



DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES

18 SEPTEMBER 2013

Present:

Chairman:

Councillors: Doole McKay
Douris Taylor (Chairman)
Harris W Wyatt-Lowe

Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, Councillor Tiley

Officers: J Deane Assistant Director (Finance & Resources)
R Baker Accounting Team Leader (Regulatory and Financial)
S Marshall Corporate Director (Finance & Governance)
J Doyle Group Manager (Democratic Services)

Outside Representatives:

Steve Blayden, Mark Hodgson; Ernst & Young

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

48. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors, Adshead and Elliot.
Councillor McKay substituted on behalf of Councillor Adshead.

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

50. MINUTES AND ACTIONS

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2013 were agreed by the Members present and then signed by the Chairman.

Councillor McKay repeated his request for clarification on the deficit identified in the Environmental & Regulatory services budget. J Deane committed to provide him with a detailed breakdown after the meeting.

The members of the committee stressed the need for Action Points after each minute in order to keep track of business.

51. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

52 AUDIT RESULTS

This item was introduced by M Hodgson from Ernst & Young, who began by complimenting the council and accountants for the year on year improvement in the production of the audit papers.

He thanked those involved for their work and predicted that following this meeting an unqualified opinion should be produced by tomorrow.

Chairman:

He moved onto the accounting risks identified in the earlier part of the audit process which could have meant a qualified opinion if they had not been adequately addressed. However they were they were addressed throughout the process and successful accounts produced. Any errors which were identified were corrected in a timely fashion and consequently there are no appendices to the report which means there are no significant weaknesses to report.

As a consequence the cost of the Audit has come in on budget.

Key message: the auditors are happy to present report.

Both the Chair and councillor Tiley, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, felt that the council had learned lessons with each audit and developed a good partnership with the auditors which was beneficial and gratifying to both sides.

Resolved:

That the Audit Report be received and acknowledged.

Actions:

None.

53 LETTER OF REPRESENTATION

This item was introduced by S Marshall as her signed response marking the conclusion of the audit.

Resolved:

That the Letter of Representation be signed by S Marshall, S Baker and Cllr R Taylor on behalf of the Council and submitted to the external auditors.

54 2012/13 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Chair introduced this item with thanks to the external auditors for the work done in partnership with the accounts team, specifically R Baker and J Deane . He then went on to formally propose accepting the statement of accounts and the letter of representation.

Resolved:

That the Audit Committee approves:

- a) The 2013 Financial Statements on behalf of the Council (having reviewed the Statement of Accounts 2012/13 and considered any issues which provide them with the assurance that they need);
- b) the Statement of Accounts for 2012/13; and,
- c) the Letter of Representation in the capacity of those charged with Governance, after consideration of the External Auditor's Annual Governance report.

55 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Chairman:

The Chair introduced this item, informing the committee that the report would not be considered at this meeting. The Corporate Director (Finance & Governance) informed the committee that there were some concerns with the quality of the report and that measures were being considered to address this before the report could be submitted.

Action:

That J Deane, Assistant Director (Finance & Resources), circulate copies of the draft Internal Audit Report to the members of the committee.

56 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved:

That, under s.100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A Part 1 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during the item in Part II of the Agenda for this meeting, because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that if members of the public were present during the item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular company (Minute 57).

57 INTERNAL AUDIT PROVISION.

See Part II minute 57.

58 VOTE OF THANKS- SALLY MARSHALL.

As this is to be the last scheduled Audit Committee meeting to be attended by Sally Marshall as Corporate Director (Finance & Governance), before she takes up her new role as Chief Executive, the committee took the opportunity to thank her for all her work, and the improvements introduced, while serving the committee.

59 WORK PROGRAMME

The committee went through the proposed work programme for this year.

Resolved:

That the Work Programme for the Audit Committee be noted.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm

Chairman: