

## **Audit Committee – 11 December 2012**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Audit Committee** held on **11 December 2012** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr Mrs A V Hale  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr I H Ward

Cllr J D Griffin  
Cllr B T Hazlewood  
Cllr M Hoy

Cllr D J Sperring  
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs J R Lumley, T E Mountain and Mrs C E Roe.

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

Y Woodward - Head of Finance  
T Metcalf - Audit and Performance Manager  
S Worthington - Committee Administrator

### **ALSO PRESENT**

L Clampin - PKF

### **263 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **264 EXTERNAL AUDITOR REPORTS AND UPDATES FOR 2011/12**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Finance introducing the external auditors' Fee Outturn Summary for 2011/12 and their Annual Audit Letter for 2011/12.

The external auditor confirmed that the work on the 2012 grant claims was now completed and that this had been achieved slightly under budget.

Responding to a Member question relating to the external auditors' verdict of 'generally adequate' in their Annual Audit Letter, the auditor advised that this was on the basis of their very narrow assessment of the Council's internal controls in the context of producing materially sound financial statements.

The auditor confirmed, in response to a further Member enquiry about the unqualified short term assurance statement with respect to the limited review of the Whole of Government Accounts, that an unqualified opinion in this context was a positive view. In response to a supplementary Member question, the auditor advised that wider review of the Council's systems and controls was undertaken by Internal Audit.

### Resolved

- (1) That the Fee Outturn Summary for 2011/12 be noted.
- (2) That the Annual Audit Letter for 2011/12 be noted. (HF)

### 265 ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2012/13 – PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Finance providing Members with the opportunity to monitor the progress of the Internal Audit Plan for 2012/13 and to agree changes to the Plan after six months of the year.

In response to Member questions the following points were noted:-

- Building Control will be monitored via income collection. The Head of Planning and Transportation is undertaking a review of Building Control, which will include staffing issues, workloads and income generation. A high target was set within the budget for Building Control income generation; income was not, however, down year on year.
- Staffing and workload within Internal Audit will be closely monitored as a result of maternity leave within the section. One part-time member of staff will work full-time in order to address workload issues. In addition, the Council can, if necessary, call in a joint contract it has with other Local Authorities for an auditor to come in and complete any specific audit projects.
- There are no instances of long-term sickness in Internal Audit.
- It could be difficult for Internal Audit staff to work from home as they would require access to many of the Council's software systems; however, it might be possible for individual audit projects, eg, housing benefits, to be completed at home.

### Resolved

That the revised audit plan for 2012/13 be agreed. (HF)

### EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

### Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining item of business on the grounds that exempt information, as disclosed in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972, would be disclosed.

### 266 AUDIT REPORT

The Committee considered the exempt report of the Head of Finance drawing Members' attention to completed audit investigations and providing an update of audit recommendations.

Officers advised, in response to a Member question relating to sick leave, that any audit of this area would focus on assessing whether the correct procedures had been followed in managing sick leave; there would not be an examination of why staff had taken sick leave. However, the processes required line managers to conduct interviews with staff on their return to work or in the event of any recurring absences from work to assess whether any changes at work might be required, or any referral to occupational health services.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That conclusions and results from the audits in appendices 2 and 3 be agreed.
- (2) That the updated information on the audit recommendations, outlined in appendix 4, be agreed. (HF)

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

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