

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Committee held in the Coltman VC Room at the Town Hall, Burton upon Trent on 29th September 2022.

Present:

Councillors E. Barker (Chairman), A. A. Chaudhry, M. Fitzpatrick, T. Hadley (via Zoom) and Mrs B. Toon.

Officers Present:

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

Also Present:

R. Deo (Internal Auditor - CW Audit) and A. Smith (Grant Thornton) (via Zoom).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Gaskin, P. Hudson and C. Sylvester.

11/22 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

12/22 **MINUTES**

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

| Those voting for the motion | Those voting against | Those abstaining |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Councillor E Barker | | Councillor M Fitzpatrick |
| Councillor A A Chaudhry | | |
| Councillor Mrs B Toon | | |

13/22 **URGENT BUSINESS**

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

13/22 **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.

Councillor Fitzpatrick requested information regarding the cemetery review, and asked whether the Council should get a second opinion on the consultations. It was agreed that the Internal Auditor would provide a response outside of the meeting.

NOTED

14/22 **ANNUAL SATISFACTION SURVEY REPORT 2022**

(CW Audit) Members received a short presentation on the internal auditor's annual customer satisfaction survey, circulated prior to the meeting.

Each year the internal auditors conduct a customer survey of their clients' executive management team and for those on the non-executive directors any lay member who sit on Audit Committee. This is to gauge satisfaction with their services, and to respond to suggested improvements.

The report described their clients' views on their internal audit offering, and the actions CW Audit plan to take in response to the clients' ideas for improving their service. The feedback suggested that a number of key measures including their added value score, which say 97% of those who responded rated them as 7 and above, with 55% of all respondents rating as excellent.

NOTED

15/22 **EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE**

The representative from Grant Thornton gave a short presentation on their progress in delivering their responsibilities as external auditors.

Andy Smith reported that the statement of accounts would be late and could not be presented to this meeting, due to staff sickness.

An opportunity for questions followed.

Councillor Chaudhry stated that he was disappointed that the accounts were not ready, and that Grant Thornton could not commit to a date when they would be completed.

The Chairman and the Deputy Leader for Finance agreed with Councillor Chaudhry's comments and said this was due to poor management planning, with no contingency plan in place.

The Chairman asked if there would be a discount for the lateness and noted that there were no apologies forthcoming from Mr Smith.

NOTED

16/22 **REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT – QUARTER 1**

Members considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer in accord with the Council's financial regulations, presenting the forecast outturn position in relation to the Council's revenue budget, capital programme of expenditure and treasury management activities.

The Chief Accountant gave a short presentation on the quarter 1 report in the annual cycle of financial monitoring for the financial year 2022/23.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

17/22 **PSAA – CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED SCALE FEE FOR 2022/23 AUDITS**

A report regarding the Consultation on the 2022/23 Audit Fee Scale for opted-in Local Government, Fire and Police Bodies was circulated with the agenda.

The document sought comments from the audited bodies and stakeholders on the proposals outlined, and the closing date for comments were Friday 30th September 2022.

NOTED

18/22 **QUESTIONS**

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

19/22 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be confirmed.

Chairman