

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee held in the Council Chamber at Knowle, Sidmouth on 5 January 2017

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 2.30pm and ended at 3.45pm

***36 Chairman's welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

***37 Public Speaking**

There were no members of the public present.

***38 Minutes**

The minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on 17 November 2016 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

***39 Declarations**

None

***40 Future of External Audit Analysis of Consultants and Agency staff fees 2015/16**

The Strategic Lead, Finance presented this report as requested by the Committee, the report detailed capital and revenue spend on consultants and specialist advice and agency staff for 2015/16.

Discussions included:

- Would it be more conducive to offer fixed term contracts?
- Fees would vary from year to year depending on specific projects being undertaken during the period
- The Outturn report shows balanced budgets

RESOLVED:

that the details of expenditure on consultants and agency staff in 2015/16 be noted.

***41 Internal Audit Activity – Quarters 2&3 2016/17**

SWAP The Audit and Governance Committee agreed the 2016-17 Internal Audit plan at its March 2016 meeting. This report provided an update on the 2016/17 Internal Audit Plan (Quarter 2). Moya Moore from SWAP spoke in detail on the report's 'Use of Consultants' review which offered reasonable assurance as an audit opinion. Most of the areas reviewed were found to be adequately controlled. Generally risks were well managed but some systems require the introduction or improvement of internal controls to ensure the achievement of objectives.

The report covered five areas:

1. Assurance over the completeness and accuracy of the Consultant's Report which was reviewed annually by the Committee.
2. Benchmarking of spend on Consultants from SWAP Partners.
3. Establishing the unqualified costs to EDDC of reading consultants reports.
4. A review of the use of Business Cases and authorisation for appointment of consultants.
5. An assessment of the extent to which recruitment for permanent established posts was delayed through the use of consultants.

The Chairman thanked Moya for her report.

RESOLVED:

1. that the content of the Internal audit progress report be noted, and
2. that the recommendations from the SWAP 'Use of Consultants' report be endorsed

***42 Audit Committee update**

Rob Andrews from KPMG, presented the Council's Progress report which provided the Audit Committee with an overview on progress in delivering their responsibilities as the external auditors.

RESOLVED:

that the content of the Progress report be noted.

***43 Certification report**

Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) required its appointed auditors to prepare an annual report on the claims and returns certified for each audited body. This letter was the annual report for the certification work KPMG had undertaken for East Devon District Council.

In 2015/16 KPMG carried out certification work on only one claim, the Housing Benefit Subsidy claim. The certified value of the claim was £32.2 million, the work was completed and the claim certified on 30 November 2016.

RESOLVED:

that the certification work be noted.

44 Identification of future internal audits 2017/18

The Chairman asked committee members to submit any proposed future internal audits by email to him by 20 January 2017.

***45 Audit and Governance Forward Plan**

Members noted the contents of the Committee Forward Plan for 2016/17.

Items to be considered at the March Committee included:

- Annual Audit Plan 2017/18
- External Audit Plan
- Audit Committee update
- Accounting Policies approval
- Anti-Money Laundering Policy approval

RESOLVED:

that the Forward Plan be noted.

Attendance list

Councillors:

Mark Williamson (Chairman)
Dean Barrow (Vice Chairman)
Steve Gazzard
Ben Ingham
Bill Nash

Also present (for some or all of the meeting)

Councillors:

Ian Thomas Portfolio Holder Finance
Megan Armstrong
Geoff Jung
Rob Longhurst

Apologies:

John Dyson
Steve Hall
John Humphreys
Paul Diviani Leader

Officers present:

Mark Williams, Chief Executive
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead – Finance
Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer

Rob Andrews, Audit Manager, KPMG
Moya Moore, Assistant Director, SWAP

Chairman Date.....