquired on the three cyber security incidents and the types of attack and if any costs were occurred and recovered. The committee was advised that there have been three cyber-attacks, 2 phishing attacks which incurred a cost of \$1,500 with purchase of iTunes cards. However, it was noted that the attackers were not successful in that they did not receive the card. Council has been able to claim the costs back through the Bank and will reutilise the cards in another manner. The third attack was on a server and the costs associated with responding to the attack are being recovered through insurance. No insurance claim was submitted for the phishing attacks due to value being below insurance claim excess.

The committee reiterated the importance of appropriate cover for cyber security by citing an example of another organisation that did not have appropriate insurance cover which resulted in a substantial financial loss.

Officer's Recommendation:

Note the annual update provided.

Decision:

Moved Cr Goodluck
Seconded Cr O'Grady

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.4. PCS QUARTERLY REPORT

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee with an update of the People and Culture statistics and activities.

Discussion:

It was highlighted that there are some issues with the level of accuracy with the recording of data, however process improvements are in place which will ensure future reports are accurate and will have better clarity regarding short term contract and funded positions.

It was highlighted that while there appears to be a significant spike in complaints and grievances this is due to proactive leadership and increase in reporting from leadership discussions and engagements and increased hazard inspections which were previously not recorded.

It was highlighted that the sick leave was starting to trend downwards and notifications have been provided to managers regarding excess leave, however with travel opening up, leave requests are starting to filter through.

It was noted to the committee that the 12 Month Rolling Turnover Rate graph trendline should be labelled target line.

The committee enquired if funded employees become employed once funding period has ceased, with advice provided that funded employees are engaged on max term contracts which align with the funding arrangements. Generally, the funded opportunities are offered internally to employees to grow their knowledge and that employees position is then back filled.

The committee expressed appreciation for the thoroughness of the report as it addressed some issues the committee had previously raised.

The committee enquired whether there are mechanisms in place to drive the 100% completion of mandatory online learning. Officers advised that there are mechanisms in place to monitor and manage the completion such as weekly reports to managers. However, it should be noted that the level of completion fluctuates depending on the date the report was run and the refresher date for renewal training and the level of new and exiting employees.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the People Services update report be received and noted.

Decision:

Moved Cr O'Grady
Seconded Stephen Coates

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.5. HEALTH SAFETY AND WELLBEING QUARTERLY REPORT

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee with an update of the Health Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) KPIs and trends.

Discussion:

It was highlighted that since the report was compiled a lost time injury has occurred. The incident was minor with an employee's knee coming into contact with a barrier which is designed to prevent people from falling into the bulk waste transfer station bins. The corrective action proposed is to raise the barrier higher to prevent future similar incidents which will still provide the fall barrier protection.

The committee expressed appreciation for the additional information and further noted an administration issue with the graphs shown on page 359 of 366 of the agenda which were unable to be viewed due to formatting issues.

The committee sought clarification regarding lost time injury and medical treatment as the details shown on page 362 of 366 shows 4 injuries in October shown as restricted duties and only one medical treatment in this period but no lost time injuries recorded. The committee further enquired how restricted duties are being managed and if the measure may need to be amended to restricted duties rather than medical treatment. The General Manager People Culture and Safety advised he would investigate the query further.

The committee extended their appreciation for the extensive report and further advised the identified issue of incidents caused by reversing is shared with Livingstone Shire Council and there may be potential to partner with Livingstone Shire Council to investigate resolutions/improvements. The committee enquired if there was a policy for mandatory reverse parking to improve safety and advice was provided that not at this stage, however this was something that will be investigated while resolving the issue. The committee was further advised that Council is currently turning over a significant amount of fleet this year and next year which will provide the opportunity to acquire vehicles with reversing cameras (currently the older vehicles do not have this capability).

Officer's Recommendation:

That the Health Safety and Wellbeing update report be received and noted.

Decision:

Moved Sandra Collins
Seconded Cr O'Grady

That the Officers Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.6. AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING DATES 2021

Purpose:

To determine dates for the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee meetings in 2021.

Discussion:

Nil.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee:

1. Schedule ordinary business meetings for the following dates and times in 2021:
 - Wednesday 17 March 2021 from 9am – 1pm;
 - Wednesday 16 June 2021 from 9am – 1pm;
 - Wednesday 15 September 2021 from 9am – 1pm;
 - Wednesday 1 December 2021 from 9am – 1pm; and
2. Undertake an Information Briefing at a Councillor Information Session scheduled for 13 April and 12 October 2021 (subject to Council meeting dates); and
3. Put forward a recommendation for consideration by Council that the Committee attend a planning meeting and site visit in February 2021 subject to committee and Council availability.

Decision:

Moved Cr Goodluck
Seconded Cr O'Grady

That the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee put forward a recommendation for consideration by Council for the following meetings:

1. Schedule ordinary business meetings for the following dates and times in 2021:
 - Wednesday 17 March 2021 from 9am – 1pm;
 - Wednesday 16 June 2021 from 9am – 1pm;
 - Wednesday 15 September 2021 from 9am – 1pm;
 - Wednesday 1 December 2021 from 9am – 1pm; and
2. Undertake an Information Briefing at a Councillor Information Session scheduled for 13 April and 12 October 2021 (subject to Council meeting dates); and
3. The Committee attend a planning meeting and site visit on 9 February 2021 subject to committee and Council availability.

CARRIED

13. SELF-DEVELOPMENT

- Stephen Coates reported that he recently attended the Audit Chairs briefing from the QAO and attended an Institute of Internal Auditors Audit Risk Committee forum.
- Sandra Collins reported that she has completed training in leading an investigation and cause analysis
- Cr O'Grady reported attending a cyber security briefing provided by Council
- Kerry Phillips reported that she also attended the Audit Chairs briefing from QAO. She advised that her role as State President for CPA Australia ends this month. She attended the CPA Australia virtual global congress and highly recommends committee members register if possible, specifically the presentation on the Ipswich City Council. She also completed work around micro credentials and digital awareness.

14. COUNCIL REFERRALS

There were no Council referrals or urgent business.

15. GENERAL BUSINESS

There were no general business items.

16. CLOSED SESSION - AUDIT REPRESENTATIVES

There were no items to report on from the closed session.

17. NEXT MEETING

Meeting Date: 9 February 2021

Time: TBA

Venue: TBA

There being no further business the Chair formally closed the meeting

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 12.50pm

I hereby confirm that I have read the minutes and they are a true and correct record of the proceedings of the meeting. I certify that these 18 pages form the official copy of the Gladstone Regional Council Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting Minutes of the 2 December 2020.

.....

Kerry Phillips (Chairperson)

...../...../.....
Date