



AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

BURNLEY TOWN HALL

Wednesday, 10th January, 2018 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT

MEMBERS

Councillor Jean Cunningham, In the Chair.

Councillors J Greenwood, M Ishtiaq, A Newhouse and A Tatchell

OFFICERS

Ian Evenett	– Internal Audit Manager
David Donlan	– Accountancy Division Manager
Howard Hamilton-Smith	– Finance and Commercial Manager
Chris Gay	– Governance Manager
Imelda Grady	– Democracy Officer

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Councillor Kathryn
Haworth
Councillor Gill Smith

EXTERNAL AUDITORS

Marianne Dixon	– Grant Thornton - External Auditor
Mark Heap	– Grant Thornton

21. Apologies

Apologies were received from Louise Gaskill and Councillors Harrison and Royle.

22. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20th September 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

23. Exclusion of the Public and order of the agenda

That the public be excluded from the meeting for item 14 (minute 33 below) of the agenda since in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, if the public were present there would be a disclosure to them of exempt information. The report was to be taken as the last item of business.

24. External Audit Progress Report and Sector Update

Mark Heap from the external auditors Grant Thornton presented the audit progress report for the year ending 31st March 2018.

The report detailed the progress of the audit as at 22nd December 2017 and outlined the key milestones in order for the Council to meet the audit deadline date of July 2018. He confirmed the Council was well placed to meet this deadline.

Members were also provided with links to a digest of publications and topical issues.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

25. External Audit Certification Letter for the year ended 31st March 2017

Marianne Dixon from the external auditors Grant Thornton presented the certification letter for the Council's Housing Benefit subsidy claim for the year ended 31st March 2017.

The letter identified issues, some of which had been identified in previous years, and which the external auditors were obliged to highlight. These would continue to be monitored during 2017/18. Marianne confirmed that overall the errors of the claim were relatively insignificant and the claim had been qualified.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

26. Final Accounts Arrangements

Members received an update on the arrangements to date and the implication of the changes required ahead of the closure of accounts and the production of the Statement of Accounts.

The Committee was informed that a provisional date of Wednesday 5th July had been set for a final accounts workshop for all members.

IT WAS AGREED

- (1) That the report and the arrangements the Council was making in advance of the closure of accounts for the year 2017/18 be noted;
- (2) That approval be given to the proposed accounting policies to be followed in producing the Statement of Accounts as shown in appendix 1 to the report; and
- (3) That the provisional date of Wednesday 5th July 2018 for the final accounts workshop be confirmed.

27. Annual Governance Statement

An updated copy of the Annual Governance Statement was circulated.

Members gave consideration to the proposed arrangements to provide assurance for the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year 2017/18.

The Statement would be in the same format as the previous year and be in line with CIPFA (Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy) and SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) guidelines.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

28. Internal Audit Q2 2017/18 Progress Report

Members received for information details of the work undertaken by Internal Audit for the period 1st July to 30th September 2017.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

29. Fraud Risk Assessment 2017/18

Members considered a report on the current fraud trends that affect the public sector and the Council's arrangements to deal with them.

The Committee was satisfied with the Council's reaction to the risk of fraud.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

30. General Data Protection Regulation

Members consider the requirements and progress of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for the Council to be able to meet the implementation date of May 2018.

The regulation would directly replace the Data Protection Act 1998. Key officers were aware of the GDPR and had been monitoring the development of the guidance and planning main elements of the responses.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

31. Work Programme

The work programme for the remainder of the 2017/18 Municipal Year was noted.

32. Exclusion of the Public.

There were no members of the public present for the following item of business (minute 33)

33. Standards Complaints update

Members received for information details of two complaints against members had been dealt with during the period August to December 2017 and noted the outcomes.