

MINUTES of a meeting of the AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE held in the Boardroom, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 26 APRIL 2023

Present: Councillor S Gillard (Chair)

Councillors E G C Allman, C C Benfield, J Clarke, R L Morris, V Richichi, S Sheahan and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr G Hammons, Ms K Beavis, Mrs A Crouch, Mrs R Wallace and Miss E Warhurst

External Audit: Mrs L Parsons and Mr M SurrIDGE

85. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors M Haye and N Smith.

86. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

87. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2023.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor J Clarke and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2023 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

88. AUDIT COMPLETION REPORT - FOLLOW UP LETTER

The Finance Team Manager introduced the item and handed over to the External Auditor to present the report to Members.

No comments were made.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor E Allman and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

89. ANNUAL AUDITORS REPORT 2020/21

The Interim Head of Finance introduced the item and highlighted the updated appendix as detailed within the additional papers. The External Auditors then presented the report to Members.

A discussion was had on the pension and liability risk and the ability to mitigate this risk. The External Auditor confirmed that when the valuation was received at the end of May, it was likely that the liability position was almost gone, this could change in 2024 but the main concern was that the figures were correct, and they were.

At the request of a Member, further information was given in relation to the External Auditors additional fees. The Interim Head of Finance also explained that the Council was

Chairman's initials

receiving support from the Government in relation to the fees that were incurred due to the change in auditing standards.

In response to a question about any concerns with the Journey to Self-Sufficiency Fund, it was the External Auditor's opinion that the Council had delivered on budgets and financial stability and therefore was in a good position.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor R Morris and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

90. EXTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY MEMORANDUM 2021-22

The Interim Head of Finance introduced the item and handed over to External Audit to present the report to Members.

In response to a question, the External Auditor explained that the forthcoming district election was not included as a risk as this report was in relation to the year 2021/22.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor J Clarke and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

91. ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND MATERIALITY 2022/23

The Finance Team Manager presented the report to Members.

No comments were made.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor E Allman and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Draft Accounting Policies for the 2022/23 Financial Statements as detailed in appendix A be approved.

92. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2022/23

The Finance Team Manager presented the report to Members.

No comments were made.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor E Allman and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be approved.

93. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Audit Manager presented the report to Members.

No comments were made.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor R Morris and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

94. CIPFA POSITION STATEMENT

The Audit Manager presented the report to Members.

No comments were made.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor E Allman and

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) The report be noted.
- 2) A cross party member working group be established, to be drawn from the Audit and Governance Committee appointed at Council on 23 May 2023, to work with the Audit Manager and the Head of Legal and Support Services to undertake a self-assessment and training needs analysis and report back to the meeting of Audit and Governance Committee at the July meeting.
- 3) The process for the recruitment of independent members to the committee be agreed.

95. ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN

The Audit Manager presented the report to Members.

No comments were made.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor R Morris and

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) The report be noted.
- 2) The 2023/24 Internal Audit Annual Plan be approved.

96. CORPORATE RISK UPDATE

The Interim Head of Finance presented the report to Members.

In response to a question in relation to cost of living and inflation, the Interim Head of Finance explained that this was still considered a risk and was being managed within other corporate risks.

During discussions on the management of the risk register, it was confirmed that previous registers were reviewed and used as a learning tool. Also, external assessments were undertaken to ascertain if any improvements could be made, there would be more information in relation to this in a future report.

In relation to a query about staff salaries and the risk of possible staff movement to the private sector due to salaries not being increased in line with inflation, the Interim Head of Finance confirmed the matter was being actively managed and regularly discussed.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor E Allman and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

97. DRAFT MEMBER CONDUCT ANNUAL REPORT

The Head of Legal and Support Services presented the report to Members.

No comments were made.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor J Clarke and

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) The Draft Member Conduct Annual Report 2022/23 be received and noted.
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Legal and Support Services to make any minor amendments to the report following comments from the Audit and Governance Committee.

RECOMMENDED THAT:

Council endorses the Member Conduct Annual Report 2022/23.

98. STANDARDS AND ETHICS REPORT - QUARTER 4

The Head of Legal and Support Services presented the report to Members.

No comments were made.

It was moved by Councillor S Gillard, seconded by Councillor V Richichi and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be received and noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.10 pm