

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

12 MAY 2014 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Miss DM Taylor - Chairman
Mr R Mayne – Vice-Chairman
Mrs R Camamile, Mr PAS Hall, Mr JS Moore and Mr K Morrell

Officers in attendance: Sanjiv Kohli, Rebecca Owen and Katherine Plummer

522 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Batty.

523 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

524 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

525 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT

Tim Ridout of CW Audit presented the Annual Internal Audit Report 2013/14 and highlighted the main areas covered. During discussion, the following points were raised:

- Members' allowances: a member asked which recommendations regarding the administration of members' allowances were outstanding. In response it was reported that the recommendations had now been completed and had related to the detail contained within the Constitution and the method of publication of the scheme;
- Car parking: in response to a member's question it was noted that the services noted in the Audit report had been re-tendered so a signed copy of the contract was available;
- Outstanding recommendations: It was noted that of the 144 recommendations made, 129 had been resolved and the remainder would be completed within two to three months.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

526 'PROTECTING THE PUBLIC PURSE' UPDATE

A report was presented to the committee which resulted from the request at the previous meeting for the 'Fighting Fraud Checklist' to be completed. During discussion, the following points were raised:

- Countering fraud: it was noted that a corporate fraud team was not usual in district authorities, but it was being considered, with the support of Internal Audit.
- Single Person Discount: Officers agreed to forward the total number of recipients of the discount to members following the meeting. It was noted that it was a self-certified discount and, whilst occasional checks were made when queries occurred, a full annual review of whether applicants were still eligible was not made. It was requested that a report be brought to a future meeting on this.

- Staff & member training: it was noted that training on anti fraud and whistleblowing policies was provided as part of the induction. With regard to member training it was reiterated that despite providing training on the request of members, there was often low turnout.

RESOLVED –

- (i) the report be noted;
- (ii) progress reports be provided on a six monthly basis;
- (iii) a report on reviews of the Single Person Discount be brought to a future meeting.

527 TREASURY MANAGEMENT

Members received a report on the Treasury Management activity in 2013/14.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

528 AUDIT COMMITTEE PRACTICAL GUIDE

Members were provided with an update on the CIPFA publication 'Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police' (2013). Discussion ensued amongst members regarding their need for increased knowledge as some items highlighted the lack of awareness and need for training. Officers again raised the problem of low attendance at training, and members also acknowledged that they had discovered as part of the Member Development Steering Group that members didn't like to admit the areas in which they required training.

Members felt it would be useful to have their performance as a committee assessed, including its effectiveness, and it was agreed that an annual report would be brought to the June meeting. It was also agreed that a meeting for members only would be held at 6pm on that evening for discussion on achievements as a committee. It was noted that this would also be a good introduction if there were any new appointments to the committee at Annual Council.

RESOLVED – an annual report be brought to the next meeting to assist members in assessing their effectiveness as a committee.

529 WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was discussed in conjunction with the previous item. Concern was expressed that the work programme did not reflect the duties of the Council Services Select Committee which had been merged with the Finance & Audit Services Select Committee in 2011 to create the Finance, Audit and Performance Committee. In response it was confirmed that the work programme contained the essential items only, but it was also highlighted that the regular Performance and Risk Management Framework reports were included, and that should any areas of concern be noted, a more detailed report could be requested either to this committee or to the Scrutiny Commission.

RESOLVED – the work programme be noted.

(The Meeting closed at 7.34 pm)

CHAIRMAN