

AUDIT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

26 JUNE 2024

Present:

Councillors Jackman, Morgan, Radford, Thorne, Jeffries, Ryan and Steemson

Apologies:

Councillors Purser

Officers in Attendance:

Martin Flitcroft, Chief Finance Officer & Head of Corporate Services

Sue Heath, Audit Manager

Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

Jack Williams, Performance Data Analyst

Graham Davey, Housing Enabling and Development Manager

13. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

It was proposed by Councillor Radford and seconded by Councillor Jackman that Councillor Morgan be elected as Chair of Audit Scrutiny Committee for 2024-2025.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

that Councillor Morgan be elected as Chair of Audit Scrutiny Committee for 2024-2025.

14. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Thorne that Councillor Radford be elected as Chair of Audit Scrutiny Committee for 2024-2025.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

that Councillor Morgan be elected as Chair of Audit Scrutiny Committee for 2024-2025.

15. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Radford that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None

17. HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDIT UPDATE

The Housing Enabling and Development Manager introduced the item.

He spoke on Housing stock, the need for social housing, compliance, and that 6 of the 11 recommendations had been implemented. 3 are underway and the last few are almost complete. He also discussed the appointment of a housing compliance officer. He informed the committee that there were 67 housing properties in the district including Gypsy and Traveller sites.

18. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT

The Audit Manager introduced the item to the Committee.

She explained the audit planning process and that mutually convenient times were agreed with officers for audit work. The risk management work was still pending. Strata is audited by the Devon Audit Partnership and audit reports could be circulated to the Committee members. Post-audit satisfaction surveys were used to help identify any improvements. A fraud risk analysis was maintained to address fraud risks and were ongoing. It was suggested an item on fraud could come to a future committee meeting.

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

A vote was taken – all were in favour

Resolved that the report be noted.

19. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Performance and Data Analyst introduced the item to the Committee.

He noted that few changes has occurred to the strategy since 2020. The Committee asked to hear the discussions with Executive Members regarding risk management.

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Councillor Thorne that the Risk Management Strategy be noted and recommended to Full Council for approval.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved that the Risk Management Strategy be noted and recommended to Full Council for approval.

20. STRATEGIC AND CORPORATE RISK REPORT

The Performance and Data Analyst introduced the item to the Committee.

It was noted that Members non-compliance with the code of conduct was considered high risk. The Committee highlighted the importance of staff members receiving defusal training.

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

A vote was taken – all were in favour

Resolved that the report be noted

21. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2023-2024

The Audit Manager introduced the item.

The CIPFA and SOLACE framework had been used for the governance review. Several actions were planned to address governance weakness. Members raised concerns at the Member-Officer protocol not being agreed. The Committee asked for update reports on planned actions.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Jeffries that the Committee recommends to Council that the Annual Governance Statement is approved.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved that the Committee recommends to Council that the Annual Governance Statement is approved.

The Committee also noted the Audit team were in the process of recruiting an independent member and that a glossary of terms would be attached to future agendas.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and finished at 12.00 pm.

Chair
Cllr Sally Morgan