

GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 22 JULY 2024

Present: Councillor , Chair

Councillors: E Winfield (Vice-Chair)
R Bullock
S Dannheimer
K Harlow
G S Hills
S P Jeremiah
A Kingdon
W Mee
J M Owen
S Webb
K Woodhead

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S J Carr and M Brown

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

12 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 20 May 2024 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

13 BRAMCOTE BEREAVEMENT SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE AGREEMENT

The Committee considered the updates to the Agreement in respect of the Bramcote Bereavement Services Joint Committee.

RECOMMENDED to the respective Councils that the revised Agreement be approved and that the consequential changes to the Constitution be made.

14 AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

The Committee considered the letter of representation and the process for the approval of the Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 and considered the Audit Completion Report from the Council's external auditors following their work on these accounts.

The auditors are yet to complete their work in respect of the Value for Money conclusion for the year ended 31 March 2023. At the time of preparing their report, Forvis Mazars had not identified any significant weaknesses in the Council's arrangements that require it to make a recommendation.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The updated Statement of Accounts 2022/23 and letter of representation as circulated be approved; and**
- 2. Delegation be given to the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, to approve any further changes required to the Statement of Accounts 2022/23.**

15 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee noted the recent work completed by Internal Audit.

Internal Audit has also reviewed progress made by management in implementing agreed actions within six months of the completion of the respective audits. Where agreed actions to address significant internal control weaknesses have not been implemented this may have implications for the Council.

16 INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW 2023/24

The Committee noted of the work of Internal Audit during 2023/24.

Overall, 71% of the planned audits were complete or awaiting finalisation as at the year-end, below the 90% target. This was figure was due to the result of timing and the audit resource released as a result was fully utilised in commencing work on other audits contained within the Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25

17 REVIEW OF STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

The Committee note the amendments to the Strategic Risk Register and the action plans identified to mitigate risks.

RESOLVED that the amendments to the Strategic Risk Register and the actions to mitigate risks as set out be approved.

18 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

Members were updated on the Risk Management Strategy for the Council.

The Strategy sets out the five key steps within the risk management process (identification, analysis, treatment, updating the risk register and monitoring) as well as the respective roles and responsibilities across the Council in terms of risk management. It was noted that the '5x5' risk map matrix would continue to be used for assessing the threats and opportunities for each strategic risk in terms of both its likelihood and impact. A new section had been included to define the Council's risk appetite as being 'cautious' (rather than 'risk averse') with decision making being based upon appropriately outlined business cases, robust financial assessments and sound project management.

RESOLVED that the updated Risk Management Strategy be approved.

19 COMPLAINTS REPORT 2023/24

Members were provided with a summary of complaints made against the Council.

Of the 407 stage one complaints received overall, 73 were investigated under the stage 2 complaints procedure and nine were investigated by the LGO. Under the stage 2 complaints procedure, 34 complaints were not upheld, 37 complaints were upheld and two were withdrawn. The Ombudsman investigated nine complaints made against the Council. One complaint was recorded as not upheld, resulting in no further action being required by the Council, six complaints were upheld and two are still under investigation.

20 WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the Work Programme. It was requested that an item on the Combined Authority Arrangements be added to the Work Programme.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme, as amended to include an item on the Combined Authority Arrangements, be approved.