

Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

10am, Thursday 18 August 2016

Update on Cameron House investigation action plan – covering report

Item number

Report number

Executive/routine

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Executive Summary

This cover report details the changes to the attached report which was considered and continued from GRBV on 23 June 2016.

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Update on Cameron House investigation action plan – covering report

1. Main report

- 1.1 There two updates to the report which have occurred during the period between the two Committees. Both relate to the action plan:
- (a) Action 1 – The South East Locality Manager has now returned from long term leave.
 - (b) Action 6 – PWC have now concluded their investigation and the outcome was reported to Council on 30 June 2016.

Andrew Kerr

Chief Executive

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Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

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Update on Cameron House investigation action plan

B agenda

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Executive summary

This report was considered at GRBV on 23 June 2016 and the action agreed was “To continue consideration of the item to the meeting in August 2016”.

At the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee (GRBV) meeting in October 2015, Committee received a B agenda report on the Monitoring Officer’s investigation into allegations of inappropriate behaviour by Council officers in relation to Cameron House.

This report updates elected members on the activities set out in the action plan which was put in place after that Committee.

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Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the matters identified within this report.

Background

- 2.1 Cameron House is a community centre in Prestonfield. The current building is a new build that was completed in early spring 2009 following the previous building reaching the end of its useful life. The construction process experienced a number of difficulties and the building has continued to suffer from defects.
- 2.2 The construction project was the subject of an independent report by Turner & Townsend. This report highlighted a number of lessons learned from the project and was scrutinised by the GRBV at the March & April 2015 GRBV meetings.
- 2.3 At the March 2015 GRBV meeting, Moira O'Neill (Chair of the Cameron House Management Committee) made a number of allegations of inappropriate behaviour by Council officers both during the design and construction phase and after the centre opened. These allegations triggered a request by the GRBV for the Monitoring Officer to investigate these allegations.
- 2.4 The results of these investigations were reported to this Committee in October 2015.

Main report

- 3.1 Following the reporting of the findings of the Monitoring Officer's investigation to Committee, the Chief Executive agreed that an action plan be put in place. The terms of the plan were agreed with Moira O'Neill (Chair of the Cameron House Management Committee) and a number of other key stakeholders.
- 3.2 The action plan and updated current status for each action is as follows:

	Action	Updated status
1.	A new contact point from outwith the Communities & Families Directorate is to be put in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agreed that this will be the South East Locality Manager who is currently on long term leave.• Pending her return to work David Lyon is acting as the contact

		point.
2.	Further investigation was to be carried out in relation to the potential doctoring of an email to cover up the failure to invite Moira O'Neill to a meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chief Internal Auditor advised the Monitoring Officer that there was no additional evidence available surrounding this matter and no practical way of obtaining it. No further action can therefore be taken in the circumstances.
3.	Further investigation was to be carried out in relation to an incognito visit to property.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chief Internal Auditor advised the Monitoring Officer that, in the absence of any additional evidence in connection with this matter, it is not possible to be more definitive than was the case in the original Monitoring Officer's report. No further action can therefore be taken in the circumstances.
4.	Conflict of interest concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In consultation with the Chief Internal Auditor the Monitoring Officer has reached the view that, whilst it is understandable why there may have been a perceived conflict of interest, it continues to be difficult to argue that there would have been an actual conflict of interest had the individual concerned carried out a defects survey. No further action required.
5.	A general improvement in culture was recognised as being required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new point of contact has been appointed per 1 above. Cultural change is one of the key reforms as the result of continued Council transformation.
6.	Whistleblowing matter – further investigation required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a continuing Monitoring Officer matter and, per the verbal update provided to this Committee in April 2016, will be referred to the relevant Committee once PwC conclude their investigations.
7.	Outstanding property repairs and concerns about unnecessary costs incurred in the build and remediation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many repairs have been completed and the remainder instructed, all funded from the repairs and maintenance budget. The summer works will include replacement of heating controls.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been further recent unfortunate issues with the building. The Acting Head of Property and his team are currently dealing with these.
8.	Accountability for wrongdoing set out in findings of report to GRBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the findings at 2, 3 & 4 above, no further action can be recommended.

3.3 Committee is asked to note the updated status in relation to the action plan.

Measures of success

4.1 The efficient and effective operation of the Cameron House community centre.

Financial impact

5.1 No direct impact.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

6.1 No direct impact.

Equalities impact

7.1 No direct impact.

Sustainability impact

8.1 No direct impact.

Consultation and engagement

9.1 None.

Background reading/external references

None.

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Chief Executive

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