

Cherwell District Council

Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 26 March 2014 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Trevor Stevens (Chairman)
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence: Councillor Ray Jelf
Councillor Rose Stratford

Officers: Nicola Jackson, Corporate Finance Manager
Denise Taylor, Corporate Accountant
Claire Taylor, Business Transformation Manager
Chris Dickens, Chief Internal Auditor
Gavin Lane, Democratic and Elections Officer

58 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

59 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no Petitions or Requests to Address the Meeting.

60 **Urgent Business**

In accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman ruled that a verbal report on a recent error in Council Tax billing should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Resolved

- (1) That officers be requested to submit a report to the next meeting on the recent error in Council Tax billing (produced by an external supplier). The report will outline what, when and how it occurred, how much officer time was spent in resolving the error and the number of complaints from residents.

61 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 January 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

62 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's Announcements.

63 **External Audit: Audit Commission Fraud Briefing**

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement on the Audit Commission fraud briefing.

Resolved

- (1) That the content of the presentation be noted.
- (2) That an item be added to the Committee Work Programme on how the Council engages with local housing associations and partners to tackle social housing fraud.

64 **Anti-Fraud and Corruption Plus Whistleblowing Update**

The Committee considered a verbal update of the Corporate Finance Manager on anti-fraud and corruption activities as well as whistleblowing.

Resolved

- (1) That the verbal update be noted.

65 **Risk Strategy Update 2014-15**

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement on the updated Council risk strategy for 2014/15.

Resolved

- (1) That the Risk Strategy 2014/15 be agreed.

66 **Review of Draft Accounting Policies 2013-14 and Closedown Update**

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement on the review of draft accounting policies and closedown for 2013-14.

Resolved

- (1) That the Draft Accounting Policies 2013-14 be approved.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement to make any further changes to the Draft Accounting Policies 2013-14 in preparation for the forthcoming accounts closure for 2013-14.
- (3) That the Closedown Timetable Summary 2013-14 be noted.

67 **External Audit Progress Update 2013-14 and Local Government Sector Briefing**

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement on the work of External Audit and the Local Government Sector Briefing.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.

68 **Internal Audit Progress Report 2013-14 and Internal Audit Plan 2014-15**

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement that summarised its Internal Audit work since its last meeting in January.

Resolved

- (1) That the content of the Internal Audit Progress Report 2013-14 be noted.
- (2) That the detail of the Internal Audit Risk Assessment and Plan 2014/15 be noted.

69 **Use of Purchase Orders**

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement on the Council's use of Purchase Orders.

Resolved

- (1) That the progress made by the Council in improving the use of Purchase Orders be noted.

70 **Review of Committee Work Programme**

The Committee considered its Work Programme 2013/14.

Resolved

- (1) That the Work Programme be amended as follows:
 - (a) the 'Statement of Accounts Review' and 'Statement of Accounts Approval' would be considered by the meeting on 25 June 2014.
 - (b) a report on the recent error in Council Tax billing be added to the Work Programme for the meeting on 25 June 2014.
 - (c) a progress report on the Use of Purchase Orders be added to the Work Programme for the meeting on 17 September 2014.
 - (d) a report on how the Council engages with local housing associations and partners to tackle social housing fraud be added to the Work Programme.

The meeting ended at 8.20 pm

Chairman:

Date: