

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 Coltman VC Room, Town Hall, Burton upon Trent on 23rd July 2019.

Present:

Councillors P. Hudson, (Chairman), S. Andjelkovic, Mrs B. Ashcroft, Mrs R. Brady, A. A. Chaudhry, A. Clarke, D. Fletcher, D. Florence-Jukes, S. Gaskin, H. Hall, M. Metcalfe, S. Sankey and C. Sylvester.

Officers Present:

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Fitzpatrick, Mrs V. J. Gould and G. Raybould.

Also Present:

Mr M. Stocks (Grant Thornton) and Mr R. Elliott (Independent Member).

20/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

21/19 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the Public Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny (Audit and Value for Money Council Services) Committee held on 20th June 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

22/19 **URGENT BUSINESS**

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

23/19 **EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS**

(Grant Thornton) The representative from Grant Thornton updated Members on the external audit findings. The report, circulated with the agenda, highlighted the key matters arising from their audit of the Council's financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2019, and to report their audit findings to management and those charged with governance.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

24/19 **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2018/2019**

The Chief Accountant gave a short presentation on the Statement of Accounts for 2018/19 following the conclusion of the work undertaken by the Council's external auditors, and requested that Members recommended their approval. Members were also asked to recommend the approval of the Letter of Representation, on behalf of the Authority.

It was noted that a number of questions had been received by the Chief Accountant via email. Responses were provided prior to the meeting.

An opportunity for questions followed.

Resolved:

1. That in future, unless specifically stipulated, responses to questions raised by an individual Member would be circulated to all members of the Committee.
2. That subject to the finalisation of the audit, delegated authority be given to the Chairman of the Committee to agree any changes that might arise from the audit.
3. That the Audit (Statement of Accounts) for 2018/19 and the Letter of Representation be recommended to the Audit Committee (Approval of the Statement of Accounts) for approval.

25/19 **REVIEW OF REPRESENTATIONS ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Corporate and Commercial Manager gave a short presentation on the review of representations on outside bodies. He reported that he had met with Councillors Deneice Florence-Jukes and Helen Hall to finalise the draft report circulated with the agenda. It was agreed that the outside bodies to which Members attend would be reduced to 15 only, with one elected Member plus one substitute on each of the organisations.

An opportunity for questions followed, along with discussions.

It was agreed that the Corporate and Commercial Manager would write to the remaining outside organisations informing them of the committee's decision in order to keep their record up to date.

The Chairman requested that it be placed on record, the Committees thanks to Councillors Florence-Jukes and Hall, for all their hard work bringing the review to a conclusion in a timely manner.

Resolved:

That the following recommendations be submitted to Cabinet:

1. That organisations that fall within categories 3, 4 and 5, which are (ward specific, community focus, none of the above) in the report are removed from the list of outside bodies associated with East Staffordshire Borough Council. Therefore a reduction of 22 to 15, losing the following organisations from the list of outside bodies:
 - Consolidated Charity of Burton
 - CPRE

- Nottingham East Midlands Airport Consultative Group
 - Rolleston Alms Houses
 - SARAC
 - Barton and Dunstall Key Trust
 - Henry Warford Trust
2. That it be left to the individual Ward Elected Member(s) to decide whether they wished to attend outside organisation groups.
 3. To reduce the number of representatives to 1 elected Member per outside body (plus one substitute).
 4. To write to all remaining outside bodies and requested that they updated their records to reflect the latest representatives and send a copy of all correspondences to the Council's Democratic Services.

26/19 **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received an update on the scrutiny work programme circulated with the agenda. The Chairman requested that Members gave consideration to topics to be reviewed next.

Discussions took place and an opportunity for questions followed.

It was agreed that the next two topics to be reviewed would be (1) Disabled Facilities Grants, and (2) the Operation of the Council's Car Parks. Councillors S Andjelkovic, A A Chaudhry and S Sankey would form a sub-group for the review for (1) Disabled Facilities Grants; and Councillors S Andjelkovic, M Metcalfe and C Sylvester would form the second sub-group for the review of (2) the Operation of the Council's Car Parks.

Resolved:

That the Corporate and Commercial Manager would meet with each sub group to scope the topics papers for the reviews prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

27/19 **PUBLIC EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORDS**

Members considered the Public Executive Decision Records.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

28/19 **QUESTIONS**

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

29/19 **DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:

That the next meeting take place on Monday 23rd September 2019 at 6.30pm in the Coltman VC Room, Town Hall, Burton upon Trent.

30/19 **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

PRIVATE EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORDS

31/19 **PRIVATE MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the Private Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny (Audit and Value for Money Council Services) Committee held on 20th June 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

32/19 **PRIVATE EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORDS**

Members considered the Private Executive Decision Records.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

Chairman