



Minutes

Audit Committee

Date: 24 April 2020

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: COVID19 Teleconference

Present: Councillor R Grahame (in the Chair), G Almas, R Downes, P Harrand and K Renshaw

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

Apologies: None

32 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2020 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

33 Matters arising

Members sought further information on the outstanding issue of the External Auditor (Deloitte) fees which had gone to arbitration and were advised that a decision was anticipated in the next few days.

34 Urgent items

None.

35 Admission of the public

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

36 Declarations of interest

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

37 Accounting policies 2019 – 20

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Finance and Procurement Officer which presented the accounting policies that would be applied in preparation and presentation of the Statement of Accounts 2019 – 20.

Members were advised that it was good practice for the Audit Committee to review the relevant policies used in preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts and the policies that would be followed in the preparation of the 2019 – 20 Statement of Accounts were set out at Annex A to the report now submitted.

Members raised the following specific issues not directly related to the Accounting policies;

- COVID19 Government grant funding and expenditure to date
- Pension poverty

RESOLVED

That the Accounting Policies to be followed in the preparation of the 2019 – 20 Statement of Accounts be approved.

38 Internal Audit Annual Report 2019 – 20

Members reviewed a report of the Chief Finance and Procurement Officer which sought endorsement of the conclusion related to the effectiveness of the system of internal audit and which asked Members to note the audit opinion on risk management and internal control during 2019 – 20.

It was reported that, by way of an update on the figures quoted in the Annual Report, 10 of the originally planned 17 audits had now been completed. Of the remaining seven, five had not been started and two had been deferred at the request of the Authority's Management Board.

The following issues were raised;

- progress on mandatory training and operational competency records and its impact on the Authority's risk management arrangements
- likely timeframe for the completion of outstanding audits and the reintroduction of planned internal audits
- water rescue competency

RESOLVED

a) That endorsement be given to the Chief Finance & Procurement Officer's conclusion as to the effectiveness of the system of internal audit.

b) That the audit opinion on governance, risk management arrangements and the internal control environment in 2019/20 be noted, thereby providing assurance for the Annual

Governance Statement 2019/20, and

c) That the Audit Charter and Strategy be approved.

39 Annual Governance Statement 2019 - 20

The Committee received a report of the Chief Finance and Procurement Officer which presented the Annual Government Statement of the Authority for approval. Members were reminded that this was a “live” document which could be amended if required prior to inclusion in the 2019 – 20 Statement of Accounts.

Five particular issues were raised for Members’ information as follows;

- Covid-19
- Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection
- Embedding of lean working
- Organisation planning cycle
- Risk Management review

In addition, the following governance issues remain from 2019/20

- Central Government Funding uncertainty
- Implications Matzak Court of Justice Ruling
- Policing and Crime Act 2017

RESOLVED

That the Annual Governance Statement as presented be approved for inclusion in the 2019 – 20 Statement of Accounts.

40 Draft internal audit plan 2020 – 21

Members considered a report of the Chief Finance and Procurement Officer which provided an outline of the proposed programme of audit work for 2020 – 21 which would involve 160 days’ of audit work at the fixed rate cost of £47,430 as detailed in the report.

It was reported that a return to ‘normal’ working practices following the COVID19 situation, would be the subject of discussion with the Authority’s Management Board and Risk Management Strategy Group. The sixteen pieces of planned work would remain in the Plan until such time that adjustments had to be made in terms of priority and practicality

RESOLVED

a) That the report be noted;

- b) That the Internal Audit Plan 2020 – 21 be approved subject to the caveats of the timescale for a return to normal working arrangements and possible change of priorities; and
- c) That Members be provided with updates on the Annual Plan 2020 – 21 as appropriate.

Chair