

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

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

27TH NOVEMBER 2019 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: A Totty (Chairman), S E N Rook (Vice-Chairman), V Caulfield, B S Dawes, N J Desmond, A L L'Huillier, C Rogers and P W M Young.

Bodrul Zzaman – Independent Person

Observers:

Councillor G W Ballinger.

AUD.19 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

AUD.20 Appointment of Substitutes

No substitutes were appointed.

AUD.21 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

AUD.22 Minutes

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting held on 29th July 2019 be confirmed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

AUD.23 Audit Progress Report

The Committee received an audit progress report from Grant Thornton (GT) Engagement Lead, for the 2019/20 audit. He asked Members to be aware of an error on page 12 of the report which should have referred to the audit of the Council's 2019/20 financial statements. The Engagement Lead then took Members through each page of the report updating on value for money arrangements and informing Members that the complex area of the Housing Benefit Subsidy claim was on target to be signed well before the deadline. The Audit Fees had been assessed to take into account the areas of increased reporting that needed to be completed to satisfy the regulator and full details of fees were provided in the report. Information was provided on the progress made by Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) and a sector update was given. There was agreement that the use of public money needed to be transparent and fully accountability evidenced.

The Audit Progress Report was noted by the Committee.

AUD.24 Annual Audit Letter for Wyre Forest District Council – 2018/19 Accounts

The Committee received the Annual Audit Letter from the Grant Thornton Engagement Lead confirming the findings of the audit of accounts for 2018/19.

The Annual Audit letter was noted by the Committee.

AUD.25 Internal Audit Monitoring Report Quarter Ended 30th September 2019

The Committee received a report from the Audit Manager and the S151 Officer which informed Members of the Internal Monitoring report for the quarter ended 30th September 2019. The work of the internal audit team was still ongoing but the report was very positive and included the process review of Members allowances that was currently being undertaken. An update was given on the work in progress status, and the chart explained in more detail; Members were informed that this would be covered in more depth at the March meeting following the completion of the annual plan. The Audit Manager gave an update on the performance against the annual plan for the financial year 2019/20 and was happy to inform Members that they were on track to achieve 95% of the audit plan.

Members asked questions about the number of enquires received over the last 3 years and the Audit Manager explained these figures, and the nature of the enquires, where processes had changed.

Councillor Desmond queried the work in progress reporting and the importance of the Audit Committee focusing on issues that had been outstanding for more than 3 months. The Audit Manager assured him that any major issues would be raised with the Audit Committee or CLT and that any recommendations would get a full audit report, detailing any improvements put into place. The Corporate Director: Resources added further explanation of the process for reporting to the Audit Committee.

Agreed: The Audit Committee considered the Internal Audit Monitoring Report for the Quarter ended 30th September 2019 as detailed in the Appendix to the report.

AUD.26 Risk Management

The Committee received a report from the S151 Officer which informed them of the current Corporate Risk register and the Budget Risk Matrix. The report centred on the corporate risk register and is brought to Committee twice a year. The Corporate Director: Resources stressed the importance of reporting on the risk register in the current financial climate, particularly given the challenges for achieving long term financial stability.

Members were informed that a new Financial Management Code had been recently launched and more information would become available in the next year's cycle of reporting.

The Corporate Director: Resources then took Members through each of the

Agenda Item No. 4

corporate risks in detail answering questions and clarifying points on each risk. She informed Members that the due date for demonstrating robust and focussed leadership in all transformation activity should have been 31st March 2020 and the status should have shown a green triangle. Discussion took place around the ICT risks and Members were informed that new insurance policies had been sourced that gave more extensive cover for potential cyber attacks on key systems.

Agreed: The Audit Committee considered and noted the Corporate Risk Register and the associated mitigating actions as at 30th September 2019 and the 2019-22 Budget Risk Matrix.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6:56pm.