



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 15th NOVEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Councillor P Turner (Chair), Councillors R Ford (Vice-Chair),
D Cook and A Cooper

Officers Stefan Garner (Executive Director Finance), Joanne Goodfellow (Assistant Director Finance), Nicola Hesketh (Monitoring Officer) and Jo Hutchison (Senior Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer)

Guests Laurelin Griffiths (Grant Thornton) and William Guest (Grant Thornton)

44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Kingstone and S Daniels.

45 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2022 were approved as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor P Turner and seconded by Councillor A Cooper)

46 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of Interest.

47 AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT AND MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER

The Audit Findings Report and Management Representation Letter were presented by Ms Laurelin Griffiths from the External Auditors.

It was reported that the two main findings were (i) on the valuation of the Council's dwellings, which had resulted in one adjustment and (ii) on the valuation of the pension liability which was being worked through and expected to be relatively minor. The outstanding items were highlighted as set out in the Audit

Findings Report. The external auditors reported that they expected to be in a position to sign well before the statutory deadline of the 30 November 2022.

The Committee thanked the Officers for their work.

Following questions from Committee the External Auditors were requested to clarify the terminology used (at page 23 of the Report) regarding the updating of members on COVID spend.

RESOLVED that the Committee approved the Audit Findings Report, subject to the terminology being clarified regarding updating members on COVID spend, and approved the Management Representation Letter.

(Moved by Councillor P Turner and seconded by Councillor D Cook)

48 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS & REPORT 2021/22

The Executive Director, Finance presented the Report to approve the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2022 following completion of the external audit.

RESOLVED that members:

1. approved the Annual Statement of Accounts 2021/22;
2. delegated authority to the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee to approve any changes and re-sign the accounts, if necessary, once the audit was concluded by the external auditors.

(Moved by Councillor P Turner and seconded by Councillor A Cooper)

Councillor D Cook voted against the recommendations and requested that this be recorded in the minutes.

49 CODE OF CONDUCT REVIEW

The Monitoring Officer presented the Code of Conduct Review Report which updated members on new Local Government Association Model (LGA) Code of Conduct in response the recommendations made by the Office for Standards in Public Life so the Committee can consider whether to adopt it in full or in part, or to retain the Council's current Code of Conduct for Councillors ("Code of Conduct").

Members of the Committee requested that this item be deferred to a future meeting as certain links in the Report did not work.

50 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE TIMETABLE

The Committee reviewed the Timetable.

51 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That Members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor R Ford)

52 UPDATE FROM THE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

The Chair updated the Committee on the discussions and proposals from the Audit & Governance Sub-Committee meeting held on 3 November 2022 to include on this Committee's agenda the consideration of the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) Risk Register and to discontinue with the meetings of that sub-committee.

The Chair reported that as the FHSF project moved from concept to construction phase it would be appropriate for the monitoring of the project risks to be undertaken by the full Committee and the proposal would be to bring a Risk Report to the 9 February 2023 meeting.

RESOLVED that this Committee monitor the FHSF Risks and the future meetings of the Audit & Governance Sub-Committee be cancelled.

(Moved by Councillor P Turner and seconded by Councillor R Ford)

Chair