



Minutes

Audit Committee

Date: 26 April 2019

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Birkenshaw

Present: Councillor R Grahame (in the Chair), G Almas, R Downes, L Holmes, M Pervaiz and K Renshaw

In Attendance: Paul Hewitson – Deloitte (external audit)
Simon Straker – Kirklees MC (internal audit)

Apologies: None

28 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2019 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

29 Urgent items

None.

30 Admission of the public

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

31 Declarations of interest

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

32 Internal audit quarterly review

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Finance and Procurement Officer which advised of the internal audit activity for the period January to March 2019.

Three audits of key financial systems had been completed (Creditors & Direct Debit payments received substantial assurance whilst Income System and Treasury Management both received adequate assurance). Four business risk audits had been completed – two with substantial assurance (Safeguarding and Managing an Industrial Dispute) and two with adequate assurance (Poor data quality risk and Loss of Key Personnel risk). Two audits were ongoing (Staff Fatality at an incident risk and Payroll).

As identified at the last meeting a National Fraud Initiative 2018 – 19 had been undertaken and Members were advised that there had been no findings of note to report and that assurance could be taken as to the robustness of the control processes in place.

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted; and
- b) That future reports provide more detailed information on the work to be undertaken to progress areas towards substantial assurance.

33 Draft internal audit plan 2019 – 20

Members considered a report of the Chief Finance and Procurement Officer which provided an outline of the proposed programme of audit work for 2019 – 20 which would involve 160 days' of audit work at the fixed rate cost of £46,500 as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted; and
- b) That the Internal Audit Plan 2019 – 20 be approved.

34 Abridged performance management report

The Chief Legal and Governance Officer submitted a report which advised Members of the performance against key performance indicators where targets were not being achieved as follows;

- Arson

Members considered the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) initiative and ways in which work could be done to raise awareness. It was hoped that implementation of the Order, initially by Kirklees MC, may assist in arson reduction.

It was further reported that no applications, authorisations or rejections had been made under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 during the relevant period.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

35 Risk Management Strategy Group report

The Director of Service Delivery submitted a report which advised of the risk management activity and developments in March 2019.

Members were informed that 27 risks had been reviewed together with two standing items relating to risks and issues associated with both the Emergency Services Network and the risks relating to the UK exiting the EU.

It was further reported that a review of the Risk Management Strategy and Policy and of cyber attacks / threats were currently being reviewed. The score relating to the risk of Failure or delay in implementing Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) initiatives had been increased from 6 to 8 following feedback from the Fire Brigades' Union on Command Leadership Management (CLM) negotiations. The recent Moorland fires would be the subject of a report to the next meeting of the Risk Management Strategy Group.

Members were advised that the register continued to identify the five "very high" risks relating to;

- Loss or reduction in Government grant
- Wide area flooding
- Response to marauding terrorist firearms attack
- Rise in national threat level to critical for a short period of time, and
- Reduced availability of retained duty system staff

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

36 Accounting policies

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Finance and Procurement Officer which presented the accounting policies that would be applied in preparation and presentation of the Statement of Accounts 2018 – 19.

Members were advised that it was good practice for the Audit Committee to review the relevant policies used in preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts and the policies that would be followed in the preparation of the 2018 – 19 Statement of Accounts were set out at Annex A to the report now submitted.

RESOLVED

That the Accounting Policies to be followed in the preparation of the 2018 – 19 Statement of Accounts be approved.

37 Annual Governance Statement 2018 – 19

The Committee received a report of the Chief Finance and Procurement Officer which presented the Annual Government Statement of the Authority for approval. Members were reminded that this was a “live” document which could be amended if required prior to inclusion in the 2018 – 19 Statement of Accounts.

Five particular issues were raised for Members’ information as follows;

- funding uncertainties beyond 2020
- assumptions underpinning the medium term financial planning
- pay increases (each additional 1% above budgeted 3% increase represented £0.5m)
- judgements on working hours and related payments to on-call firefighters (current EU justice ruling), and
- blue light collaboration

RESOLVED

That the Annual Governance Statement as presented be approved for inclusion in the 2018 – 19 Statement of Accounts.

38 External audit progress report

Members received a verbal report from Mr Paul Hewitson from Deloitte which summarised auditor activity in the current year.

Members were further advised that there had been no concerns to raise at the time of reporting.

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted; and
- b) That future external audit progress reports be subject of a written report to the Audit Committee.

Chair