

Minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

**19th October, 2017 at 5.00pm
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

Present: Councillor Preece (Chair);
Mr Ager (Vice - Chair and Independent
Member);
Councillors Allcock, Gavan and Dr Jaron.

Apologies: Councillors Jarvis, Piper and Sandars.

13/17 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 17th August, 2017, be confirmed as a correct record.

14/17 Code of Corporate Governance

The Committee gave consideration to the Code of Corporate Governance which had been recently updated following guidance from CIPFA. This guidance had been used to refresh the existing Code and to ensure it considered Sandwell's 2030 Vision.

The Code of Corporate Governance had been reviewed by the Corporate Governance Board and each Service Director.

The Committee agreed that the Code was fit for purpose and should be submitted to Cabinet.

Resolved that the updated Code of Corporate Governance be presented to Cabinet.

15/17 Strategic Risk Register Update

The Committee gave consideration to the Council's Strategic Risk Register in order to gain assurance that risks to the delivery of the Council's key priorities were being managed.

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Members were updated as to new risks, which included the challenge to maximise opportunities from the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Council's Vision 2030. Further information relating to these two areas would be provided to the Committee at the next meeting.

The Committee was also updated on three matters that had been raised at the previous meeting in respect of Cyber Security Strategy, Emergency Planning, and the implementation of GDPR. Ongoing work was taking place in order assess and mitigate these risks. Further information would be presented to the Committee as these areas progressed.

16/17 Internal Audit Charter

It was reported that there was a statutory requirement for the provision of internal audit work in accordance with the proper audit practices. Those practices were effectively the public sector internal audit standards, which were reflected in the Council's Internal Audit Charter.

The charter was reviewed every twelve months. There had been no changes made since the last review.

Resolved that the Internal Audit Charter be approved.

17/17 Internal Audit Progress Report

The Committee considered the Internal Audit Progress Report which summarised areas of work covered by Audit Services for the period ending **31st October, 2017**.

The report updated the Committee on progress made against the delivery of the 2018/19 Internal Audit Plan and gave details of the performance of the internal audit service.

The Audit Service Manager informed the Committee that relevant staff training had taken place to address fraud as a specific area of risk, and results had so far been positive.

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The Audit Service Manager advised that relevant staff training had taken place to address fraud as a specific area of risk, and results had so far been positive.

18/17 Counter Fraud Update

The Committee received the Interim Counter Fraud Report which provided an update on counter fraud activities and undertaken by the Counter Fraud Unit with Audit Services.

The Committee congratulated the Counter Fraud Unit on their work to deliver an effective counter prevention and detection of fraud service.

19/17 Recruitment of Independent Member to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee considered the process to appoint an independent member.

It was proposed to advertise the vacancy during November 2017 and an appointment be made to seek approval from Council in January 2018.

20/17 Work Programme 2017/18

The Committee noted the work programme for 2017/18.

(Meeting ended at 5.55pm)

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