

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD: 23 SEPTEMBER 2014
Start: 7.00pm
Finish: 8.10pm

PRESENT:

Councillor: E Pope, (Chairman)
D Whittington (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: C Dereli G Oliver
Y Gagen R Pendleton
P Greenall D Westley
G Jones

Officers: Borough Treasurer (Mr M Taylor)
Borough Solicitor (Mr T Broderick)
Audit Manager (Mr M Coysh)
Assistant Member Services Manager (Mrs J Denning)

In attendance: Mr G Small, Engagement Manager, Grant Thornton (External Audit)

15. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors G Hodson and Pryce-Roberts.

16. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, the Committee noted the termination of membership of Councillor Savage and the appointment of Councillor G Oliver for this meeting only, giving effect to the wishes of the Political Groups.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 26 June 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19. GRANT THORNTON - AUDIT PLAN FINDINGS REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer, as contained on pages 147 to 174 of the Book of Reports, which set out the reports received from the External Auditors setting out their findings on the audit of the accounts and value for money.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- Reserve balances
- Adequacy of planning assumptions – impairment charges
- Capital spending

RESOLVED That the report be noted.

20. INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITIES - QUARTERLY UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer, as contained on pages 175 to 180 of the Book of Reports, which advised of progress against the 2014/15 Internal Audit Plan.

The Audit Manager advised that 46% of the items were currently in progress compared with 44% for the same period in 2013/14.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- Changes to performance Indicators
- Benefits processing – speed and error levels
- Universal Credit Briefing for all Members – 23 October 2014

The Borough Treasurer gave an undertaking to provide details to Members in respect of error levels in relation to Benefits Processing.

RESOLVED That progress in the year to date, be noted.

21. APPROVAL OF STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer, as contained on pages 181 to 186 (page 101), of the Book of Reports, which sought approval of a Letter of Representation and the Councils Annual Statement of Accounts.

RESOLVED A That the revised Letter of representation set out in the updated Appendix 1 to the report, be endorsed.

 B That the Statement of Accounts set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.

22. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT - ANNUAL SETTING OF POLICY AND REVIEW OF USE OF POWERS

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Solicitor, as contained on pages 187 to 214(b), which reviewed and set out the policy for the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) and reviewed the Councils use of covert surveillance and communications data over the last year.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- Incidents occurring in Tanhouse
- Monitoring of CCTV cameras in compliance with the Code

The Borough Solicitor gave an undertaking to seek assurance from the Assistant Director Community Services that all cameras are working and are being monitored by the CCTV Suite.

RESOLVED That the report be noted.

23. ANNUAL REVIEW - ANTI FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION POLICY

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer, as contained on pages 215 to 234 of the Book of Reports which provided a summary of the fraud, bribery and corruption issues facing the Council and the action being taken with them.

RESOLVED A. That the self assessment of fraud and corruption issues, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

 B. That the Counter Fraud Plan, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be endorsed.

24. LOCAL AUDIT AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT 2014

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer, as contained on pages 231 to 234 of the Book of Reports, which provided a summary of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

RESOLVED That the new requirements of the act be noted.

25. WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the Committee's programme of work as set down at page 235 of the Book of Reports.

The Chairman gave an undertaking to contact all Members seeking ideas for future Briefings.

RESOLVED That the Work Programme be noted.

THE CHAIRMAN