

Minutes

Audit Committee

- Venue: Committee Room
- Date: 24 September 2014
- Present: Councillor Mrs C Mackman (Chair), Councillor J Cattanach, Councillor J Crawford, Councillor M Dyson, Councillor I Nutt and Councillor S Ryder
- Apologies for Absence: Councillor C Pearson
- Also Present: Phil Jeffrey and Richard Smith, Veritau and Cameron Waddell and Alison Kent, Mazars
- Officers Present: Jonathan Lund, Deputy Chief Executive; Gillian Marshall, Solicitor to the Council; Karen Iveson, Executive Director (s151); Janet Lornie, Finance Officer and Richard Besley, Democratic Services Officer

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

23. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

To receive and approve the following minutes and they be signed by the Chair:

- **Special Audit Committee – 12 June 2014**
- **Audit Committee – 18 June 2014**
- **Special Audit Committee – 4 July 2014**
- **Special Audit Committee – 29 July 2014**

24. CHAIR'S ADDRESS

The Chair welcomed the new representatives from Veritau to the meeting.

The Chair informed the Committee that the latest Work Programme was attached to the agenda to reflect the request from Veritau that the item on Counter Fraud be moved to the January 2015 meeting rather than this meeting.

25. A/14/10 – CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

The Solicitor to the Council presented the report which set out the findings of the Audit Committee's Review of the Constitution.

The Solicitor to the Council explained that the re-drafted Constitution took into account the legislative changes introduced by the Openness in Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014. It was also explained that changes had been made to Article 13 in the Council's Constitution to reflect the changes brought in by the regulations.

The Chair thanked the Solicitor for the hard work put in preparing the draft Constitution for approval. It was explained that if supported by the Committee, the changes would be presented to the Executive and then Full Council for formal approval.

RESOLVED:

To note and approve the Report at Appendix 1 of the findings of the Audit Committee Review of the Constitution.

26. INFORMATION GOVERNANCE REPORT

The Solicitor to Council provided a verbal update of the Information Governance project and confirmed the project was on course to meet the internal audit recommendations and action plan and it was intended to put an Annual Report on Information Governance before the Committee in January 2015.

It was explained that the report would pay particular attention to data and document retention and data protection issues. The Solicitor to the Council confirmed that she was currently looking at historical documents to identify what should be retained and the length of retention.

The Solicitor confirmed that there would also be a requirement for all staff to undergo training on information governance.

RESOLVED:

To note the update and consider the Annual Report at the Committee meeting in January 2015.

27. A/14/11 – ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Executive Director (S151) presented the report on the Annual Governance Statement 2013/14 and explained that the statement provided assurance that the authority had an effective method of internal control.

The Chair asked the Committee to note that the overall opinion from Veritau on the matter of management of risk, governance and controls operated by the Council was that they provided substantial assurance without qualification.

It was explained that the statement if approved would then be signed by the Leader of Council and the Chief Executive.

RESOLVED:

To approve the 2013/14 Annual Governance Statement.

28. A/14/12 – STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS (POST AUDIT)

The Executive Director (s151) presented the Council's Statement of the Accounts for 2013/14, following external audit, for the Committee to examine and approve.

The Executive Director (s151) explained that the Council had experienced a successful year financially with surpluses achieved and an increase in net assets despite the difficult current financial climate and the reduction in funding from central Government. The Executive Director (s151) also highlighted the key issues and amendments for the Committee.

The Chair expressed the thanks of the Committee to the Executive Director (s151) and the Finance team for their efforts in preparing the Statement of Accounts.

RESOLVED:

To approve the 2013/14 Statement of Accounts.

29. A/14/13 – MAZARS' AUDIT COMPLETION REPORT

Cameron Waddell, Mazars, presented the Audit Completion report.

The Committee noted the opinion of the Auditors was that the financial position remained strong and that a continued position of effective financial management had been demonstrated throughout the year.

The Auditor highlighted the significant findings and confirmed that some adjustments had been made with the approval of the Executive Director (s151).

The Auditor confirmed that Mazars were providing an unqualified opinion on the Audit completion report and the letter of representation was signed at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

30. A/14/14 – INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2014/15

Phil Jeffrey, Veritau informed the Committee that he would be the successor to John Barnett after the departure of Isabel Jones and presented the 1st Quarter update report on the progress made in delivering the internal audit work plan for 2014/15.

The Auditor reported on the progress of the current audits and also on the status of the follow up actions of the 2013/14 audits that required action. He confirmed that all audits would be submitted within target.

RESOLVED:

To approve the report.

The meeting closed at 5:50 pm