

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

HELD: Tuesday, 28 May 2019

Start: 6.30pm

Finish: 7.30pm

PRESENT:

Councillor: C Cooper (Chairman)

Councillors: N Pryce-Roberts T Blane
A Blundell C Coughlan
C Dereli J Gordon
J Mee I Moran
P O'Neill I Rigby

Also in attendance: Councillors K Mitchell & J Thompson
Georgia Jones (Grant Thornton)

Officers: Marc Taylor – Borough Treasurer
Jacqueline Pendleton – Internal Audit Manager
Jane McNeice – Data Access & Storage Governance Officer
Kay Lovelady – Principal Solicitor
Julia Brown – Member Services/Civic Support Officer
Kirsty Breakell – Member Services/Civic Support Officer

1 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence received.

2 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, the Committee noted the termination of Councillors M Nixon, A Pritchard and E Pope, and the appointments of Councillors C Coughlan, I Moran and A Blundell respectively, for this meeting only, thereby giving effect to the wishes of the Political Groups.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of Interest received.

4 PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no items under this heading.

5 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 29 January 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 GRANT THORNTON - PROGRESS UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer as circulated and contained on pages 67-72 of the supplementary agenda dated 21 May 2019 and pages 67-74 on the supplementary agenda dated 24 May 2019, of the book of reports. The purpose of the report was to receive an update from the Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton, on a range of different matters.

The Chairman invited Georgia Jones from Grant Thornton to present the Progress Report to the Committee.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:-

- Calculation used to determine audit fees
- External audit fees and delivery of work on time
- How value for money study, is chosen

RESOLVED: That the Progress Report and Planned Audit Fee letter be noted.

(Note 1: Georgia Jones (Grant Thornton) left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.

(Note 2: Report marked in error as Agenda Item 8 – Annual Governance Statement, when should be marked as Agenda Item 6 – Grant Thornton Progress Report Appendix 1)

7 GRANT THORNTON - CERTIFICATION LETTER

This item was withdrawn.

8 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer as set out on pages 11 -18 of the Book of Reports which sets out the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- The role and core functions of an audit committee as identified in CIPFA's publication *Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities* and had not received a copy of this – a link will be provided to all Councillors to this documentation.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19, set out in appendix 1 be approved and commended to the Leader and Chief Executive for signature.

9 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Consideration was given to the report of the borough Treasurer as set out on pages 19-20 of the Book of Reports which provides details on the preparation of the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019.

The Borough Treasurer outlined the report and confirmed the framework is still in effect. He advised that the only significant issues are the financial challenges which are facing all Local Authorities.

RESOLVED: A. That the report be noted.

B. That a further report to approve the audited statement of accounts be produced for the next meeting of the Committee.

10 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer as set out on pages 21-30 and pages 73-78 of the supplementary agenda dated 21 May 2019 of the Book of Reports, presenting the 2018-19 Internal Audit Annual Report for consideration.

The Chairman invited Jacqueline Pendleton, Internal Audit Manager, to present the 2018-19 Internal Audit Annual Report.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of performance indicators and customer satisfaction surveys.

RESOLVED: That the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2018-19 be noted.

11 INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITIES - QUARTERLY UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer contained on pages 31- 46 and pages 79 – 86 of the supplementary agenda dated 21 May 2019 of the Book of Reports advising of the progress against the 2018/19 Internal Audit Plan.

The Chairman invited Jacqueline Pendleton, Internal Audit Manager, to present the 2019/19 Internal Audit Plan.

Questions and Comments were raised as follows:

- 3 matters having limited assurance – These will come before the Committee in July 2019.

RESOLVED: That Members noted the progress in the year to date.

12 INTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY AND AUDIT PLAN 2019/20

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer contained on pages 47–58 of the Book of Reports, providing Members with the background to the preparation of the 2019/20 Internal Audit Plan, to be presented for approval.

The Chairman invited Jacqueline Pendleton, Internal Audit Manager, to present the 2019/20 Internal Audit Plan.

RESOLVED: That the internal Audit Plan 2019/20 attached at appendix 1 is approved to take effect from 1 June 2019.

13 RIPA ACT REGULAR MONITORING OF USE OF POWERS

In relation to the quarterly monitoring of activity under the Regulation of Investigatory powers Act 2000 (RIPA), the Borough Solicitor reported that there were no relevant activity to bring to the attention of the Committee since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

14 ELECTRONIC RECORDS STORAGE AND MANAGEMENT

To consider the report of the Borough Solicitor contained on pages 59–64 of the Book of Reports to update Members of programmed work in relation to the Council's electronic records storage and management.

The Data Access & Storage Governance Officer outlined the report for the Committee.

Questions and comments were raised as follows:

- Number of reports being overdue – BTLS have now given dedicated project management support and new dates have been agreed, which will be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

15 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the Committee's Work programme as set out on page 65 of the Book of Reports.

Councillor Dereli raised questions with regards to training and the length of the training sessions – After discussion, the motion was withdrawn to allow more time to consider the suggestions raised.

It was noted that:

- The Whistleblowing Code be added to the work programme for July 2019 meeting
- Training issues – To be referred to Member Development.

RESOLVED: (A) That the Work Programme be noted
(B) That the Whistleblowing Code be added to the work programme for July 2019
(C) That the exploration of training for Audit & Governance be referred to Member Development Commission.

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Chairman

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

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