



Minutes

Audit Committee

Date: 28 November 2014

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Conference Room, Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Birkenshaw

Present: Councillor J Cummins (in the chair), K Akthar, L Holmes, H Middleton, B Smith (as substitute for Councillor K Renshaw) and A Stubley

In Attendance: None

Apologies: Councillor K Renshaw

10 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2014 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

11 Urgent items

None.

12 Admission of the public

There were no items which required the exclusion of the public and press.

13 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter under consideration at the meeting.

14 Internal Audit Quarterly Review

The Chief Finance and Procurement Officer submitted a report which provided a summary and reported findings of the audit activity for the period June to October 2014.

Members focused on the area which had provided limited assurance as follows;

- Management of minor repairs and maintenance

Members were advised that, consequent upon the findings of the audit, Management Board had temporarily adjusted the requirements for quotations for minor works and had reduced the threshold to a maximum contract value of £5,000 to allow closer monitoring on a Value for Money basis. The following measures had also been introduced;

- Increased monitoring of the impact of aggregation on contract values, and
- Use of a new e-tendering system to speed up the quotation process and link into the national construction line thereby allowing the Authority to access a large database of local, West Yorkshire-based, contractors and new companies.

It was also reported that further action had been taken in this regard with the creation of an additional post on the establishment in the Property Management Unit which had been approved at the last meeting of the Human Resources Committee to enhance effectiveness and Value for Money in this area and lead to an improved level of assurance.

Two other areas were reported as receiving adequate assurance;

- Managing the risk of faulty Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and
- IT inventory – the level of assurance had been revised as a result of a follow-up audit in June from the previously reported limited assurance. Once all the changes had been fully implemented, there would be a further report to the Audit Committee.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

15 External Audit Management Letter 2013 – 2014

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Finance and Procurement Officer which presented the External Annual Audit Letter for 2013 / 2014 following the completion of the 2013 – 14 accounts and the issue of an unqualified audit opinion.

RESOLVED

That the content of the External Annual Audit Letter 2013 – 14 be noted.

16 Audit Member Awareness Session – feedback

The Chief Finance and Procurement Officer submitted a report which sought feedback from the Member awareness session held on 17 October 2014 which had been presented by KPMG, the Authority's external auditor.

Members had found the content of the session useful and were encouraged to source further training as appropriate.

RESOLVED

- a) That the views be sought of non-Audit committee members who attended the training; and
- b) That proposals for further training be brought to a future meeting of the Committee as appropriate.

17 Presentation – Service Delivery Assurance

Members received a presentation which advised Members of the results of a new process which would be incorporated into the statutorily required Annual Statement of Assurance for 2015 following the abolition of the previous inspection arrangements.

The process related to the production of an annual report into Service Delivery and the use of self-assessment and peer review to provide relevant assurance of standards and how well the service was achieving outcomes for local citizens. It had been approved for use also by the internal audit team from Kirklees Metropolitan Council as a tool through which information could be shared.

It was reported that a three-year timetable had been established for initial information gathering in the following key assessment areas which would, subsequently, be continually monitored;

- Community risk management
- Prevention
- Protection
- Response
- Health and safety
- Training and development
- Call management and incident response

Members welcomed the new initiative which, whilst resource intensive in the initial stages, would prove useful in the audit of the Brigade / Authority and would allow a snapshot of the state of the service at any given moment. Results would also be vital in identifying more accurately the required level of resourcing for each department / directorate and would be a valuable tool in service improvement.

Chair