

MINUTES OF AUDIT AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

20 JULY 2023

PRESENT:

Mr J Eves (Vice-Chair in the Chair), Councillors Mrs Roberts, Roberts, Roodhouse and Slinger

11. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2023 were approved and signed by the Chair subject to the Committee's resolution for Part 1 – Agenda Item 8 – Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy being amended to read:

“1) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and the Fraud Response Plan be approved; and
2) the Annual Fraud Report be noted.”

12. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence from the meeting was received from Mr P Dudfield (Chair).

13. ANNUAL REPORT OF INTERNAL AUDIT

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 1 – Agenda Item 4) concerning the Corporate Assurance Manager's annual opinion of the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal control environment with an appended summary of the audit work undertaken to formulate the opinion.

The Committee placed on record their thanks to the Corporate Assurance Manager and Transformation Lead and the Corporate Assurance Team for their hard work during the 2022/23 financial year.

RESOLVED THAT – the report be noted.

14. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 1 – Agenda Item 5) concerning the Annual Governance Statement.

RESOLVED THAT – The Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 be approved.

15. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 1 – Agenda Item 6) concerning the updated Risk Management Strategy, the Council's strategic risks and the arrangements in place for monitoring and managing those risks.

A member of the Committee noted that no overall control of the council posed a significant risk. The Corporate Assurance Manager and Transformation Lead responded that the risk was previously included on the register but following an independent external review, the council's strategic risk register was revised to reflect the priority outcomes of the Corporate Strategy for 2021 – 2024.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT the Risk Management Strategy be approved;
- (2) the Strategic Risk Register be noted; and
- (3) a councillor workshop be considered as part of stakeholder engagement for future reviews of the council's strategic risk registers.

16. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 1 – Agenda Item 7) concerning the progress towards delivery of the annual internal audit plan and the update on service performance.

The Committee welcomed Richard Green, Interim Corporate Assurance Manager. The Interim Corporate Assurance Manager would be leading the Corporate Assurance Team during the Corporate Assurance Manager and Transformation Lead's secondment.

RESOLVED THAT – the internal audit progress update be noted.

17. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC UNDER SECTION 100(A)(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED THAT – under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of information defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

18. LIMITED ASSURANCE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Committee considered the private report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 2 – Agenda Item 1) concerning results of a recently completed internal audit review.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) a progress report be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

19. INTERNAL AUDIT INVESTIGATION REPORT

The Committee considered the private report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 2 – Agenda Item 2) concerning results of an internal audit investigation completed following a whistleblowing complaint received.

RESOLVED THAT – the report be noted.

20. WHISTLEBLOWING INCIDENTS – STANDING ITEM – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES

There were no issues to report.

21. FRAUD AND CORRUPTION ISSUES – STANDING ITEM – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES

There were no issues to report.

CHAIR