

## **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 2015 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes (Chairman)

Councillor Ray Jelf  
Councillor Barry Richards  
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies  
for  
absence: Councillor Dan Sames  
Councillor Nicholas Mawer  
Councillor Lawrie Stratford  
Councillor Douglas Williamson

Officers: Paul Sutton, Head of Finance and Procurement  
Chris Dickens, Chief Internal Auditor  
Louise Tustian, Acting Corporate Performance and Insight  
Manager  
Belinda Green, Benefits Manager  
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections  
Sharon Hickson, Assistant Democratic and Elections Officer

#### 54 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of Interest.

#### 55 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

#### 56 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

#### 57 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 January 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 58 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following Announcements.

1. Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the public were permitted to film, broadcast and report on the meeting, subject to the efficient running of the meeting not being affected.
2. Councillors were requested to remain after closure of the meeting for a Council Tax Reduction update.

59 **External Audit: Annual Audit Plan 2014-15 and Local Government Sector Briefing**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Finance and Procurement which presented the External Auditors Annual Audit Plan 2014-15 and Local Government Sector Briefing.

In presenting the report the Director, Ernst and Young, informed members that there were no significant issues to report and provided an overview of the future areas External Audit would focus their audit plan on; group accounts for Graven Hill, the Council's capital programme, further joint working and the new financial management system, attention would also be given to the new ledger.

Members were advised that the 2015-2016 audit fee was still in the process of being agreed, the additional work required for the Councils group accounts would be reflected in the final fee.

In response to Members' questions the Head of Finance and Procurement confirmed that best endeavours would be made to ensure the Assets Register was correct and up to date.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the Ernst Young's report be noted.

60 **Internal Audit - Progress Report 2014-15 and Draft Internal Audit Plan 2015-16**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Finance and Procurement which presented the Internal Audit Progress report 2014-15 and Draft Internal Audit Plan 2015-16

In presenting the report, the Chief Internal Auditor advised the Committee that the scope for the new financial system had now been agreed. Members were advised that the review of Risk Management had been completed with no significant issues to report.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the contents of the 2014-15 progress report be noted.
- (2) That the details of the 2015-16 Draft Internal Audit Plan be noted.

61 **Closedown Update 2014-15**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Finance and Procurement which presented the Internal Audit Progress report 2014-15 and Draft Internal Audit Plan 2015-16

The Head of Finance and Procurement advised Members that he would manage the closedown project working closely with the Corporate Accountant and Auditors.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the closedown timetable summary as set out be approved.
- (2) That the response to external to external audits request for management assurances from those charged with Governance (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

62 **Third Quarter Risk Review**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Transformation and Acting Corporate Performance Manager on the management of Strategic, Corporate and Partnership Risks during the third quarter of 2014/15.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the report be noted.

63 **Corporate Fraud Team**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Finance and Procurement introducing the new joint Corporate Fraud team including the team's business plan for 2015-16.

In presenting the report the Benefits Manager updated Members on the progress of new joint Corporate Fraud team following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud investigation to the Department for Work and Pensions under the Single Fraud Investigation Service. The Benefits Manager informed Members that for the first six months the team would be bedding in, raising awareness of corporate fraud and establishing internal and external partnerships. Team targets for 2015-16 would be reviewed and monitored on a monthly basis.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) That the changes to the joint Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy be endorsed.
- (3) That the changes to the joint Whistleblowing Policy be endorsed.

64 **Work Programme 2015-2016**

The Committee considered its work programme 2015/16.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the Work Programme 2015-16 be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm

Chairman:

Date: