



Minutes

Audit Committee

Date: 22 October 2021

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Birkenshaw

Present: Councillor K Renshaw (in the Chair), R Downes, D Hall, J Illingworth, S Nazir and S Tulley

In Attendance: Simon Straker – Kirklees KMC (internal audit)

Apologies: None

16 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2021 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

17 Matters arising

The Chief Finance and Procurement Officer provided an update on the progress made by the External Auditors (Deloitte's) with the signing off of the accounts as follows;

- The GAD (Government Actuarial Department) and West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) reports had been received, and
- An outstanding query remained about the collection fund

RESOLVED

That Members be provided with an update report should the work of the External Auditors be not completed in time for the re-convened meeting, scheduled for 25 November 2021.

18 Urgent items

None.

19 Admission of the public

There were no items which required the exclusion of the public and press.

20 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest made in any matter under consideration at the meeting.

21 Internal Audit quarterly review

The Chief Finance and Procurement Officer submitted a report which presented the internal audit activity for the period July to September 2021.

Members were provided with information that detailed the criteria to be met for the award of the different levels of assurance;

- Substantial
- Adequate
- Limited
- No assurance

It was reported that four audits had been completed as follows;

- Faulty personal protective equipment – adequate assurance
- Availability of on-call staff – substantial assurance
- Asbestos in building estate – adequate assurance
- Additional Responsibility Allowances – substantial assurance

In response to a Member's query about Additional Responsibility Allowances, it was reported that these were payable for specialist skills which were above and beyond the relevant role map. Qualifying tasks were interpreted differently by each Brigade and it was anticipated that this issue would be addressed when the forthcoming Fire and Rescue Service White Paper was published.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

22 Service Improvement and Assurance policy

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Service Support which advised of some changes that had been made to the Service Improvement and Assurance policy to reflect changes to the Assurance Framework.

Members were advised that the revisions were specifically related to the reporting and approval process and the involvement of this committee – reports would now be made about the assurance process and direct audit activity on an annual basis.

RESOLVED

That the changes to the Service Improvement and Assurance policy be noted.

23 Abridged performance management report

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Service Delivery which advised Members where targets were not being achieved for the period 1 April – 30 June 2021.

It was reported that the following targets were currently showing as not being achieved;

- Arson – this impacted on the total activity reported but appeared to have a seasonal profile. It was anticipated that the target would be achieved by the year end, and
- Malicious false alarms – many were as a result of a specific problem in Halifax which had since been addressed

In response to a query about the relevance of the target-setting methodology, it was reported that work was currently underway on a review of Performance Management targets which hopefully would include the ability to compare West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service with other fire services nationally to provide a more informed target-setting process.

Members were further advised that the domestic fire injuries were likely to be associated with the degree of vulnerability of the householder but nothing specific had been identified as a cause.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

Chair