

MINUTES

AUDIT AND STANDARDS Committee

Date:	Thursday, 19 January 2023
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes.
Committee Members Present:	Councillor Ellie Gaunt (Chairman) Councillor Ed Nash (Vice-Chairman) Councillors, Delma Collins, Peter Collins, Brian Gill, Will Harris, Paul Hayhurst.
Other Councillors Present:	Councillor Karen Buckley
Officers Present:	Paul O'Donoghue, Tracy Manning, Ian Curtis, Sharon Wadsworth Fiona Hill (MIAA),
Other Attendees:	Nick Raynor and Paul Hewitson (Deloitte) attended remotely

1. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and any personal or prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members. No interests were declared on this occasion.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held 10 November 2022 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

3. Substitute Members

No substitutions were reported under Council Procedure Rule 23(c):

Audit Decision Items

4. Deloitte Audit Plan 2021/22

Nick Rayner, from Deloitte, was invited by the chairman to update members their Audit Plan for 2021/22. In doing so he advised that the Infrastructure Assets guidance from CIPFA had now been published and that work was commencing to complete the 2021/22 audit to enable the accounts to be signed off. Mr Rayner highlighted the key areas of responsibility for the audit and the identified significant risks including from the increase in capital grants and contributions received.

Paul Hewitson, from Deloitte, assured members that staffing levels were in place to complete the 2021/22 audit and commence the 2022/23 audit.

It was RESOLVED to note the Deloitte Audit Plan Report for 2021/22.

5. Internal Audit Progress Report

Councillor Gaunt invited Fiona Hill, MIAA, to present the Internal Audit Progress report for the period 24 October 2022 to 9 January 2023.

The key areas included the completion of the Data Assurance Protocols review, which had achieved a Limited assurance rating with two high and two medium recommendations and the Homelessness review, which had achieved a Moderate assurance rating with one high, three medium and three low recommendations.

Ms Hill stated that the Homelessness review showed that a good service was being offered and the recommendations were mainly around some incidences of incomplete record keeping.

In reference to the Data Assurance Protocols review, Ian Curtis, Head of Governance, assured the committee that there was no suggestion of non-compliance with GDPR but areas had been identified for improvement against best practice.

It was RESOLVED to note the Internal Audit Progress report.

6. Constitution

Councillor Gaunt introduced the report that detailed the changes proposed by the Constitution Review Working group to reflect the reduction in size of the council and the change of committee structure that would be taking effect following the local election in May 2023.

Ian Curtis, Head of Governance, provided an overview of each of the suggested changes together with an additional recommendation to amend the order that items appear on the council agenda by placing questions from members of the public before questions from Councillors.

Councillor Gill proposed an amendment asking for the changes to Article 15 and questions at full council to remain as existing, in particular the right to ask a supplementary question.

The amendment was voted upon and was lost. Councillor Peter Collins moved a second amendment requesting a person has a right to a written supplementary question. Following a vote this amendment was lost.

Following a show of hands it was RESOLVED to recommend that the council adopts the documents referred to in paragraph 4 of the report (together with any updated members' allowances scheme), including the addition to the proposed changes to the order of business at council, as the council's constitution with effect from 9 May 2023

Audit Information Items

7. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000: Authorisations

The committee received information regarding the review of the use of covert surveillance and covert human intelligence sources by the council at least quarterly. It was noted that in the quarter up to January 2023, there had been no authorised operations.

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