

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Audit and Governance Committee held at Axe Room, Blackdown House on 21 March 2019**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 2.30 pm and ended at 3.50 pm

#### **48 Public speaking**

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

#### **49 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on 31 January 2019 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

Members discussed the presentations on Northamptonshire County Council and Commercial Property made before the meeting of the last Committee and requested that these be circulated to all members of the Committee.

Members were disappointed that no mention had been made in the minutes of the concern highlighted in the Internal Audit report at the last meeting regarding the £270M anticipated shortfall in CIL income against the projects that were proposed. It was noted that the risk was not being able to delivering the projects on the list.

**RESOLVED** that an update be provided to a future meeting of the Committee on the potential CIL deficit of £270M and ways in which this could be overcome and risk mitigated.

#### **50 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

#### **51 EDDC Accounting Policies for adoption**

The Strategic Lead – Finance advised the Committee that it was good practice for the Audit and Governance Committee to approve the Accounting Policies to be adopted in advance of the preparation of the Accounts. The report reminded Members of the accelerated timetable for completion of the 2018/19 Annual Statement of Accounts.

#### **RESOLVED:**

that the Accounting Policies for the 2018/19 Statement of Accounts be agreed.

#### **52 Annual Audit Plan and Charter 2019/20 - SWAP**

As a key element of its Governance arrangements the Council has a partnership arrangement with South West Audit Partnership to deliver an annual internal audit plan. The Executive Director for SWAP, together with the Council's S151 Officer and in consultation with the Senior Management Team had produced an Audit Plan for 2019/20 that required the approval of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

1. that the Internal Audit Plan for 2019-20 (Appendix 1 to the report), be approved;
2. that the Internal Audit Charter (Appendix 2 to the report) be approved.

53 **Audit Committee update - Grant Thornton**

Sam Harding from Grant Thornton provided the Committee with a report on progress in delivering their responsibilities as the external auditors.

**RESOLVED:**

that the content of the Progress report be noted.

54 **Strata ICT Audit 2017/18 - DAP**

The Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) had been formed under a joint committee arrangement comprising of Plymouth, Torbay and Devon councils and are the appointed internal auditors for Strata Services Solutions. Strata Service Solutions has three founding partners; East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council (the Partners) and provide ICT services for these three authorities.

Strata now offered the Partners greater opportunities in delivering affordable services in the short and medium term. The report predominantly focused on the operational baseline upon which Strata deliver ICT services to the Partners and the security afforded to their computerised information assets. It also summarised the ongoing progress made in respect of Strata's ability to fulfil the third principle object and assist the Partners in delivering transformational change to the Partners.

It was noted that Strata's principle objectives were to:

- Reduce Risk;
- Reduce cost;
- Increase Capability to change.

During discussions the following points were noted:

- In discussing business continuity planning the Councils should specify the business requirements we need rather than let Strata do so;
- Need for Strata to provide an end-to-end business solution;
- Concern expressed that Strata still did not identify Councillors as customers in the same way as officers;
- Strata provided an appropriate level of security for the needs of EDDC and that there were a number of layers of security in place;
- Concern expressed about the quality and user friendliness of the Council's website.

Craig Moodie from DAP was thanked for his informative and interesting report and it was hoped that similar audit reports would be made to future meetings of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

that the DAP internal audit report be noted.

55 **Strata Annual Assurance - DAP**

The statement of assurance was provided by the Devon Audit Partnership, the provider of Internal Audit Services to Strata Service Solutions for audits in relation to the 2017-18 internal audit plan.

This statement was compiled to meet the assurance needs of The Partners, as the interested bodies for the provision of ICT services. This assurance statement consisted of the following elements:

- Overall Assurance Statement;
- Governance:
- ICT Service operations.

**RESOLVED:**

that the DAP annual assurance report be noted.

56 **RIPA update - Strategic Lead Governance & Licensing**

At the meeting of 18th January 2018, Members agreed to receive an update on RIPA activity throughout the year. The RIPA Senior Responsible Officer advised that there had been no requests for RIPA authorisation since the last committee.

57 **Audit and Governance Forward Plan**

Members noted the contents of the Committee Forward Plan for 2019/20.

Items to be considered at the July 2019 committee included:

- External Audit Report 2018/19
- Statement of Accounts 2018/19 including Governance Statement
- Letter of Representation
- Review of Internal Audit Charter
- Annual Report inc. Quarter 4
- Internal Audit Activity – Quarter 1 2019/20
- Audit Committee update
- Risk Management Review
- RIPA update

**RESOLVED:**

that the Forward Plan be noted.

The Chairman Councillor Mark Williamson, wished to express his sincere thanks to Simon Davey, Amanda Coombes, the external and internal auditors and all members who had assisted with the committee over the term of his Chairmanship.

**Attendance List**  
**Councillors present:**

M Williamson (Chairman)  
J Dyson (Vice-Chairman)  
S Grundy  
S Hall  
R Longhurst

**Officers in attendance:**

Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance  
Chris Lane, Democratic Services Officer

Alastair Woodland, Assistant Director SWAP  
Georgina Teale, Senior Auditor SWAP  
Sam Harding, Engagement Manager Grant Thornton  
Craig Moodie, Devon Audit Partnership

**Councillor apologies:**

S Gazzard  
J Humphreys  
B Ingham  
C Nicholas

Chairman .....

Date: .....