

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY (AUDIT AND VALUE FOR MONEY COUNCIL SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny (Audit and Value for Money Council Services) Committee held in the Meeting Room at the Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent on 21st November 2017.

Present:

Councillors S. Smith (Chairman), G. Allen, A. A. Chaudhry, M. Fitzpatrick, S. Gaskin, D. Goodfellow, H. Hall, A. Johnson, Mrs J. Killoran and C. Smith.

Officers Present:

Head of Service (Sal Khan), the Chief Accountant, the Corporate and Commercial Manager and the Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present:

T. Ridout (Internal Auditor - CW Audit) and J. Barnett (Grant Thornton).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Andjelkovic, D. F. Fletcher, P. Hudson, L. Milner, Mrs B. Toon and Dr B. Jones (Independent Member).

35/17 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest declared at the commencement of the meeting.

36/17 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the Public Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny (Audit and Value for Money Council Services) Committee held on 9th October 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

37/17 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business submitted to the meeting pursuant to Rule 12.

38/17 **INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT**

(CW Audit) The Internal Auditor gave a report summarising the work of internal audit, outlining the progress against the audit plan, the key findings and conclusions arising from their work, details of planned work, and to update the Committee on the progress made in implementing previously agreed recommendations.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

39/17 **ANNUAL SATISFACTION Survey 2016/17**

(CW Audit) The Internal Auditor gave a short presentation on the annual internal audit satisfaction survey for 2016/2017, for information.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

40/17 **INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER – UPDATE**

(CW Audit) Members received a short presentation on the internal audit charter.

NOTED

41/17 **ANNUAL EXTERNAL AUDIT LETTER – 2016/17**

(Grant Thornton) The representative from Grant Thornton updated the Committee on their audit letter, summarising the findings year ended 31st March 2017. It included key issues arising from the audit and the results of the work they had undertaken to assess the way the Council managed their performance and arrangements to secure value for money.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

42/17 **EXTERNAL AUDIT – UPDATE**

(Grant Thornton) The representative from Grant Thornton updated the Committee on their progress in delivering their responsibilities as the Council's external auditors. This included the requirement to issue a planned fee letter, their accounts audit plan, interim accounts audit, final account audit, their value for money conclusion, the annual audit letter and the certification of housing benefits claim year ended 31st March 2017.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

43/17 **MID YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT**

To comply with the Treasury Management Code of Practice, the Chief Accountant presented the Mid Year Treasury Management Report to Members. It provided an update against the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, setting out current investment and borrowing portfolios and outlining any other treasury related matters.

An opportunity for questions followed.

Resolved:

That Members noted the Mid-year Treasury Management Report and did not make any comments or observations to full Council.

44/17 **INDEPENDENT MEMBER**

The Corporate and Commercial Manager reported that he had received a letter of resignation from Andrea Johnson, Independent Member. He informed Members that he would commence recruiting a new independent member in January 2018.

It was agreed that a letter be sent to Andrea to convey the Committee's thanks for all her hard work.

45/17 **REVIEW OF INCOME GENERATION UPDATE**

The Corporate and Commercial Manager updated the Committee on Income Generation review. He informed Members that the sub-group had met prior to the meeting and that further information had been requested and shared with Members.

Discussions took place.

It was agreed that the sub-group would meet again in December to continue with the review.

46/17 **SCRUTINY – WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman requested that Members should give consideration on how future scrutiny reviews be undertaken by the Committee including the number of sub groups and how many Members should sit on each group.

It was agreed that each sub group should consist of 5 Members.

The Chairman asked for Members to identify topics they would like to be included on the Scrutiny Work Programme for future reviews.

A discussion took place and opportunities for questions followed.

Councillor Allen requested that the Committee review the processing the Disabled Facilities Grants. Members agreed that this would be the next topic to be reviewed by the Committee. Councillor Allen agreed to take the lead on the sub-group and be supported Councillors A. Chaudhry, M. Fitzpatrick, D. Goodfellow and H. Hall. The Corporate and Commercial Manager would liaise with Councillor Allen to co-ordinate the scope of the review.

Councillor Chaudhry proposed that the Committee put forward "Representations on Outside Bodies" as a further topic to be included on the work programme. It was agreed that the Corporate and Commercial Manager would bring information on this review to the January meeting.

Councillor Goodfellow proposed that the following topics be also considered for future review:

- Review of Scrutiny and its Effectiveness
- Leisure Options – Update
- Accommodation Review and its Effectiveness
- Changes to the Operation and Management of Neighbourhood Funds
- Car Park Changes in the Borough

It was identified that three of the above topics (Review of Scrutiny and its Effectiveness, Disabled Facilities Grants and Changes to the Operation and Management of Neighbourhood Funds) are already included as part of the Internal Audit Programme for 2017/18. It was agreed that these three reviews would take place after the internal audits had been completed.

It was agreed that all six topics identified would be included on the Scrutiny Work Programme.

47/17 **QUESTIONS**

There were no questions submitted to the Committee prior to the meeting.

48/17 **DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:

That the next meeting take place on 13th December 2017 at 6.30pm in the Meeting Room, Brewhouse, Burton upon Trent.

49/17 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved:

That, in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting during discussion of the following items as it would likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets before each item number on the Agenda:

PRIVATE MINUTES

DOVE WAY/PENNYCROFT LANE PROJECT

EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORDS

Chairman