

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,
KIDDERMINSTER**

29TH SEPTEMBER 2014 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: T L Onslow (Chairman), J A Hart (Vice-Chairman), J Holden, L Hyde, M B Kelly, J W Parish, J Phillips and C Rogers.

Observers:

Councillors: P W Wooldridge and M J Wrench.

AUD.12 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence

AUD.12 Appointment of Substitutes

There were no appointed substitutes.

AUD.14 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

AUD.15 Minutes

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting held on 30th June 2014 be confirmed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

AUD.16 Audit Findings Report for Wyre Forest District Council – Report 2013/14 Final Account

The Committee received a report from Grant Thornton detailing the findings of the audit of accounts for 2013/14.

Members were taken through the report and advised that the audit had gone well and Officers were thanked for their contribution and help. There was one minor area to report which was a slight understatement of income for housing benefit but this was not an area for concern.

In response to a Member question regarding the large number of users who had access as a system administrator for ICT, Grant Thornton had recommended a review of this in 12 months time but this had been benchmarked against other councils.

Members queried why the Key indicators of performance in the Value for Money was only adequate. Grant Thornton advised that it was audit terminology and there was nothing to be concerned about. In addition, the £1.5m of reserves referred to increasing revenue reserves.

Agreed: The report be noted.

AUD.17 Statement of Accounts 2013/14

The Committee received a report from the Chief Financial Officer on the Statement of Accounts 2013/14.

Members were taken through the report and advised that the full Final Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 had been sent electronically to all Members but a hard copy would be made available if Members wished to have one.

In response to a Member query regarding the contribution to reserves of £127K, the Chief Financial Officer replied that during the reconciliation of accounts it was found that additional housing benefits debtors had been recovered.

Members were also informed that the Council had received £62K from Bellwin Grant in respect of the flooding suffered during the first few months of 2014. The Council had also made a provision for NNDR Appeals in case any appeals be received as this was an unknown quantity.

Members attention was drawn to the movement in reserves and the comprehensive income statement in the full Statement of Accounts.

Members were advised that the heritage assets included artefacts and the clock tower, a list was available that could be circulated to Members.

In response to a Member question, Members were informed that the loans the Council had taken out were in respect of borrowing requirements for the new cemetery, the State of Area Debate and also replacement of vehicles.

Agreed:

- 1. The Revised Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 be approved.**
- 2. The Letter of Representation for 2013/14 attached at Appendix 1 of the report to the Audit Committee be approved.**

AUD.18 Internal Audit Monitoring Report Quarter Ending 30th June 2014

The Committee received a report from the Section 151 Officer /Principal Auditor which informed Members of the Internal Monitoring Report for the quarter ended 30th June 2014.

Members were taken through the report and the Principal Auditor highlighted reports which had been finalised in the quarter, all of which had achieve "full" or "some" assurance. Members attention was drawn to Section 4 – follow up

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reviews in that there were no recommendations implemented for Corporate Creditors as these now formed part of the Finance Intervention which commenced in April 2014 and would be reviewed as part of this.

With regard to the audit consultancy a member asked about the debtors query and were advised that bi monthly invoices were raised for rent and utilities but Bewdley Museum also had a profit sharing scenario with the Cafe where they would invoice at year end.

Agreed: The Internal Audit Monitoring Report for the Quarter ended 30th June 2014 as detailed in the Appendix to the report of the Audit Committee be considered.

AUD.19 Risk Management – Corporate Risk Register

The Committee received a report from the Chief Financial Officer which provided an update on the Corporate Risk Register.

Members were taken through the report and the following points were highlighted:

- a. CORPRISK01 – The Council paid a subscription to the LGA but it was perceived if the Council were in the position of a “hung” Council, then any extra costs would be kept to the lowest level possible together with any advice needed.
- b. CORPRISK05 – Members would be updated regularly regarding the budget and updates would be given at the Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel.
- c. CORPRISK11 – A Member queried training for Members and asked for Chairmanship skills to be arranged. The Chief Financial Officer agreed to follow this up.

Following a request at the last Audit Committee meeting asking for service managers to attend the meeting, the Chief Financial Officer reported that she had spoken to the Chief Internal Auditor at Worcestershire County Council to go through their practices and procedures and they appeared to be similar to the Council's. They only called upon managers to attend the meetings if there were serious concerns on the risk register.

Agreed:

- 1. The Corporate Risk Register and the associated mitigating actions as at 31st July 2014 be considered and noted.**
- 2. The Chief Financial Officer to follow up Chairmanship training for Members.**

The meeting ended at 18.52 pm.