

M I N U T E S

meeting: **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

date: **17 DECEMBER 2012**

PRESENT:

Councillor Inston (Chair);
Councillors Claymore, Jones
and Mrs Thompson

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors
Dr Hardacre, Holdcroft and Simkins

EMPLOYEES IN ATTENDANCE:

Delivery

K Ireland	-	Strategic Director
S Davies	-	Head of HR (part)
P Farrow	-	Head of Audit
D Johnston	-	Head of Risk Management and Insurance
R Morgan	-	Senior Audit Manager
M Taylor	-	Chief Financial Officer
M Webb	-	Head of Service-Delivery
M Fox	-	Democratic Support Officer

PRESENT BY INVITATION:

J Howse	-	PricewaterhouseCoopers – External Auditors
R Vialard	-	PricewaterhouseCoopers – External Auditors

PART I - OPEN ITEMS
(Open to Press and Public)

Chair's items

- 32 The Chair congratulated Councillor Jones on his appointment as Police and Crime Commissioner and Mark Taylor on his appointment as Chief Financial Officer

Declarations of Interest

- 33 No declarations were declared.

Minutes

- 34 Resolved:-
 (a) That the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 24 September 2012 be confirmed as a correct record.
 (b) That the minutes of the meeting of the Audit (Final Accounts Monitoring and Review) Sub-Committee held on 17 September 2012 be noted.
 (c) That the minutes of the meeting of the Audit (Monitoring of Audit Investigations) Sub-Committee held on 22 October 2012 be noted.

Dates of Meetings – Audit (Final Accounts Monitoring and Review) Sub-Committee

- 35 In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Thompson, it was confirmed that further meetings of the Sub-Committee will take place at 1400 hours on Monday 25 February and Monday 22 April 2013.

Schedule of Outstanding Minutes (Appendix 23)

The Committee received a report which gave an indication of dates on which reports on individual items would be submitted for consideration.

- 36 Resolved:-
 That the report be received.

Human Resources Improvement Plan (Appendix 24)

This report detailed progress on the improvement plan and detailed phase 1 HR policies regarding management of attendance, discipline, grievance, bullying and harassment and appraisal as approved by Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 27 November. Councillor Mrs Thompson received an assurance that these policies apply to all staff, except teaching staff and asked that further reports be submitted if these policies presented any difficulties.

- 37 Resolved:-
That progress on the plan be noted.

Work Programme 2012/13 (Appendix 25)

The updated work programme had been circulated for information.

- 38 Resolved:-
That the work programme be received.

EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS AND INSPECTION:-

Annual Audit Letter 2012/13 – Report of PricewaterhouseCoopers (Appendix 26)

The Council's External Auditors presented their annual audit letter, which they considered represented a positive report, with most of the information having already been reported to the Committee. They also emphasised that the letter is a public document.

- 39 Resolved:-
That the report be received.

RISK MANAGEMENT – ASSURANCE ON CORPORATE RISKS:

Corporate Risk Register (Appendix 27)

The updated corporate risk register was submitted for consideration and attention was drawn to changes which had occurred since August 2012. Councillor Claymore commented on

the impact of welfare reform changes (CR8) and his concern about their effect on vulnerable people. The Strategic Director-Delivery indicated that a programme manager with welfare reform included within his role has now been appointed and that progress is now being made in this area.

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Resolved:-

(a) That the current list of corporate risks, including those added since August 2012, be noted.

(b) That work being carried out to support those people most affected by welfare reform changes be noted.

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS:

Internal Audit Update (Quarter 2 – 2012/13) (Appendix 28)

This report asked the Committee to note the internal audit update as at 30 September 2012. The Strategic Director-Delivery commented on a contract review issue included within the report, adding that the extension of the contract had not been approved in this case in order to allow for further testing of the market.

The Chair took the opportunity of thanking staff in internal audit for their services during the year.

41

Resolved:-

That the audit update as at 30 September 2012 be noted.

Payment Transparency (Appendix 29)

The report detailed the Council's continued compliance with the Code of Recommended Practice regarding the publication of all payments over £500. The Strategic Director-Delivery suggested that policies may change in future to take in all payments.

42

Resolved:-

That the Council's compliance with the code of recommended practice concerning payments over £500 be noted.

Review of the Assurance Framework (Appendix 30)

The recent review of the Council's assurance framework was submitted for information.

- 43 Resolved:-
That the recent review of the assurance framework be noted.

CIPFA Audit Committee Update – Issue 9 (Appendix 31)

The latest CIPFA Audit Committee update-issue 9 - helping audit committees to be effective - was submitted for information.

- 44 Resolved:-
That the report be received and noted.

Audit Committee Self-Assessment 2012 (Appendix 32)

The outcome of the Committee's 2012 self-assessment exercise was submitted for information.

- 45 Resolved:-
That the outcome of the self- assessment exercise be noted.

OTHER GOVERNANCE ISSUES:

Benefits Fraud Sanctions Report 2011/12 (Appendix 33)

The report noted the final position as at 31 March 2012 of the sanction results for the Benefit Fraud Investigation Team.

- 46 Resolved:-
That the final position of the sanction results for the Benefit Fraud Investigation Team be noted.

Christmas Greetings

- 47 The Chair wished all those present a Happy Christmas.