

MINUTES OF AUDIT AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

1 DECEMBER 2022

PRESENT:

Mr P Dudfield (Chairman), Mr J Eves (Vice Chairman), Councillors Mistry, Mrs Roberts, Roodhouse and Willis

31. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

32. APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2021/22

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 1 – Agenda Item 4) concerning the Council's Financial Statements, the external auditors' Audit Findings Report and the approval of Financial Statements for signature and publication.

A representative from Grant Thornton, the Council's appointed external auditor, attended the meeting to answer questions and present the Audit Findings Report (Part 1 – Agenda Item 4 – Appendix A).

The Committee placed on record their thanks to the Chief Officer for Finance and Governance and the Financial and Procurement Services for their hard work in completing the Council's Financial Statements.

During consideration of the Audit Findings Report (Appendix A), a question was raised about the role of senior ICT staff in business process related to financial reporting. The Committee was assured that ICT's involvement was minimal and in the past two years resulted in one journal input to correct a system error. To provide further assurance within the area, an internal audit review would be scheduled for 2023/24.

RESOLVED THAT –

- 1) the Audit Findings Report for 2021/22 be noted;
- 2) the Management Representation Letter for 2021/22 be approved;
- 3) the Statement of Accounts for 2021/22 be approved;
- 4) authority be delegated to use the Chair of Audit and Ethics Committee and the Chief Financial Officer's electronic signatures to sign the Statement of Accounts; and
- 5) the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance together with the Chief Officer for Digital and Communication to form a plan of action in relation to the audit findings and provide an update at a future meeting of the Committee.

33. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2022/23

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 1 – Agenda Item 5) concerning the treasury management activities from 1 April to 30 September 2022.

To further enhance the strategic treasury management process and to provide key data to stakeholders, officers were in the process creating a dedicated treasury management dashboard which would review investments and borrowing, report on treasury management indicators and monitoring counterparty and investment limits as included in the Treasury Management Strategy.

RESOLVED THAT –

- 1) the report be noted;
- 2) the monitoring and the review of Treasury Management indicators be agreed; and
- 3) the Committee to receive a demonstration of the treasury management dashboard at a future meeting.

34. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 1 – Agenda Item 6) concerning the progress toward delivery of the annual internal audit plan, the proposed in year amendments to the plan and a service performance update.

RESOLVED THAT –

- 1) the internal audit progress update be noted; and
- 2) the amendment to the internal audit plan be approved.

35. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC UNDER SECTION 100(A)(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED THAT – under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of information defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

36. EXEMPTION TO CONTRACTS STANDING ORDERS – RENEWAL OF HR PAYROLL SOFTWARE CONTRACT FOR 3 YEARS

The Committee received the report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 2 – Agenda Item 1) concerning an exemption to Contract Standing Orders with regard to the renewal of the HR/Payroll contract for a period of three years.

RESOLVED THAT – the exemption to Contracts Standing Orders decision made by the Chief Financial Officer and the Monitoring Officer on 4 November 2022 be noted.

37. EXEMPTION TO CONTRACTS STANDING ORDERS - THE RUGBY MARKET

The Committee considered the private report of the Chief Officer for Finance and Performance (Part 2 – Agenda Item 2) concerning an exemption to Contract Standing Orders with regard to the appointment of a third-party operator for the Rugby Market.

RESOLVED THAT – the exemption to Contracts Standing Orders decision made by the Chief Financial Officer and the Monitoring Officer on 19 October 2022 be noted.

38. WHISTLEBLOWING INCIDENTS – STANDING ITEM – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES

The Corporate Assurance Manager and Transformation Lead provided Members with verbal updates in relation to two ongoing investigations.

RESOLVED THAT –

- 1) the verbal updates be noted; and
- 2) the Committee be provided with progress updates at the next meeting.

39. FRAUD AND CORRUPTION ISSUES – STANDING ITEM – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES

There were no issues to report.

CHAIRMAN