

Audit Committee Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee of Wyre Borough Council held on Tuesday 7 March, 2017 at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Audit Committee members present:

Councillor R Amos	Councillor Ingham
Councillor E Anderton	Councillor McKay
Councillor Ballard	Councillor Moon
Councillor Collinson	Councillor A Turner
Councillor Fail	Councillor Wilson
Councillor Greenhough	
Councillor Holden	

Apologies: Councillors Balmain and Barrowclough.

Officers present:

C James – Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
J Billington – Head of Governance
K McLellan – Senior Auditor
C Leary – Democratic Services Officer

Non-members present: C Paisley - Audit Manager of KPMG and Councillor I Amos

Members of the public present:

None

Audit. 37 Declarations of interest

None.

Audit. 38 Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 8 November, 2016 were confirmed as a correct record.

In relation to minute Audit 29, the Head of Governance provided an update on how well the one-to-one meetings had gone, with members of the Audit Committee. She then informed those four members, namely, Ballard, Holden, E Anderton and Collinson, who were still outstanding, that she would be contacting them shortly.

Audit. 39 Review of Audit Committee's Terms of Reference

The audit committee's terms of reference are subject to an annual review, in accordance with CIPFA's best practice guidance 'Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities'.

The Head of Governance stated that she did not intend to go through each of the core functions of the Terms of Reference as members had recently had 1-1's where the core functions of the Audit Committee had been discussed.

Following an email from Councillor Fail, The Head of Governance gave him the opportunity to raise his concerns in relation to the publishing of internal audit reports and more specifically, the follow-up and implementation of recommendations made.

The Head of Governance stated that audit reports are issued to the Audit Committee for information only and they are to be used to enable them to give an independent overall opinion on the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework, the internal control environment, the annual governance statement and the integrity of the financial reporting.

The Head of Governance confirmed that recommendations are followed-up as required. She encouraged members to challenge responsible officers if recommendations are not implemented, but this should be done when the date agreed for implementation has passed, not at the time the reports have been issued.

RESOLVED: that the Audit Committee approved the previously agreed terms of reference and agreed that they accurately reflect the role of the committee.

Audit. 40 Annual Internal Audit Plan 2017/18

The Head of Governance introduced the report and took members through each section of the audit plan.

The Head of Governance stated that interim procedures were in place at the Marine Hall and adequate support will be provided to the Marine Hall, Thornton Little Theatre, Fleetwood Market and the Tourist Information Centre. Time has been allocated for this in the audit plan.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2017/18 be approved.

Audit. 41 Risk Management Update

The Senior Auditor introduced the revised Risk Management Policy and explained that the policy is normally brought to the Audit Committee in September, however following the recent Strategic Risk Management workshop, it was agreed that the policy be reviewed to take account of the decision to review the risk action plans on a quarterly basis rather than 6 monthly as stated in policy.

The Senior Auditor then took the Committee through the strategic risk report, which had been published following the recent strategic risk workshop which was attended by the Audit Chairman in her capacity of risk champion. She explained that two new risks had been identified and that one risk had been removed. She then provided details of the seven risks that were above the council's risk appetite.

The Senior Auditor stated that in accordance with the council's risk management processes, a review of the directorate operational risk registers will be undertaken in March 2017, to review the risks currently recorded on the operational risk registers and to identify and prioritise any new risks facing each of the directorates in the delivery of their service plans for 2017/18.

RESOLVED that the amended Risk Management Policy and the annual Strategic Risk Management Review document be approved.

Audit. 42 Certification of Claims & Returns Annual Report 2015/16

The External Auditor introduced the report, which summarised the results of their work on the certification of Wyre Council's 2015/16 claims and returns namely, the Housing Benefit subsidy claim. He explained there were no issues or errors with the claim and they therefore certified the claim unqualified and without amendment.

RESOLVED: that the Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report for 2015/16 report be noted.

Audit. 43 External Audit Plan 2016/17

The External Auditor presented the report which describes how KPMG will deliver their audit work for Wyre Council and sets out their approach to the value for money arrangements work. He informed members of the recent changes at KPMG and the team that would be working with Wyre Council.

Councillor E Anderton requested that the plan be updated to reflect and show the monies given by Fleetwood Town Council towards the Coastal Protection Scheme. The External Auditor said he would amend the plan and reissue.

Resolved: That the External Audit Plan 2016/17 from KPMG, the External Auditors, be noted.

Audit. 44 Periodic private discussion with Head of Internal Audit

Audit Committee Members are provided annually with an opportunity to speak to the Head of Governance in confidence, in accordance with the Audit Committee work programme.

The Head of Finance, the Senior Auditor, the External Auditor and the Democratic Services Officer left the room for this item.

Audit. 45 Date and time of next meeting

Audit Committee Meeting, Tuesday 13 June 2017 at 6pm in the Council Chamber

The meeting started at 6pm and finished at 7.05pm, with an additional 30 minutes for the private discussion.

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