

Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee Meeting held on 13 September 2021

Present: Mike Worthington (Chairman)

Attendance

Carolyn Trowbridge (Vice-Chairman)	Phil Hewitt
Bernard Williams	Graham Hutton
Ann Edgeller	Bernard Peters
Richard Ford	Janice Silvester-Hall
Philippa Haden	Arshad Afsar

Also in attendance: Lisa Andrews (all Items), Debbie Harris (all Items), and Ann-Marie Davidson (all Items).

Hassan Rohimun and Jason Burgess (Ernst and Young, External Auditors) (Item 4). Cabinet Member Cllr David Williams (Highways and Transport), David Walters, Richard Harris (Amey) (item 9); Cabinet Member Cllr Jonathan Price (Education & SEND), Louise Clayton, Dominic Davidson (item 10 and 11); Tim Cooper (Item 12); Kerry Dove (Item 13); Jo Cowcher (Item 14); and Steve Lycett (Item 15).

Apologies: Ross Ward and James Salisbury

PART ONE

92. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Arshad Afsar informed the Committee that he had taken advice from the Monitoring Officer and that he did not have to declare an interest in report items 10 and 11.

93. Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th July 2021

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on the 13 July 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

94. Annual Audit Letter 2019/20

Hassan Rohimun introduced the report from Ernst and Young summarising the key findings of their work following completion of the audit procedures for the year ending 31 March 2021.

Members felt that it would have been useful to see past information on audit fees for SCC and the Pension fund to put audit fee increases into context. It was reported that this information was available and would be circulated to the Committee for information.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report be received.
- b) That the Committee be provided with past financial information on the audit fees for both SCC and the pension fund as discussed at the meeting.
- c) That the Committee be provided with clarification of when the follow-up Ofsted & CQC inspection is scheduled for regarding SEND services.

95. Changes to the Constitution - Number of Questions by Members at Full Council

Anne Marie Davidson attended the Committee and presented the report of the Director of Corporate Services. The current maximum number of questions that could be submitted by Elected Members to the Council meeting, under Standing Order 8, was currently 2 per member per meeting. It was suggested that the limit be revised to a maximum of 1 question per member per meeting thus enabling more members to ask questions.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report be received.
- b) That paragraph 8.3 of Section 12 (Procedural Standing Orders) of the Council's Constitution be amended to limit the maximum number of questions that may be submitted by a member to one rather than the current two. The wording of paragraph 8.3 would then read: "Each Member may submit a maximum of one question each, however only the first 15 questions received by the Director for Corporate Services before the deadline will be dealt with at the meeting. All other questions would receive a written answer.

96. Forward Plan 2021/22

Lisa Andrews presented the Committees Forward Plan. Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Committee would be on 26 October 2021. The current list of report items were listed in the report.

RESOLVED: That the Forward Plan be noted.

97. Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated.

The Committee proceeded to consider the following items:

98. Exempt minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2021

RESOLVED: The exempt minutes of the meeting held on the 13 July 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

99. Infrastructure + Contract Quality Systems - Final Audit Report 2020-21

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report be received
- b) That progress on the implementation of the audit recommendations be noted and continue to be monitored and an update report on recommendations implemented would be brought back to the Committee for the February 2022 meeting by the Service.

100. Taxi Compliance Exercise - Use of PPN 02/20 COVID 19 Supplier Relief Payments By A Taxi Operator - Special Investigation Report 2020/21

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report be received
- b) That progress on the implementation of the audit recommendations be noted and continue to be monitored and reviewed in February 2022 by the Committee. The service to present a progress report on the implementation of recommendations at the February 2022 committee meeting.

101. Counter Fraud Proactive Exercise: School Transport Taxi Payments - Final Audit Report 2020/21

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report be received
- b) That progress on the implementation of the audit recommendations be noted and continue to be monitored and reviewed in February 2022 by the Committee. The service to present a progress report on the implementation of recommendations at the February 2022 committee meeting.

102. Climate Change - Final Audit Report 2020/21

RESOLVED: That the report be received

103. Digital Programme - Value - Final Audit Report 2020/21

RESOLVED: That the progress made against the original audit report and recommendations be noted.

104. Adult Social Care Pathway - Final Audit Report 2020/21

RESOLVED: That the report be received

105. Proactive Counter Fraud - Purchasing Card Cash Withdrawals Follow Up Final Audit Report 2021/22

RESOLVED: That the report be received and the control failings report associated with the significant fraud be presented at the Committee in October 2021.

Chairman