

Minutes of Accounts and Audit

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 12 April 2023, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor D Berryman (Chair)

Councillors:

J Clark	D Peat
K Fletcher	J Rogerson
S Fletcher	R Sherras
J Hill	R Walsh

In attendance: Director of Resources, Head of Financial Services, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Internal Audit Manager and Georgia Jones

895 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received for the meeting from Councillor S Bibby.

896 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

897 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY, OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

899 REVIEW OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES 2022/23

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking endorsement of the Accounting Policies to be used in producing the Financial Statements for the Council for the 2022/23 financial year.

It was noted that no major changes to the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (The Code) have been identified, so there are no material changes to the policies needed. Members were informed that the policies reported in the report may be subject to further changes should any be needed whilst the financial statements are being prepared. Such changes would be reported to Committee with an explanation of the impact when the financial statements are presented.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Endorse the use of the policies shown at Annex 1 to the report, subject to the need for any further changes identified as needed whilst the Statement of Accounts are produced.

900

STRATEGIC INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2023/24 TO 2025/26

The Director of Resources submitted a report presenting the 3-year Strategic Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24 to 2025/26 for consideration and approval by Committee.

The Internal Audit Plan considers core, mandates, national and regional risks as identified in the Council's risk register. Members were informed that the plan remains flexible to respond to emerging risks the Council may face.

The Council's 3-year Strategic Plan was annexed to the report, and it was noted that it would be continually reviewed. It was acknowledged that a new Corporate Strategy will be produced after the elections when a new Council is formed.

A number of key performance indicators were outlined in the plan and these set clear expectations on the Internal Audit Service and enable the team to demonstrate the impact, effectiveness and compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Approve the Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 to 2025/26 as attached in Appendix A to the report.

901

INFORMING THE AUDIT RISK ASSESSMENT 2022/23

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking members to ratify the responses made by management in response to a number of questions raised by Grant Thornton. These questions cover some important areas of the auditor risk assessment where there is a requirement to make inquiries of the Accounts and Audit Committee under auditing standards.

The questions raised and the management responses were annexed to the report and covered the following:

- General Enquiries of Management
- Fraud
- Laws and Regulations
- Related Parties
- Going Concern
- Accounting Estimates

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Ratify the responses made to the Grant Thornton document 'Informing the audit risk assessment for Ribble Valley Borough Council 2022/23' as attached at Annex 1 of the report.

902

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

The Director of Resources submitted an information report to provide the Committee with details of the recently revised Strategic Risk Register.

Members were reminded that it is considered good governance that Councillors are provided with regular updates.

The Committee discussed and reviewed the Strategic Risk Register, and it was noted that it contains 16 open risks as at March 2023 which affect the delivery of the Corporate Strategy. Members noted the risk management activity that has taken place.

903 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2022/23

The Director of Resources submitted a report providing an update to the Committee in respect of progress made in delivery against 2022/23 Internal Audit Plan. It brought attention to matters relevant to members of the Committee and it provided a summary of internal audit activity which is a requirement of PSIAS.

Members noted that since the last meeting of this Committee, the following areas have been a key focus for the Council:

- Managing Conflicts of Interest
- Overtime Payments
- Purchase Orders
- Cyber Security
- Biodiversity Net Gain Grant Claim

904 EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Grant Thornton presented their audit progress report, along with audit deliverables and a sector update. It confirmed that they completed the work on the Council's financial statements for 2021/22 in November 2022. Initial planning work was undertaken for the 2022/23 audit in February 2023 and an interim audit is carried out in April. The results of this interim audit will be included in the June Audit progress report.

Georgia Jones also provided a brief verbal overview of the report to Committee.

905 ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE - MINUTES 17/02/23

Committee noted the minutes of the Accounts and Audit Sub-Committee on 17 February 2023

906 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from representatives on outside bodies.

907 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items under this heading.

The meeting closed at 7.07 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, Jenny Martin jenny.martin@ribblevalley.gov.uk