

Report sponsor: Chair of Audit and Governance Committee
Report author: Head of Internal Audit

Allestree Hall and Golf Course – Internal Audit Investigation Report

Purpose

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with the findings and conclusions of the internal audit investigation (see Appendix 1) that it requested at its meeting on 22nd March 2023 into specific issues raised concerning the sale of Allestree Hall and Golf Course.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To consider the findings of the internal audit investigation report attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 To determine whether Committee feels that the report provides it with sufficient assurance to report back to Full Council.
- 2.3 To request that the minute extract on the consideration of the investigation findings is sent to Full Council.

Reasons

- 3.1 The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for providing assurance to the Council on the effectiveness of its governance arrangements, its risk management framework and the internal control environment. The work of Internal Audit supports the Committee in providing this assurance.

Supporting information

- 4.1 At Full Council on 18th January 2023, Councillor Shanker moved a Motion Without Notice under CP42(d) for the matter regarding Allestree Hall to be referred to the Audit & Governance Committee as the appropriate body for the matter to be dealt with.
- 4.2 At its meeting on 22nd March 2023, this Committee formally requested that the Central Midlands Audit Partnership (CMAP) carry out an independent investigation into the ongoing sale of Allestree Hall and Golf Course. It also requested that issues concerning English Heritage status and potential criminality of tree removal works alleged to have taken place were included in the investigation.

- 4.3 Committee passed a motion for the scope of the investigation to be agreed with Councillor Shanker, the then Chair of Audit and Governance Committee (former Councillor Joanna West), the Group Auditor and the Head of Internal Audit and for the outcome of the investigation to be reported back to the Committee in due course. Committee also requested that, where necessary, its Co-opted Member should provide support to CMAP for this investigation.
- 4.4 A scoping meeting was held on 12th April 2023. Unfortunately, Councillor Shanker was unable to attend. However, Councillor Shanker's comments at the Audit and Governance meeting on 22nd March were taken into account when deciding the scope of the audit work. The former Chair agreed the following scope for the investigation:
- The Council's engagement with the English Heritage assessment for the golf course to become a Heritage Asset and that completion of the Heritage Impact Assessment followed due process.
 - Whether the removal of /damage to trees at Allestree Park constituted a criminal offence.
 - Was a competitive process carried out for the sale of Allestree Hall & Golf Course and was adequate due diligence undertaken to ensure that the process provided a value for money outcome for the Council.
- 4.5 The former Chair also agreed that once the fieldwork had sufficiently progressed, then CMAP should involve the Co-opted Member in a review of fieldwork and findings and the conclusions that CMAP had drawn from its investigation. A meeting to go through the findings and conclusions was held with the Co-opted member on 26th September 2023.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 None

Other options

- 6.1 None

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 None arising directly from this report.

Legal implications

- 8.1 None arising directly from this report.

Climate implications

- 9.1 None arising directly from this report.

Socio-Economic implications

10.1 None arising directly from this report.

Other significant implications

11.1 None

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal Finance Service Director(s) Report sponsor Other(s)		
Background papers:	None	
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Internal Audit Report	