

(AGS.17)
Decisions to be considered by
Full Council on 11 December 2012

Minutes of the meeting of the AUDIT,
GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS
COMMITTEE held at 9.00am on Wednesday
31 October 2012 at the Civic Centre, Stone
Cross, Northallerton

Present

Councillor J N Smith (In the Chair)

Councillor	D E Adamson	Councillor	R W Hudson
	Mrs C S Cookman		M Rigby

Also in Attendance

Councillor	K G Hardisty	Councillor	M S Robson
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(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G W Dadd and Mrs B S Fortune. It was noted that Councillor Mrs B S Fortune was on official Council business.)

AGS.17

ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Resources presented the results of a review of the Committee's terms of reference.

A number of amendments were made in relation to the change in name from the North Yorkshire Audit Partnership to Veritau.

Alternative options considered:

None

The reason for the decision:

To fulfil the Audit Commission's good practice requirement to the annual review and incorporate the audit terms of reference suggested by CIPFA.

THE DECISION:

To recommend to Council that the:

- (1) annual review of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee's terms of reference be noted; and
- (2) terms of reference for the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee as set out in Annex A to the report be approved as amended.

The meeting closed at 10.15am

Chairman of the Committee

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AGS.18

MINUTES

THE DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 September 2012 (AGS.10 - AGS.16), previously circulated, be signed as a correct record.

AGS.19

REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT – REVIEW OF ACTIVITY

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Corporate Services presented a report advising the Committee that the Council, like many public authorities, was governed by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA). This Act ensured that public authorities complied with their obligations under the Human Rights Act when undertaking investigations which might interfere with the rights of individuals. The Act introduced safeguards on activities such as surveillance undertaken by public bodies. The Committee had now been given responsibility for RIPA matters. This would involve the Committee reviewing the Council's Policy Statement and receiving quarterly reports on any activities which had been authorised under RIPA.

From 1 November 2012 the Council would only be able to use RIPA for directed surveillance for potential criminal activity with a possible penalty of at least six months imprisonment. This meant that the Council could no longer use the procedure for low-level offences such as littering, dog control and fly-tipping. For serious offences the Council needed approval from a magistrate before it could use directed surveillance.

Alternative options considered:

None

The reason for the decision:

To comply with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)

THE DECISION:

That:

- (1) it be noted that no RIPA activity was undertaken by the Council during the period 1 August – 31 October 2012;
- (2) the Policy Statement be re-adopted.

AGS.20

ANNUAL REPORT TO CABINET ON AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES FOR 2011/12

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Resources presented a draft report which analysed the work undertaken by the Committee for the year to March 2012.

Members requested details of current performance against target for processing benefits claims.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reasons for the decision:

To agree the content of the draft report prior to submission to Cabinet.

THE DECISION:

That:

- (1) the report content as agreed be submitted to Cabinet;
- (2) details of current performance against target for processing benefits claims be provided to Members.

AGS.21

ANNUAL REPORT ON COUNTER FRAUD AND ANTI-CORRUPTION 2011/12

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Resources presented a report informing Members of the work that had been undertaken on Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption during 2011/12.

Members requested information relating to the number of fraud investigations currently open and the number resolved in the year to date. Members also suggested that consideration be given to the appropriateness of self insurance in response to the management actions agreed in the Veritau report on insurance.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reasons for the decision:

To receive information on the work undertaken as part of the Committee's work programme.

THE DECISION:

That:

- (1) the Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption work undertaken during the year to 31 March 2012 be noted;
- (2) information relating to the number of fraud investigations currently open and the number resolved in the year to date be provided to Members;
- (3) consideration be given to the appropriateness of self insurance in response to the management actions agreed in the Veritau report on insurance.

AGS.22

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2012/13

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Resources presented a report informing Members of progress made to date in delivering the Internal Audit Plan for 2012/13.

Veritau was making good progress in delivering the agreed internal audit plan and there were no significant delays anticipated. Six audits out of 29 had been completed to final report stage, which represented 21% of the plan completed. Based on work so far an opinion of Substantial Assurance could be given; however as the plan was still in progress, this opinion might change to reflect the findings emerging from audit reviews later in the year.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To take account of the work of Internal Audit to date.

THE DECISION:

That the work undertaken by Internal Audit in the year to date be noted.

The meeting closed at 10.15am

Chairman of the Committee