

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee held on 21 June 2017

Present

Councillor Smith K (Chairman)

Councillors Lenaghan, Sceal, Smith D and Carpenter (Standing Deputy)

90 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Davis and Rees.

91 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee held on 8 March 2017 and the minutes of the Extraordinary Governance and Audit Committee held on 24 April 2017 be approved as a correct record.

92 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

93 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

94 Chairman's Report

There were no matters that the Chairman wished to report.

95 Annual Internal Audit Report and Opinion

The Committee considered a report 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 report provided the Committee with the Chief Internal Auditor's opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control for the year ending 31 March 2017. The Committee was assured that the Council's framework was adequate and where weaknesses had been identified, work had been undertaken with Council management to agree appropriate corrective actions.

During the course of the debate, members requested that internal auditors consider conducting a benchmarking survey to compare the number of frauds / errors identified with similar local authorities.

RESOLVED that the Annual Internal Audit Report and Opinion for 2016/17 from the Southern Internal Audit Partnership be approved.

96 External Audit Papers

The Committee considered the report presented by Ernst and Young LLP. Andrew Brittain 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 Plan set out how the external auditors intended to carry out their responsibilities and provide the Committee with a basis to review their proposed audit approach and scope for the 2016/17 audit.

The Local Government Audit Committee Briefing summarised current issues facing the Local Government sector.

RESOLVED that the Audit Plan for the year ending 31 March 2017 and the Local Government Audit Committee Briefing from external auditors be noted.

97 Annual Governance Statement 2016-17

The Committee considered a report from the Governance and Information Manager detailing the Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17. The Monitoring Officer introduced this report and answered member's question in relation to the paper.

During the course of the debate, the Monitoring Officer advised that in the Annual Governance Statement for 2017/18, the Council's policies for anti fraud and corruption, anti-bribery and whistle-blowing would be moved from the Constitution to the Policy Hub.

RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17 be approved for inclusion in the Statement of Accounts 2016/17 for Havant Borough Council subject to:

- 1) The following amendments:
 - a) reference on page 9 of the submitted Statement to the Council's 'Governance and Audit Scrutiny Committee' be amended to read 'Governance and Audit Committee'; and
 - b) the final sentence on page 11 of the submitted Statement be amended to read 'Ernst and Young LLP also provided an unqualified conclusion of the Council's arrangements to secure Value for Money'.
- 2) The officers reviewing the wording of paragraph 3 on page 11 of the submitted Statement to ensure clarity.

98 Monitoring Officer's Update

The Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that six Code of Conduct complaints against Councillors had been received in 2017. Two were currently outstanding, and no further action had been taken against the other complaints received.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 5.45 pm