

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee held on 8 March 2017

Present

Councillor Smith K (Chairman)

Councillors Davis, Lenaghan, Rees, Sceal and Wade

75 Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

76 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee held on 30 November 2016 and the minutes of the Extraordinary Governance and Audit Committee held on 20 February 2017 be approved as a correct record.

77 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

78 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

79 Chairman's Report

There were no matters that the Chairman wished to report.

80 External Audit Papers

The Committee considered the Annual Certification Report 2015/16 as presented by Ernst and Young LLP. Andrew Brittain and Emma Bryant of Ernst and Young LLP joined the meeting for the debate on this item and answered members questions in connection with the report.

The report summarised the results of the external auditors' work on Havant Borough Council's 2015-16 claims. No errors had been highlighted in their sample testing.

RESOLVED that the Annual Certification Report 2015/16 from external auditors be noted.

81 Internal Audit Progress Report 2016-17 (January 2017)

The Committee considered a paper presented by Antony Harvey and Amanda Chalmers of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership, who joined the meeting for the debate on this item and answered members' questions in connection with the report.

The paper provided an overview of internal audit activity against assurance work completed in accordance with the approved audit plan and an overview on the status of 'live' reports.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Progress Report 2016-17 (January 2017) be noted.

82 Internal Audit Plan and Fraud & Corruption Risk Plan 2017/18

The Committee considered the Internal Audit Plan and the Fraud and Corruption Risk Plan 2017-18, as presented by Antony Harvey and Amanda Chalmers of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership.

The Internal Audit Plan aimed to assure the Committee that the framework of internal control, risk management and governance is appropriate and operating effectively, with specific consideration of the 6 Councils Partnership and related risks.

The Fraud and Corruption Risk Plan highlighted the framework of reactive and proactive initiatives to detect fraud and provide assurance that fraud has not taken place.

During the course of the discussion, members requested further details on the number of frauds identified within key fraud risk areas relevant to the Council.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Plan 2017-18 and the Fraud and Corruption Risk Plan 2017-18 be approved.

83 Internal Audit Charter 2017/18

Antony Harvey and Amanda Chalmers of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership presented the Committee with the Internal Audit Charter 2017/18.

The Committee were advised that the Charter formally outlines the roles and responsibilities of internal audit.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Charter 2017/18 be approved.

84 Changes to the Councillor Code of Conduct

The Committee considered a report from the Monitoring Officer recommending changes to the Councillor's Code of Conduct.

The report highlighted the need for the Code of Conduct to be updated to include clearer guidance relating to bias and timescales for responses to residents. The updates also included points on the use of social media and email messaging.

During the debate, the Committee discussed adding a reference to the Council's Lone Working Policy to the Code of Conduct.

RECOMMENDED to Council that it adopts the changes to the Councillor Code of Conduct subject to an amendment to item 8 (ix) to read:

"Behaving in accordance with all the Council's legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained in the Council's policies, protocols and procedures relating to conduct, including the Council's Lone Working Procedure."

85 Monitoring Officer's Update

The Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that one Code of Conduct complaint had been received in 2017, and this had not been upheld.

The Committee was also informed that the Constitution was currently being reviewed and would be submitted to the meeting in due course. The Code of Conduct complaints procedure was also being updated.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 5.48 pm