

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

21st March 2022

Present – The Chair (Councillor Hull) and Councillors Handley, Lis, and Noland.

Officers – Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer), Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer, Performance Manager and Exchequer, Finance Manager, Audit Services and Fraud Manager (Harrogate Borough Council) (Virtual) and Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies for absence were received from the Councillors Barrett, Mercer and Wheeler.

Start: 6.30pm

Finish: 7.06pm

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2021 were approved as a correct record. A brief update on the Accounts Audit progress for 2020/21 was given to Members by the Finance Manager.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

That, in accordance with the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules, the public is excluded from the meeting during consideration of Minutes AC.425 and AC.428 (marked\$) below on the grounds that it is not in the public interest to disclose the Category 3 exempt information (financial or business affairs of any particular person including the Council).

Minutes for Report

\$AC.425 Exception from the Contract Procedure Rules for the Procurement of the Council's Insurance Programme for 2022/23

The Exchequer and Performance Manager presented a report which requested an exemption from the Contract Procedure Rules. Craven District Council's Insurance Programme is soon expiring, but most contracts run for longer than a year. For this reason, and the amount being discussed, an exemption was requested. Members agreed with the report.

Resolved – (1) That, the Contract Procedure Rules are disapplied in these special circumstances, and that insurers can be appointed as recommended by the Council's insurance brokers under the terms of the Council's Long-Term Agreement.

AC.426 Council Performance Framework 2022/23

The Exchequer and Performance Manager updated members on the Council's Performance Framework for the coming financial year. This is produced every two years, and the report submitted to members provided them with the suggested changes. Members were pleased with the report.

Resolved – That, the Council Performance Framework 2022/23 is noted.

AC. 427

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000

The Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer updated members on the Council's use of RIPA. It was reported that there has been no covert surveillance since the last update, that the inspection of March 2021 identified no issues, and that training has now been carried out. The Investigatory Powers Tribunal's Notice of Decision was also highlighted. Members were pleased with the report.

Resolved – That, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 is noted.

§AC.428

Internal Audit Recommendations – Progress Report

The Audit Services and Fraud Manager updated the committee on the progress made with the Internal Audit recommendations until March 2022. It was reported that three Priority 1 recommendations were outstanding and that some recommendations may be altered with upcoming LGR. The Audit Services and Fraud Manager informed the committee that if changes were made, they would be made aware.

Resolved – That, the Internal Audit Recommendations – Progress Report is noted.

AC.429

Audit Services Report as at 10th March 2022

The Audit Services and Fraud Manager updated members on the progress made against the 2021/22 Internal Audit plan. The strain on audit resources was attributed to government Covid-19 grant schemes. LGR was also reported to have been responsible for increasing the delays. Members were informed that the Housing Benefits audit had been deferred until 2022/23 as a result of these delays. The Audit Services and Fraud Manager highlighted that a new risk-based plan would focus on the areas most in need.

Members accepted that LGR will cause delays, but hoped that, at some point, all suggested audits will be carried out. The Audit Services and Fraud Manager reassured members that this would be the case. Independent Person Greg Robinson highlighted that the essential audits had already been carried out.

Resolved – That, the Audit Services Report is noted.

AC.430

Data Breaches 2021/22

The Audit Services and Fraud Manager introduced the report and it was confirmed that management had accepted it. Members were pleased with the report.

Resolved – That, the Data Breaches report is noted.

Chairman.