

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Joint Governance Committee held on 29 May 2013

Present

Councillor Smith K (Chairman)

Councillors

East Hampshire District Council: Councillors Aiston, Denston and Evans
Havant Borough Council: Councillors Buckley, Kennedy, Mrs Smallcorn and Tarrant

1 Appointment of Chairman

Cllr Ken Smith, Havant Borough Council was appointed Chairman of the Joint Governance Committee for the year 2013/14.

2 Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Cllr Philip Aiston, East Hampshire District Council was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Joint Governance Committee for the year 2013/14.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N Branch, Z Faddy and M Johnson MBE, East Hampshire District Council and T Hart, Havant Borough Council.

4 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman:

- (i) Pointed out the location of the fire exits;
- (ii) Asked that all present switch off their mobile phones;
- (iii) Welcomed everyone to the meeting; and
- (iv) Informed those present that he had agreed the consideration of an additional item, as a matter of urgency under the Government (Access to Information) Act 1972. The special circumstances justifying this action were that the report needed to be considered before the date of the next meeting of the Committee in September. The item would be considered as item 9 of the agenda.

5 Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 23 January 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

6 Matters Arising

None.

7 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations.

8 External Audit Papers - Havant Borough Council

The Committee considered Report, EXTH.15/13, which had been previously circulated.

Ian Young, Audit Manager Ernst & Young LLP presented the report.

Following the discussion, it was RESOLVED that the report be NOTED.

9 Internal Audit

Mr Neil Pitman, Chief Internal Auditor/ Head of Partnership at Southern Internal Audit Partnership introduced himself to the Committee and gave a short briefing on the new audit partnership.

He explained that the Southern Internal Audit Partnership had evolved from a shared Internal Audit service between Southampton City Council and Hampshire County Council. The benefits of merging the teams had been an economy of scale.

The partnership was hosted by Hampshire County Council but was a true partnership and it had a wide portfolio of clients including four local authorities, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire, the Fire and Ambulance Service and the University of Winchester.

The partnership employed 35 FTE's (Full Time Equivalents) all professionally qualified.

Jane Eaton, Executive Head Governance & Logistics was a member of the Partnership Board and in this position would be kept up-to-date on future plans.

The Partnership hoped to expand to other local authorities and public sector organisations in the future

Following the discussion, it was RESOLVED that the briefing be NOTED.

10 Internal Audit Annual Report 2012/13

The Committee considered an urgent item at the request of Cllr K Smith, Chairman of the Committee. The report was deemed urgent as this item could not wait until the next meeting of the Committee on 11 September 2013.

Mark Norton introduced the Internal Audit Annual Report 2012/13, the Committee were asked to consider the report and the assurance opinion from the Internal Partnership Manager on the system of internal control. The Committee were also asked to note the matters raised by Internal Audit and action taken by management..

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Following the discussion, it was RESOLVED that the report be NOTED.

11 Annual Governance Statements - EHDC and HBC

The Committee considered Report, EXTH.19/13, which had been previously circulated.

Kevin Harlow, Accountant (Finance & Governance) introduced the report.

Following the discussion, it was RESOLVED that the statements be NOTED.

12 Complaints Update

Jo Barden-Hernandez, Monitoring Officer updated the Committee on complaints received and outcomes since June 2012.

She advised the Committee that the Independent Persons had raised concerns about Councillors from both Councils failing to acknowledge correspondence either by email or post. Three of the complaints received since the beginning of January 2013 had been about this. It was understood that the management of emails could be difficult at times and that on occasions it may be a round robin email or letter and might not even be a constituent. However, it was felt to be simple courtesy to acknowledge correspondence.

The Committee noted these concerns.

Following the discussion, it was RESOLVED that the update and that the Monitoring Officer has sent a note to all Councillors passing on the sentiments of the Committee concerning the acknowledgement of correspondence be NOTED.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and concluded at 6.30 pm