

## **AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

Monday, 29th September, 2014

**Present:-** Councillor John Taylor – in the Chair

Councillors Loades, Allport, Mrs Burgess, Jones, Sweeney and Mrs Hambleton

### 1. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July be agreed as a correct record.

### 2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. **CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR THE PERIOD APRIL-JUNE 2014**

The Head of Business Improvements, Central Services and Partnerships provided an overview of the report.

Since the last meeting of the Committee, officers had rolled out an updated version of the GRACE system. This update featured a web-based version of GRACE that allowed easier access for users.

Members attention was also drawn to section 4 of the report which included information in relation to items requested at the previous meeting:

- Recycling by residents in terraced houses and flats; and
- Risks relating to community centres

Detailed information relating to these was attached at appendix 2.

Additional clarification was sought in relation to the potential claims growth listed in appendix 1 to the report. The Head of Business Improvements, Central Services and Partnerships stated that he was satisfied that the current risk profiles related to this were accurate with the Council in a strong place regarding defending any claims.

Members also questioned risks relating to Community Centres such as not being able to find people to manage the centres or people no longer hiring the centres. The Head of Business Improvements, Central Services and Partnerships stated that he would feed these concerns back to the risk owner.

Concerns were also raised regarding whether the Council was legally covered in relation to the use/misuse of Community Centres.

Members queried whether an advice sheet existed relating to Members taking decisions that were contrary to Officer recommendations. It was stated that a section relating to risk did exist on Cabinet reports and that an advice sheet would be produced in the future.

**Resolved:** That the new risks identified between April and June 2014 be noted.

**4. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

A report was submitted requesting the Committee to approve the statement of accounts, receive the external auditor's Audit Findings Report for 2013/14 and to agree the Letter of Representation to the Auditor.

It was a statutory requirement, contained in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 that the Council produced a Statement of Accounts detailing its financial transactions for the year and its position at the year end and that this be approved by a Committee no later than 30 September in the year following that to which the Statement relates.

The external auditor was required, according to the International Standard on Auditing 260 (ISA 260), to report to the Committee on matters affecting governance via an Audit Findings report.

The Letter of Representation was a formal letter from the Council to the External Auditor stating various matters which the auditor needs to have confirmed in order to gain sufficient assurance to be able to certify the Council's accounts.

Representatives from Grant Thornton ran through the Audit Findings and invited questions from the Committee.

**Resolved:**

- a) That the Statement of Accounts 2013/14 be approved and signed by the Chair of the Committee.
- b) That the Audit Findings Report for 2013/14 be received.
- c) That the Letter of Representation be approved for signature by the Council's Section 151 Officer.

**5. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT - QUARTER 1**

A report was submitted to report on the work undertaken by the Internal Audit section during the period 1st April to 30th June 2014. This report identified the key issues raised. The full individual reports issued to Officers contained the key issues plus a variety of minor issues and recommendations.

Some concern was expressed regarding Community Centres. The Audit Manager confirmed that this was an on-going process and would continue to be monitored.

**Resolved:** That Members consider any issues raised.

**6. QUARTERLY REPORT. ADOPTION OF INTERNAL AUDIT HIGH RISK RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY OF ASSURANCE. 1 APRIL - 30 JUNE, 2014**

A report was submitted regarding any outstanding high risk recommendations and to provide Members with an assurance opinion on internal controls over Council Services.

**Resolved:** That the actions of officers and levels of assurance be noted.

7. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

**COUNCILLOR JOHN TAYLOR**  
**Chair**