

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

1. Recommendations:

That the information contained in the Director of Corporate Services report below be noted

2. Appointment of auditors

- a. LHC invited 12 audit firms to tender for LHCs annual audit of its financial statement. Out of the 12 firms, 4 expressed an interest in LHCs financial audit including our existing auditors whom were invited for an interview.
- b. The 2 firms with local and national experience that were shortlisted were Moore Kingston Smith which has recently undergone a merger and Crowe our existing auditors. Both are respected credible audit firms that have specialists in the not for profit sector.
- c. Our recommendation is to retain Crowe who have demonstrated the better expertise for our sector. Crowe have a deeper understanding of risk factors impacting our sector, fresh ideas about audit improvements, charity specific training for their staff, sector specific technical resources and an investment in their processes leading to an overall saving of audit fees.
- d. For the 11th consecutive year, Crowe has been named the top charity auditor in Charity Financials' annual Charity Audit Spotlight report.

3. Information Technology

- a. We previously reported that *"we are in the process of configuring an organisation wide ticketing system to manage the growing needs of the business which will drive process improvements and provide a more efficient service to internal staff, LHC's customers and Appointed companies"*. We are pleased with the progress with the Sysaid project which was launched at the end of September and staff are currently being trained to use the system. We will monitor the benefits over the ensuing months.

4. Accommodation

- a. The renewal of the Uxbridge office lease is progressing with each parties legal teams preparing documentation for engrossment and signing.

5. HR Update

- a. We have recently seconded an interim HR manager from LB Hillingdon to support some of the HR projects which include some from the staff away day in May 2019.
- b. The specific areas that we will evaluate are LHCs performance management system, well-being charter and flexible working policy.
- c. We are currently in the process of recruiting a HR manager to support the central and regional units and expect the new recruit to be in post by the 1st April 2020.

6. Membership

- a. More LHC associate members signed up

Since 1st April 2019, a further 9 organisations have joined as Associate members.

These are:

Abingdon and Witney College
Cranfield University
Plymouth Community Homes Limited
Homes in Sedgemoore Ltd
Howard Cottage HA
Trent & Dove HA
Colne Housing
BCP Council
South Devon Rural HA