

DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES

30 NOVEMBER 2016

Present:

Councillors: Taylor (Chairman) Douris
 Barnes Tindall
 Brown W Wyatt-Lowe

Councillor Elliot, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources.

Officers: J Deane Corporate Director (Finance and Operations)
 E Brooks Assistant Director (Housing)
 D Skinner Assistant Director (Finance & Resources)
 R Smyth Assistant Director (Performance & Projects)
 N Brathwaite Group Manager (Strategic Housing)
 B Hosier Grp Manager (Procurement, Compliance & Commissioning)
 F Williamson Group Manager (Property and Place)
 J Doyle Group Manager - Democratic Services

Others: H Ormston E&Y LLP
 A Brittain E&Y LLP
 S Knowles MAZARS
 M Tower MAZARS

The meeting began at 7.00 pm

122 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

123. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

124. MINUTES AND ACTIONS (Agenda Item 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2016 were agreed by the members present and signed by the Chairman.

There were no outstanding actions to discuss.

125. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Agenda Item 4)

None.

126 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER (Agenda Item 5)

Cllr Elliot, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources introduced the item which provided detail on the Quarter 2 update of the Strategic Risk Register.

Outcome:

The content of the report was noted and the committee were provided with further assurance where required.

127 ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016 – OCTOBER 2016 (Agenda Item 6)

The Annual Audit Letter was introduced by the representatives of E&Y and communicated to Members and external stakeholders, including members of the public, the key issues arising from the External Auditors' work, which they felt should be brought to the attention of the Council. They had already reported the detailed findings from the audit work in the 2015/16 Audit Results Report to the 27th July 2016 Audit Committee, and the matters reported are what they consider to be the most significant for those charged with governance for the Council.

The letter contained an 'Unqualified' Opinion on the Council's financial statements which are judged to be a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2016 and of its expenditure and income for that year. The information published with the financial statements was consistent with the Annual Accounts. The Council was judged to have put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in its use of resources.

Members of the Audit committee then commented on the favorable conclusions of the audit and The Chairman, Councillor Taylor thanked the Auditors for the work carried out. He went on to highlight the good working relationship that had been developed with the Auditors and to express his praise and thanks to all those DBC officers who had been involved in the production of the accounts and who had assisted the auditors with their task.

Resolved

That the contents and conclusions of the Annual Audit Letter for the year ended 31 march 2016 be noted and the Audit committee formally minute praise for James Deane, Dave Skinner, Richard Baker and all the members of the team who had been involved in assisting the auditors.

128. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT (ITEM 7)

The Internal Auditors from MAZZARS introduced the item and took the committee through the covering report.

S Knowles then progressed to the individual service reports in the agenda.

Homelessness

(Evaluation assurance: **Substantial**. Testing assurance: **Substantial**);

The Internal Auditors took the meeting through the three, priority 2, Recommendations and one Systems Improvement Opportunity. Members then questioned the officers present on

some of the details of the service covered in the report and then expressed satisfaction with the results of the audit.

Contract Management

(Evaluation assurance: **Full**. Testing assurance: **Substantial**);

The Internal Auditors took the meeting through one Priority 1, one Priority 2 and one Priority 3 recommendation where they believed that there is scope for improvement within the control environment. They also raised one Systems Improvement Opportunity. Members then questioned the officers present on some of the details of the service and discussed with the officers the plans for addressing the issues highlighted in the audit.

Resolved:

That the Internal Audit progress report and the individual reports on Homelessness and Contract Management be noted.

130. 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 2 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 and business affairs of the Council and particular persons (Item 9).

131. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (ITEM 9)

The Internal Auditors from MAZZARS introduced the item and took the committee through the individual service report in part II of the agenda.

Housing Maintenance Contract

(Evaluation assurance: **Limited**. Testing assurance: **Limited**)

The Internal Auditors took the meeting through eight Priority 2 recommendations where they believe there is scope for improvement. Members then questioned the officers present on some of the details of the service and discussed with the officers the plans for addressing the issues highlighted in the audit.

Resolved:

That the Internal Audit report on the Housing Maintenance Contract be noted.

132. WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The committee considered the work programme for 2016/17.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm