

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

Monday, 6th July, 2015

Present:- Councillor Ms Sarah Pickup – in the Chair

Councillors Burgess, Loades, Owen and Hambleton

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Waring. Cllr Sweeney was in attendance as a substitute for Cllr Waring.

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

4. **AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Resolved: That the terms of reference be agreed.

5. **AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE PLAN OF WORK**

Resolved: That the plan of work be agreed.

6. **HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT**

A report was submitted to inform Members of issues and trends regarding health and safety at the council.

Members considered community centres and concerns were raised as to whether all centres were checked.

Officers stated that at the moment the Health and Safety Committee chose a cross section and that the responsibility for the community centres was with the Council's leisure department which had produced a handbook for all community centres.

Members requested that a report relating to this be brought to a future meeting.

Officers confirmed that the Council was covered should an accident occur.

Members also queried whether public buildings were checked for legionella. Officers confirmed that yes this was required by law and carried out by the facilities management team.

Resolved: a) That the report be noted
b) That a report be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee in relation to community centres.

7. CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT JANUARY TO MARCH 2015

Members queried the progress of the Planning Peer Review Action Plan and it was stated that a report on this would be going to Cabinet in July. Officers agreed that an update report on this could be brought to the next meeting. Members also queried why actions relating to the plan had taken so long.

Resolved:

- (a) That the Committee note the new risks that have been identified between January to March 2015
- (b) That an update on the Planning Peer Review be brought to the next meeting.
- (c) That the Committee note the point 2.1.1 showing no overdue risk reviews.
- (d) That the Committee note the report showing risk rating changes

8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2014/2015

A report was submitted in relation to the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2014/15 and to review the Treasury Management activity for this period.

Members were pleased to note the seamless change in banking services and the savings that had been made.

Resolved: (a) That the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2014/15 be received and be reported to Full Council on 15 July 2015.

9. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

A report was submitted requesting the Committee to consider the draft Statement of Accounts 2014 and to gain approval for the financing of capital expenditure. The report highlighted the key issues which were contained in the accounts including a commentary on the General Fund outturn, the Collection Fund and the Balance Sheet.

Members thanked Dave Roberts and his team for their hard work regarding the accounts and welcomed the user friendly format.

Resolved: a) That the contents of the draft Statement of Accounts for 2014/15 be noted.

b) That the financing of capital expenditure incurred during 2014/15, as set out in Appendix 2 be approved.

10. ADOPTION OF INTERNAL AUDIT HIGH RISK RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY OF ASSURANCE

A report was submitted to report on any outstanding high risk recommendations to the Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis and where necessary to request Members' approval to the Executive Directors requested actions in respect of the recommendations and proposed target dates.

Resolved:

That the action of your officers and levels of assurance be noted

11. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT

A report was submitted requesting members to consider the annual report of the Internal Audit Section for the financial year 2014-15 enclosed as Appendix A.

Members queried whether officers had any concerns regarding section 2.3 of the report which highlighted the percentage of Internal Audit recommendations implemented by your officers. Officers stated that this had now improved and was under control.

Resolved: That the Internal Audit Section Annual Report for 2014-15 be received.

12. REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

A report was submitted to demonstrate that the Council had good governance and as part of providing evidence to support the Annual Governance Statement, the Council needed to demonstrate that it had an effective Audit Committee. An assessment had been completed on the effectiveness of the Audit Committee for 2014/15 and the results were summarised within this report.

Members queried the section regarding skills and training in relation to ICT. Officers stated that the size of the audit team did not justify a FTE Computer Audit Specialist therefore the Audit service currently bought in 30 days specialist computer audit work as part of the annual audit plan.

In addition to this the Staffordshire Chief Auditors Group were trying to develop the IT skills within our own teams through an IT Sub Group which comprised auditors with some IT awareness – the aim of the group was to share best practice in order to enhance the skills in this area.

Members requested that this be looked at as a possible risk.

Resolved:

That the report outlining the findings from the review of the effectiveness of the Audit Committee for 2014/15 be noted.

13. SELF ASSESSMENT OF INTERNAL AUDIT

A report was submitted for members to consider the findings of the annual review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit for 2014/15.

Resolved:

That the report outlining the findings from the review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit for 2014/15, together with the action plan be agreed.

14. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

A report was submitted to recommend that the Annual Governance Statement 2014/15 be approved for inclusion in the financial statements.

Resolved:

That Members approve the Annual Governance Statement 2014/15(AGS)

15. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PEER REVIEW

A report was submitted to advise Members on the recommendations of the LGA Peer Review and to request feedback on the recommendations.

Resolved:

That Members agreed in principle with the merging of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Standards Committee.

16. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Business.

COUNCILLOR MS SARAH PICKUP
Chair