

AUDIT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 AUGUST 2021

Present:

Councillors Colclough, H Cox, Goodman-Bradbury, Morgan (Chair) and Rollason (Vice-Chair)

Apologies:

Councillors Clarence, Mullone and Thorne

Officers in Attendance:

Martin Flitcroft, Chief Finance Officer & Head of Corporate Services

Sue Heath, Audit Manager

Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

Sarah Selway, Democratic Services Team Leader & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Jack Williams, Performance Data Analyst

67. ELECTION OF CHAIR

It was proposed by Councillor Rollason and seconded by Councillor Colclough that Councillor Morgan be elected as Chair of the Audit Scrutiny Committee 2021-2022

Resolved

That Councillor Morgan be elected Chair of Audit Scrutiny Committee.

68. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor H Cox that Councillor Rollason be elected as Deputy Chair of the Audit Scrutiny Committee 2021-2022.

Resolved

That Councillor Rollason be elected as Deputy Chair of Audit Scrutiny Committee.

69. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

70. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

The representative from Grant Thornton presented the report. She discussed how the way the audit was conducted had changed as well as the impact of Covid-19.

In response to a question, the representative explained that audit fees had increased as a result of the auditing changes.

Resolved

That the External Audit Plan be noted.

71. STRATEGIC AND CORPORATE RISK REPORT

The Performance and Data Analyst presented the report. He informed the councillors about risks and risk litigation.

Comments from Councillors included

- Councillors are grouped together as a risk rather than being separate
- Some officers have a considerable amount of projects to work on simultaneously
- Large number of high risks, including struggles to recruit staff

In response, the Chief Financial Officer commented on officer projects being monitored, Councillor risk being based on number of complaints received, and the smaller staff turnover.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Rollason that the report be noted.

Resolved

That the Committee note the actions being taken to reduce risks to the achievement of the council's objectives.

72. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

The Audit Manager presented the report. She informed the committee on the Auditing work that had been carried out internally. She also discussed DEFRA, the fraud risk analysis, and told the committee that the risk report had been satisfactory.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Rollason that the report be noted.

Resolved

That the Internal Audit Annual Report 2021-2022 be noted.

73. OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REPORT

The Audit Manager presented the report. 17 complaints had been made and 3 had been upheld. This was similar to neighbouring authorities. She also stated that satisfaction with working during Covid had been acceptable.

In response to a question on if the number of complaints had risen, the Audit Manager responded that she would respond later with more information.

Resolved

That the Ombudsman Annual Report be noted.

74. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Audit Manager presented the report to the committee. She noted that legal cases, assurance statements and reports had all contributed to the statement. She also discussed the move to digital working during the Covid-19 pandemic. She also stated that governance is fit for purpose and outlined challenges.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Rollason that the Committee recommends to Full Council that the Annual Governance Statement be approved.

Resolved

The Audit Scrutiny Committee recommends to Council that the Annual Governance Statement is approved.

75. DRAFT FINAL ACCOUNTS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT

The Chief Financial Officer presented the Draft Final Accounts and Treasury Management. He informed the committee that the accounts had been posted on 30 July.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Rollason that the three recommendations be noted.

Resolved

The the Committee note:

- (1) That the draft statement of accounts for 2020/21 have been published
- (2) The current authorised lending list at appendix 1
- (3) The draft treasury management results for 2020/21 at appendix 2

76. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN AND CHARTER 2021-2022

The Audit Manager updated the Committee on the internal audit plan and charter. This included data equality and performance monitoring.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Colclough that the Internal Audit Plan and Charter 2021-2022 be noted.

Resolved

That the Internal Audit Plan and Charter 2021-2022 be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10:00am and finished at 11:00am.

Chair
Cllr Sally Morgan