

Regulatory Committee's Chairs' reports

Audit and Standards Committee

The Committee has met on two occasions:

22nd April 2024.

As of 1st April 2024 the council has new contracts in place for both internal and external auditors and representatives from Staffs County Council (Internal Auditor) and KPMG (External Auditor) were in attendance to introduce themselves and the relevant reports.

Following agreement of the minutes, Deborah Harrison of SCC introduced the Internal Audit Charter 2024. Members were happy to approve the document.

Attention turned to the Internal Audit Plan 2024/25 as prepared by the S151 Officer (due to the change-over) and it was agreed that this had the potential, should it be felt necessary, to be amended later in the year. After a brief discussion Members agreed to approve the plan and accept quarterly updates at future meetings. Sarah then detailed the counter-fraud arrangements and Members were asked to note the following documents:

Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework

Fraud Response Plan

Whistleblowing Policy

Anti-Money Laundering Policy

Anthony Harold, Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal, lead Members through the Corporate Risk Policy Statement and Strategy 2024/25. The Committee agreed to accept and approve the document and also note that Policy Statement would be signed the Chief Executive and the Leader. Members noted their responsibilities in relation to risk management.

KPMG now introduced the External Audit Plan & Strategy 2023/24 and gave some brief details as to the background KPMG had in auditing public bodies and how it proposed to carry out the Audit of the past year's Accounting Statements. They did not anticipate any difficulties in keeping to prescribed timetables.

Members were informed that Ernst and Young had now signed off the Staffs County Council Pension Fund Audit and as a result of this, Grant Thornton will provide the 2022/23 Final Audit Report (unchanged from earlier draft reports) for members at the May meeting.

Attendees were thanked for their attendance.

28th May 2024.

Members were first asked to consider and note the contents of the Auditors Report and Closure of the Audit 2022/23 which had been awaited subject to completion of the pension scheme audit.

Approval was then sought in relation to the proposed accounting policies, critical accounting judgements and sources of estimation uncertainty used in the preparation of the accounts for 2023/24.

The Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 was now introduced by Craig Turner (Finance Manager and Deputy S151 Officer). Members approved the document.

Craig now also briefed members on the salient points contained in the draft accounts in order that approval be given for their Audit and Publication. Members were also asked to note the outturn and key financial issues for the year ended 31st March 2024.

15th July 2024.

Clare Potts, Internal Audit Manager for Stoke-on-Trent City Council, briefed Members and asked them to consider the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2023/24. It was explained that this year, as it was the final year of a 4 year contract, they had carried out further work to complete audits in progress at the year end, after the year end, to ease the hand over to Staffordshire County Council.

The S151 Officer, Sarah Wilkes, took members to the Corporate Risk Management Report, and covered various points. It was noted that at the time of writing, the council had no borrowing and was receiving significant interest from its current deposits. It was agreed that the report be received and reported on to full council in September.

The Corporate Risk Management Report was presented to Members by Anthony Harold and it was noted that there were no risks more than 6 months overdue, no risk level increases and no changes to the corporate risk register. There were no specific requests for in-depth scrutiny of any specific areas.

Cllr Paul Waring

Chair

Planning Committee

The Planning Committee have met twice since the last Full Council meeting

21st May 2024

One major application was considered for residential development at Knutton and a minor application for an extension to a dwelling.

An update report was given on land at Doddlespool, Betley.

18th June, 2024

An application for Major Development was considered for a Great Crested Newt habitat at Talke. An application for Minor development was also considered for a new village hall in knutton.

An application for financial assistance was granted for works at Audleys Cross Farm and an update report was given on 5 Boggs Cottages, Keele.

Cllr Paul Northcott

Chair

Licensing and Public Protection Committee

The Licensing and Public Protection Committee met on the 11th June, 2024.

At the meeting Members, received the following Licensing report:

- CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REVIEW

The Committee discussed a number of aspects of the report and agreed to the proposed recommendations that were set out in those reports.

The Committee also received the following Public Protection reports:

- PROPOSED CONSULTATION ON PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER
– CAR CRUISING

Members had a brief discussion on those reports and the Committee agreed and agreed that the consultation be carried out.

Since the last Full Council meeting the Licensing Sub Committee has met once and the Public Protection Sub Committee has met twice.

The minutes for the Public Protection Sub Committee held on 22nd May, 2024 were received and noted as a correct record

Cllr Joan Whieldon

Chair