

Minutes of the meeting of the AUDIT,
GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE
held at 9.30 am on Wednesday, 28th January, 2015
at MAIN COMMITTEE ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE,
STONE CROSS, NORTHALLERTON

Present

Councillor R W Hudson (in the Chair)

Councillor	J N Smith	Councillor	M Rigby
	R A Baker		Mrs J Watson
	Mrs C Patmore		

Also in Attendance

Councillor M S Robson

AGS.24 **MINUTES**

THE DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 October 2014 (AGS.17 - AGS.23), previously circulated, be signed as a correct record.

AGS.25 **REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT - REVIEW OF ACTIVITY AND REVIEW OF POLICY**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Support Services and Deputy Chief Executive 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.

The Council's current Policy Statement on the use of powers under RIPA was reviewed and a minor change to the reference to the Director of Corporate Services being replaced by the Director of Support Services and Deputy Chief Executive was recommended.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

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

THE DECISION:

That:-

- (1) the current Policy on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act be approved with the proposed amendment; and
- (2) it be noted that no RIPA authorisations were made by the Council during the period 1 October – 31 December 2014.

AGS.26 **STATUTORY AUDITOR - ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2013/14**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Support Services and Deputy Chief Executive presented a report on the External Auditor's Annual Audit Letter on the 2013/14 Audit, a copy of which was attached as Annex 'A' to the report.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To take account of the External Auditor's audit and inspection work for the financial year 2013/14.

THE DECISION:

That the External Auditor's Annual Audit Letter on the 2013/14 Audit be received.

AGS.27 **INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2014/15**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Support Services and Deputy Chief Executive presented a report informing Members of progress made to date in delivering the Internal Audit Plan for 2014/15.

Veritau North Yorkshire (VNY) had completed 7 out of 20 internal audit reviews to final report stage and a further 9 audits were in progress with 2 close to draft report stage.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To take account of the statutory requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

THE DECISION:

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

AGS.28 **STATUTORY AUDITOR - QUARTERLY UPDATE**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Support Services and Deputy Chief Executive presented a report which provided an update on the Council's statutory auditor, Deloitte's, activities to date.

A representative from Deloitte attended the meeting to provide the update and answer questions.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To take account of the work undertaken to date by the Council's statutory auditor.

THE DECISION:

That the quarterly update from the auditor be noted.

AGS.29 **INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Support Services and Deputy Chief Executive reported that the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) which had been in place since April 2013 required the Council to adopt an audit charter setting out the purpose, authority and responsibility of internal audit. The Audit Charter had been approved by the Committee in March 2014 and a review of the Charter had been completed. A minor change was considered necessary to clarify the fact that auditors would not be assigned new review areas where they had any direct operational or managerial involvement within the last year. A copy of the updated Charter was attached to the report.

It was considered that the proposed Internal Audit Charter gave sufficient assurance to the Council that the internal audit service delivered by Veritau would comply with the revised standards.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To take account of the statutory requirement regarding the provision of Internal Audit under the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

THE DECISION:

That the Internal Audit Charter, as amended, be approved.

AGS.30 **REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Support Services and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report which set out the Council's risk management process which included a comprehensive risk register. The risk register was divided into operational and strategic risks; operational risks were those affecting individual services and tended to involve the day to day running of those services, whilst strategic risks affected the whole Council and were wide reaching, both in terms of timescales and impact. The Committee was asked to review these risks.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

A critical purpose of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee was to monitor the Strategic Risks affecting the Council ensuring that these were appropriately measured and that suitable actions were undertaken to mitigate the effect of each risk.

THE DECISION:

That the strategic risks affecting the Council and the actions that are in place to mitigate the impact upon the Council of each risk be noted.

The meeting closed at 9.50 am

Chairman of the Committee