

Minutes of the meeting of the AUDIT,
GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE
held at 9.30 am on Tuesday, 22nd March, 2016 at
MAIN COMMITTEE ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE,
STONE CROSS, NORTHALLERTON

Present

Councillor R W Hudson (in the Chair)

Councillor	R A Baker	Councillor	R Kirk
	Mrs C S Cookman		Mrs J Watson

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C Patmore

AGS.27 **MINUTES**

THE DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 February 2016 (AGS.21 - AGS.26), previously circulated, be signed as a correct record.

AGS.28 **REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT - REVIEW OF ACTIVITY**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Head of Service Resources (Section 151 Officer) 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 from time to time and receiving quarterly reports on any activities which had been authorised under RIPA.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

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

THE DECISION:

That it be noted that no RIPA authorisations were made by the Council during the period 17 February to 22 March 2016.

AGS.29 **INTERNAL AUDIT THIRD PROGRESS REPORT 2015/16**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Head of Service – Resources (S151 Officer) presented a report informing Members of progress made to date in delivering the Internal Audit Plan for 2015/16 and any developments likely to have an impact on the plan throughout the remainder of the financial year.

In the period between 1 April 2015 and 26 February 2016, Veritau had completed eight audit reports to final report stage. Two reports on Payroll and Leisure Centre Cash collection had been finalised since the last report to Committee. Four draft reports had been issued on Website Management, Housing Benefits, Council Tax/NNDR and Contract Management. Work was ongoing on all other audits.

It was confirmed that the remaining reports were targeted to be finalised in May 2016 and reported at the June 2016 Committee. Clarification was given that in future reports would include further detail of actions being taken by Departments as a result of findings in the internal audit reports.

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.30 **INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN FOR 2016/17**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Head of Service - Resources (S151 Officer) submitted a report presenting the proposed Internal Audit Plan for the financial year 2016/17.

Members discussed the number of days allocated in the plan, where they wanted a better understanding of days allocated to specific audits and requested that further information was required as to the process of creating the audit plan.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To take account of the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the Council's Audit Charter.

THE DECISION:

That the Internal Audit Plan for 2016/17 be approved, subject to a further report being brought to the June 2016 meeting setting out the process involved in forming the Audit plan including a comparison of audit plans from previous years.

AGS.31 **REVIEW OF ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2016/17**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Head of Service – Resources (S151 Officer) presented the Council’s Treasury Management Strategy for the forthcoming year 2016/17 for review.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To ensure the Committee fulfils its terms of reference and scrutiny role in relation to Treasury Management.

THE DECISION:

That:-

- (a) the Council’s Treasury Management Strategy for 2016/17 be accepted; and
- (b) training on treasury management be held during 2016/17.

AGS.32 **STATUTORY AUDITOR - ANNUAL GRANT CLAIMS AND RETURNS 2015/16**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Head of Service – Resources (S151 Officer) presented the Statutory Auditor’s Annual Grant Claims and Returns for 2014/15.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To take account of the Statutory Auditor’s Annual Grant Claims and Returns Report for 2014/15.

THE DECISION:

That the Statutory Auditor’s Annual Grant Claims and Returns Report for 2014/15 be received.

AGS.33 **REPORTING PROGRAMME 2016/17**

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Head of Service – Resources (S151 Officer) presented a report which identified those reports which the Committee wished to receive on a structured basis.

In addition, the Annual External Audit report was requested for the January 2017 meeting and training on final accounts and treasury management being scheduled for after the meetings in June 2016 and October 2016 respectively.

Members also discussed the best practice approach of meeting external and Internal audit on an annual basis without the presence of Officers.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To identify which reports the Committee wished to receive on a structured basis.

THE DECISION:

That the report programme set out in Annex A of the report be approved, including the annual external audit report at the January 2017 Committee and training on final accounts and treasury management to be scheduled after the meetings in June 2016 and October 2016 respectively. Also, Members to meet with external and internal audit without the presence of Officers subsequent to the September 2016 meeting.

The meeting closed at 10.20 am

Chairman of the Committee