



MINUTES

AUDIT AND STANDARDS Committee

Date:	Thursday, 26 May 2022
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, John Singleton JP.
Other Councillors Present:	None
Officers Present:	Paul O'Donoghue, Tracy Manning, Ian Curtis, Sharon Wadsworth Fiona Hill (MIAA), Haley Garstang (Corporate Fraud Manager)
Other Attendees:	Paul Hewitson and Nick Raynor (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 17 March 2022 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

3. Substitute Members

There were no substitute members in attendance.

Update on the external audit

Prior to the start of the decision items Paul Hewitson, from Deloitte, was invited by the chairman to update members on the status of the external audit. In doing so he advised that continued progress was being made and were currently now awaiting for CIPFA to issue new guidance on infrastructure assets. It was anticipated that CIPFA would complete a consultation and issue guidance by mid June. Until the guidance had been received then Deloitte would be unable to sign off the audit.

Audit Decision Items

4. Internal Audit Progress Report

Fiona Hill, MIAA, presented the Internal Audit Progress report that covered the period 10 March to 16 May 2022. The reviews that had been finalised in this period were the Shared Service and Third Party Assurance and Project

Mrs Hill provided an overview of the completed reviews including the assurance level given and the recommendations.

It was confirmed that all areas highlighted by previous audits with findings of limited or moderate assurance were being followed up.

It was RESOLVED to note the contents of the Internal Audit Progress report.

5. Revised Anti-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Statement & Strategy and Fraud Response Plan Review

Ian Curtis introduced the updated Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Statement and Strategy and the Fraud Response Plan. The documents were based on the guidance from the CIPFA Code of Practice – Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption (2014) and the four key themes of the Local Government Fraud Strategy – Fighting Fraud & Corruption Locally (2020). They were last revised in November 2020 and had been revised to reflect the Council's current arrangements when fraud is reported and the responsibilities for those involved.

It was RESOLVED to approve the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Statement & Strategy and the Fraud Response Plan as set out in Appendices A and B respectively of the report.

Audit Information Items

6. Corporate Fraud Team Report 2021/22

Haley Garstang, Corporate Fraud Manager, was invited by the Chairman to provide an overview of the performance and counter fraud activity undertaken by the Corporate Fraud Enquiry Team during the financial year 2021/22. Attention was also drawn to the annual refresh of the shared service business plan for 2022/23.

7. Local Government Ethical Standards: Government Response

The committee received information on the Government response to the report on ethical standards in local government, published by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in January 2019.

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