

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Notes of a meeting of the Audit Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne, on Wednesday, 24th January 2024 at 14:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:- Councillor Duncan Haywood and Tom Munro (Chair).

Officers:- Jim Fieldsend (Monitoring Officer), Theresa Fletcher (Section 151 Officer), Jenny Williams (Head of Internal Audit Consortium), Pam Brown (Director of Executive Corporate Services and Public Partnerships), Ken Eastwood (Joint Assistant Director of Environmental Health), Deborah Whallett (Housing Enforcement Manager), and Alison Bluff (Governance).

As only two Members were present, this meeting of the Audit Committee was not quorate. However, as only the Minutes of the last meeting and the Work Programme 2023/24 required a formal decision, Members agreed to proceed with the meeting for the other items for information and discussion. The Minutes of the last meeting and the Work Programme 2023/24 would be ratified at the next meeting.

A APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chris Kane and Carol Wood.

B URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

C DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

D MINUTES – 27TH NOVEMBER 2023

AGREED that the minutes of a meeting of the Audit Committee held on 27th November 2023 be deferred for approval at the next meeting.

E AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023-2024

AGREED that the Audit Committee Work Programme 2023-2024 be deferred for approval at the next meeting.

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F EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

AGREED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

G SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ON THE 2023/24 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

Members considered a report which provided information relating to progress in respect of the 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan.

Appendix 1 to the report provided a summary of reports issued during September to December 2023, in respect of the 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan. The Appendix showed for each report the level of assurance given and the number of recommendations made / agreed where a full response had been received. This provided an overall assessment of the system's ability to meet its objectives and manage risk. The definitions of the assurance levels used were set out in a table in the report. The assurance levels had also now been linked to definitions of risk within the risk management strategy.

It had previously been agreed that Audit Committee would see full copies of any Limited or Inadequate internal audit reports.

During this period, 7 reports had been issued; 4 with Substantial Assurance, 1 with Reasonable Assurance and 2 with Limited Assurance.

Attached at Appendix 2 to the report was a Limited Assurance Internal Audit report. The key points arising from this audit were set out in the report
Attached at Appendix 3 to the report was a second Limited Assurance Internal Audit report. The key points arising from this audit were set out in the report
No issues arising relating to fraud were identified.

Appendix 4 to the report provided full details of the audits completed and those in progress. The Head of Internal Audit Consortium advised Committee that the plan would not be completed, as a member of staff had been on long-term sickness and had now left. However, further to a recruitment process, a new auditor would start in post at the end of March. Any audits not completed would roll over to the 2024/205 plan.

In relation to the first Limited Assurance Internal Audit report, the Assistant Director of Environmental Health provided an update to Committee in terms of progress against the recommendations. All the recommendations had been implemented, however, some small issues remained. He also stated that he wished to put on record his thanks to the Internal Auditor, Sharon Lynch, as this was a complex area, and she had carried out excellent work in understanding and helping the team realise what needed to be done.

The Chair thanked the officer for the update.

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Member's raised various questions to which the Assistant Director of Environmental Health responded.

With regard to the second Limited Assurance Internal Audit report, the Service Director, Executive, Corporate Services and Partnerships, and the Housing Enforcement Manager, provided an update in terms of progress against the recommendations. It was noted that there were many areas of good practice with no issues.

Member's raised various questions to which the Service Director, Executive, Corporate Services and Partnerships, and the Housing Enforcement Manager, responded. The Chair thanked the officers for their update.

AGREED that the Summary of Progress on the 2023-2024 Internal Audit Plan be noted.

The meeting concluded at 14:25 hours.