

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee held on 3 March 2015

Present

Councillor Smith K (Chairman)

Councillors Mackey, Hart, Perry, Tarrant and Shimbart (Standing Deputy)

41 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Smallcorn and Wilson.

42 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held on 2 December 2014 be approved as a correct record.

43 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

44 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests from any of the members present.

45 Chairman's Report

There were no matters the Chairman wished to report to the Committee.

46 External Audit Papers

The Committee considered four papers presented by Ernst and Young LLP. Helen Thompson and Ian Young of Ernst and Young LLP joined the meeting for the debate on this item and answered members' questions in connection with the report.

The Audit Progress Report informed the Committee that all work associated with the 2013/14 audit had now been completed and an outline of the timetable for the 2014/15 audit was provided.

The Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2013/14 related to the audit of the Council's 2013/14 grant claims.

The Scale Fee Variation Letter informed the Committee of a change to the scale fee of the Council for 2014/15, and an agreed variation to the 2013/14 fee included in the Annual Audit Letter which had been presented to the Committee in September 2014.

The Local government Sector Briefing report summarised some of the current issues facing the Local Government sector. The section on the future of local government audit and the changes to the audit timetable were highlighted as being particularly relevant to the Committee.

RESOLVED that the reports be noted.

47 Internal Audit Progress Report 2014-15 (January 2015)

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 a summary of the status of 'live' reports.

The Committee was pleased to note that good progress had been made in achieving its performance targets and that no significant issues had been identified.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

48 Internal Audit Plan 2015-16

Antony Harvey and Amanda Chalmers of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership presented the Committee with Havant Borough Council's Internal Audit Plan 2015/16. The Plan ensured the most appropriate use of internal audit resources in order to provide a clear statement of assurance on risk management, internal control and governance arrangements.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Plan 2015/16 be approved.

49 Internal Audit Charter

Antony Harvey and Amanda Chalmers of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership presented the Committee with the Internal Audit Charter for 2015/16. The Committee noted that the Charter defined the internal audit activity's purpose, authority and responsibility in line with the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Charter for 2015/16 be approved.

50 Codes and Protocols

Antony Harvey and Amanda Chalmers of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership provided the Committee with updated codes and protocols, in line with the Committee's terms of reference and compliance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) code of practice on managing the risk of fraud and corruption.

Governance & Audit Committee (3.3.15)

The Committee requested that a future Councillor training session on the new codes and protocols be held.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the following codes and protocols be adopted:

- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Anti Bribery Policy;
- Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy;
- Anti Fraud and Corruption Response Plan; and
- Anti Money Laundering Policy

51 Quarterly Update on Corporate Risks from the Executive Board

The Committee noted a report from the Executive Head for Governance and Logistics providing an update on the highest corporate risks reviewed by the Executive Board, alongside the Health Check, in February 2015.

The Committee expressed an interest in being provided with further details of the risks reviewed by the Executive Board. It was suggested that discussions take place on how to further develop communications with the Committee surrounding corporate risks.

RESOLVED that the most serious corporate risks reviewed by the Joint Executive Board on 10 February 2015 be noted.

52 Code of Conduct Complaints

The Committee received an update on code of conduct complaints. During the course of the discussions the Committee considered:

- That the Chairman be requested to write to the Leader of East Hampshire District Council expressing support for the need to strengthen the standards regime;
- A requirement for all Councillors to undertake a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check;
- The need to develop a social media code of conduct guide for Councillors;
- The possibility of Councillors lobbying local MPs to request Parliament to strengthen the standards regime; and
- What training was provided to staff who used social media for Council business.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 6.28 pm