

---

**AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE MURRAY ROOM, GRIFFITH ON  
MONDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2025 COMMENCING AT 5:00 PM**

---

**PRESENT**

Stuart Heffer (Chair) (Community Representative), Helen Brill (Community Representative)

National Audits Group, Stephen Prowse, National Audits Group, Gail Farrar, NSW Audit Office, Nicky Rajani (Zoom)

Quorum = 3

**STAFF**

General Manager, Brett Stonestreet, Acting Director Business, Cultural & Financial Services, Max Turner, Director Economic & Organisational Development, Shireen Donaldson, Senior WHS & Risk Coordinator, Raymond McCloy, Governance Manager & Minute Secretary, Leanne Austin

Absent: Councillor Christine Stead

**1 APOLOGIES**

An apology was received from Dorian Radue (Community Representative).

**2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Stuart Heffer and Helen Brill that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 November 2024, having first been circulated amongst all members, be confirmed.

**3 BUSINESS ARISING**

Nil.

**4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Pecuniary Interests**

There were no pecuniary interests declared.

**Significant Non-Pecuniary Interests**

There were no significant non-pecuniary interests declared.

## **Less Than Significant Non-Pecuniary Interests**

There were no significant non-pecuniary interests declared.

## **5 ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

Clause 07 was brought forward.

### **CL07 ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Mr Rajani advised the audit has now been finalised and an unqualified audit has been issued. The non-recognition of RFS Assets which has been an issue in the past has now been treated as an uncorrected misstatement. The Audit Office is preparing the Management Letter which will be provided to Council in the coming week. Mr Turner advised Council staff will work through issues identified in the Management Letter and begin planning for the next audit to ensure adequate resources are available to meet the required deadlines. Mr Rajani advised the Audit Office is analysing the significant costs of the audit and will advise Council of the cost overrun. Mr Stonestreet advised the costs need to be quantified and reported back to Council. Resourcing issues also need to be addressed.

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Stuart Heffer and Helen Brill that Committee note the finalised Annual Financial Statements.

Mr Rajani left the meeting at 5:09 pm.

Mr Turner thanked National Audits Group for their assistance in preparing the Griffin Green accounting paper.

Mrs Brill suggested Council should document the accounting process required for this project to assist with treatment of any future similar projects.

Mr Stonestreet advised the time and cost involved in preparing the Annual Financial Statements this year under the Audit Office was significantly more than in prior years with Council's previous external auditors. Mr Turner stated that the extent and scope of the audit was much more complex than previously undertaken.

### **CL01 INDUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS - MANDATORY**

Mrs Austin provided an overview of the Committee induction process which Committee members may access on Council's website. Committee members are required to read the Code of Conduct policy and procedures, Code of Meeting Practice policy, Statements to the Media Policy, Social Media Policy, Information Protection Principles and Child Safe policy. Committee members are also required to complete the online policy acknowledgment form. Explanation was provided in relation to the requirement to declare any Conflicts of Interest Committee members may have in their consideration of Committee matters.

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Stuart Heffer and Helen Brill that the Committee note the Committee Induction requirements and complete the induction process outlined in the report.

Clause 10 was brought forward.

#### **CL10 UPDATE FROM COUNCIL'S SENIOR WHS & RISK COORDINATOR**

Mr McCloy provided an update on progress made regarding Council's Risk Management Manual, Procedure and Risk Assessments. Documents have been prepared and sent to Council officers for feedback. Once the documents have been reviewed and finalised, Council's Risk Register will be updated. The finalised documents will be presented to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee for consideration.

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Helen Brill and Stuart Heffer that the Committee note the update provided.

Mr McCloy left the meeting at 5:33 pm.

#### **CL02 STRATEGIC INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN, ANNUAL PLAN AND CORE REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST**

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Stuart Heffer and Helen Brill that the information be noted.

#### **CL03 REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE AND CHARTER**

This item is to be considered at the next Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting.

#### **CL04 AGENDA FORWARD PLAN**

Mr Prowse advised the internal auditors have commenced the WHS Audit and were on site this week conducting interviews with Council officers.

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Stuart Heffer and Helen Brill that the Committee note the report.

#### **CL05 UPDATE ON INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - ASSET MANAGEMENT 2024**

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Stuart Heffer and Helen Brill that the Committee convene in March/April 2025 to consider the Audit Report on Asset Management.

#### **CL06 ENGAGEMENT LETTERS - ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LEASES AND LICENCES**

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Stuart Heffer and Helen Brill that the Engagement Letters for internal audits on Accounts Payable and Property Management Leases and Licences be approved.

The internal auditors noted that Property Management is not subject to a performance review as was stated in the engagement letter.

#### **CL08 INVESTMENTS REPORT NOV AND DEC 2024**

Mr Turner reported that Council's Investments were providing favourable results overall with a spread of maturities and a number of term deposits locked in for four to five years with good rates.

#### **CL09 FIRST QUARTERLY REVIEW REPORT (ADOPTED 26 NOV 2024)**

Mr Turner advised that the second quarterly review would be presented to Council on 25 February. The first quarter results indicated a consolidated surplus forecast however General Fund continues to be in deficit.

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Helen Brill and Stuart Heffer that the Investments Report and First Quarterly Review Report be noted.

#### **CL11 SAFETY UPDATE AND MEMBER PRIORITISATION ADVICE FROM STATECOVER**

Mr Stonestreet advised Council has been prioritised by State Cover as Low risk meaning that Council is not required to take part in a performance improvement process for this audit cycle. Council has done a lot of work to reduce injuries and claims in recent years.

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Stuart Heffer and Helen Brill that the information provided be noted.

#### **CL12 STATEWIDE MUTUAL - CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PATHWAY SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Mrs Donaldson advised Council regularly participates in the Statewide Mutual Continuous Improvement Pathway Self-Assessment program. Council's recent self-assessment was conducted on pathways, swimming pools and enterprise risk management.

Mrs Brill enquired if Council would review any high risk areas on an annual basis? Mrs Donaldson advised she would take this on notice.

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Helen Brill and Stuart Heffer that the Committee note the information provided.

#### **CL13 ANNUAL REPORT AND STATE OF OUR CITY REPORT**

Mrs Donaldson provided an overview of Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements advising that Council had prepared a State of our City report and Annual Report both of which were adopted by Council in November 2024, as required.

Mrs Austin advised that as the Annual Financial Statements have now been finalised, they will be uploaded onto Council's website along with the Annual Report.

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Helen Brill and Stuart Heffer that the information be received.

#### **CL14 PROPOSED COMMITTEE MEETING DATES 2025**

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Helen Brill and Stuart Heffer that the Committee note the proposed meeting dates for 2025.

#### **CL15 SERVICE REVIEWS PROGRESS REPORT**

Mr Stonestreet advised that Council was progressing the recommendations from the GRALC and Roads Service Reviews.

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Helen Brill and Stuart Heffer that the Committee note the information.

#### **6 OUTSTANDING ACTION REPORT**

The Committee considered the Outstanding Action Report. Mrs Brill suggested Council officers revise the due dates to ensure the timeframes are achievable.

**RECOMMENDED** on the motion of Helen Brill and Stuart Heffer that the report be noted.

#### **7 GENERAL BUSINESS**

Nil.

#### **8 NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee is to be held on Wednesday, 2 April 2025 at 5:00 pm, pending availability of members.

There being no further business the meeting terminated at 6:17 pm.