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Minutes of the meeting of the Audit,
Governance and Standards Committee held
at 1.30 pm on Tuesday, 5th October, 2021
at Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Stone
Cross, Rotary Way, Northallerton, DL6 2UU

Present

Councillor N A Knapton (in the Chair)

Councillor P Atkin Councillor K G Hardisty
D B Elders

Also in Attendance

Councillor M S Robson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Bardon,
Mrs B S Fortune and R W Hudson

AGS.10 Minutes

The decision:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 July 2021 (AGS.3 - AGS.7), previously circulated, be signed as a correct record.

AGS.11 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act - Review of Activity

The subject of the decision:

The Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) submitted 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 been given responsibility for RIPA matters. This would involve the Committee reviewing the Council's Policy Statement from time to time and receiving bi-annual 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 23 March to 5 October 2021.

AGS.12 Annual Review of Risk Management

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Interim Director of Finance (s151 Officer) presented a report which provided the Committee with an annual review of the Council's risk management process.

The Committee enquired as to whether working from home was included within the corporate health and safety risks. The Committee was advised that there were appropriate policies in place regarding working from home and that the inclusion of this as a corporate risk would be reviewed and updated accordingly.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To comply with the Committee's Terms of Reference as detailed within the Constitution.

The decision:

That the Committee note the Corporate Risks, the Key Corporate Project Risks and the Service Risks with a net risk threshold of 12 or above attached at Annex A, B and C of the report respectively.

AGS.13 Internal Audit First Progress Report 2021/22

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) presented a report providing an update on audit work planned and undertaken, and counter fraud activity.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

To take account of the statutory requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

The decision:

That the work undertaken by Internal Audit and the Counter Fraud Team in the year to date be noted.

Note: Councillor M S Robson left the meeting at 2.10pm

AGS.14 Counter Fraud Framework Update

All Wards

The subject of the decision:

The Interim Director of Finance (s151 Officer) submitted a report which presented a review on the Council's counter fraud framework, updated the counter fraud strategy action plan, and presented a revised fraud risk assessment.

The Committee asked questions regarding whistleblowing which were responded to at the meeting and where further information was requested, it was agreed that this would be provided at the appropriate time.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reasons for the decision:

The Committee was satisfied with progress on the actions set out in the Counter Fraud and Corruption Strategy and the preventative measures introduced within the Counter Fraud Risk Assessment to reduce the risk of fraud.

The decision:

That the Council's updated counter fraud framework with associated action plan and the updated Counter Fraud Risk Assessment be noted.

The meeting closed at 2.22 pm

Chairman of the Committee

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