

Decisions of the Audit Committee

28 January 2016

Members Present:-

Councillor Brian Salinger (Chairman)
Councillor Sury Khatri (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Geof Cooke Councillor Peter Zinkin
Councillor Kathy Levine
Councillor Arjun Mittra
Councillor Gabriel Rozenberg

Also in attendance
Geraldine Chadwick (Independent Member)
Richard Harbord (Independent Member)

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2015 be approved as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS (IF ANY)

There were none.

3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS (IF ANY)

Councillor Geof Cooke declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 8, CAFT Q3 Progress Report: October - December 2015, as his children attend East Barnet School.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

Details of the questions asked and the published answers were provided with the agenda papers for the meeting. Verbal responses were given to supplementary questions at the meeting.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

None.

7. INTERNAL AUDIT EXCEPTION RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT AND PROGRESS REPORT UP TO 31ST DECEMBER 2015

The Head of Internal Audit introduced the report. The Committee discussed the report and asked questions to the relevant Director(s), or their representatives, on the audits that received limited or no assurance reports, including Street Scene Operations, the Better Care Fund and Section 75 agreements, Compliance with Contract Procedure Rules, Accounts Payable and Client Affairs.

The Committee discussed the 'Recruitment – conflicts of Interest' and 'Workforce Management – Governance Arrangements' issues identified in the no assurance audit opinion of the Street Scene Operations Review. The HR Director CSG agreed the new process to review job application forms regarding declarations of interest or close relatives would be piloted for 6 months (as opposed to 2 years) before the outcome is reported to the Audit Committee.

The HR Director CSG responded to Members' questions regarding whether the issues uncovered could attest to wider weaknesses in HR procedures. In particular it was noted that robust monitoring needs to be in place to ensure policies are being implemented across the Council. The Committee requested that these matters be brought to the attention of the Performance and Contract Management Committee to determine whether there are contract compliance issues which need attention.

RESOLVED – That the Committee note the work completed to date on the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2015-16 and progress against high priority recommendations

8. CORPORATE ANTI-FRAUD TEAM (CAFT) PROGRESS REPORT Q3 OCTOBER 2015 - DECEMBER 2015

The Assurance Assistant Director introduced the report.

RESOLVED - That the Committee note the CAFT Progress Report covering the period 1st October 2015 – 31st December 2015.

9. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2014/2015

The Assistant Director of Finance, CSG presented the report.

RESOLVED - That the External Auditor's Annual Audit Letter for 2014/2015 be accepted as a reasonable statement on the Council's position in respect of the Audit of the Accounts, Financial Performance, Value for Money and Financial Resilience.

10. GRANTS CERTIFICATION WORK REPORT 2014/2015

The Assistant Director of Finance, CSG presented the report.

RESOLVED –

- 1. That the Committee note the report.**
- 2. That the matters raised by the External Auditors relating to the grant submission and certification process are noted by the Committee.**

11. EXTERNAL AUDITOR PROGRESS REPORT

Leigh Lloyd Thomas and Jody Etherington from BDO presented the report.

RESOLVED - That the Committee note the content of Appendix A.

12. AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the forward work programme 2015-16.

13. ANY ITEM(S) THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

The meeting finished at 9.02 pm