

AT A MEETING of the Audit Committee of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
held at the castle, Winchester on Thursday, 28th September, 2017

Chairman:

* Councillor Keith Evans

* Councillor Alexis McEvoy
* Councillor Adrian Collett
* Councillor Dominic Hiscock
* Councillor Mark Kemp-Gee
* Councillor Derek Mellor

Councillor Floss Mitchell
* Councillor Rob Mocatta
* Councillor Tom Thacker
* Councillor Lance Quantrill
Councillor Bruce Tennent

*Present

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Mitchell. Cllr Quantrill was in attendance as a deputy.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

21. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed

22. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

23. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's Announcements.

24. INFORMATION COMPLIANCE - USE OF REGULATED INVESTIGATORY POWERS

Committee received a report from the Head of Risk and Information Management (Item 6 in the Minute Book), which detailed how the County Council has used its regulated investigatory powers during the 1st quarter of 2017/18. Members questioned whether investigatory powers were being used enough, or whether the County was over cautious, but it was felt that a good balance had been met and powers were being used appropriately.

RESOLVED:

The report was received and approved by Committee

25. COMPLAINTS REPORT

The Committee received a report from the Head of Risk and Information Governance, which outlined an overview of customer complaints for the year 2016/17 across the County Council.

It was explained that this was a new reporting method that would continue to go to Committee for review. Feedback was usually done via a central online form, which was very accessible to the public, but statistics were kept in various ways across departments and the current data was in the process of being analysed in more detail.

It was anticipated that more complex complaints would be able to be dealt with more effectively going forward. It was noted that Environment and Transport received 50% of all complaints, but this was going to be highways related.

It was noted in paragraph 3.4 of the report that the aim was to solve most complaints at the first stage. Committee wondered whether this meant that it was harder to find trends, however, it was agreed that it was better that less officer time was taken up on complaints that could be easily resolved and more complex issues left to go onto Stages 2 and 3.

RESOLVED:

The Audit Committee noted the contents of the report.

26. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2017

The Committee received a report from the Director of Corporate Resources – Corporate Services (item 8 in the Minute Book) which provided an overview of internal audit activity again assurance work completed in accordance with the approved audit plan and ‘live’ reports.

It was noted that there was one overdue action in relation to the Insurance Fund (page 32). It was explained that clearance of this action was reliant on a report to Cabinet in December 17 following feedback from a recent actuarial review. The progress report would continue to monitor progress.

RESOLVED:

The Audit Committee noted the Internal Audit Progress report for the period to September 2017.

27. HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AUDIT RESULTS REPORT 2016-17

The Committee received the External Audit Results report (Item 9 in the Minute Book) and Maria Grindley and Adam Swain from Ernst & Young were welcomed to the meeting.

It was confirmed that a wash-up meeting undertaken following the audit had gone very well and there were no concerns over Hampshire County Council meeting the July deadline in future years.

Committee asked whether analytics tools could be used for benchmarking against other organisations going forward and it was confirmed that they could be used for this and finding trends, as well as disparities.

There had been no significant findings this year and the only significant potential risk, being management override had no issues found.

Committee welcomed the strong audit report and thanked officers for their hard work and working so efficiently.

RESOLVED

The Audit Committee received the Audit Results Report 2016-17

28. HAMPSHIRE PENSION FUND AUDIT RESULTS REPORT 2016-17

The Committee received the Hampshire Pension Fund External Audit Results report (Item 10 in the Minute Book), which was presented by Marie Grindley and Adam Swain from Ernst & Young.

There had been no significant findings this year and an unqualified opinion had been issued.

Committee welcomed the audit report and thanked officers for their hard work and working so efficiently.

RESOLVED:

The Audit Committee received the Pension Fund Audit Results Report 2016-17.

29. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2016/17

Committee received a report from the Director of Corporate Resources (Item 11 in the Minute Book) regarding the Statement of Accounts for 2016/17.

Members had been briefed on the report, and it was confirmed that insurance related aspects in the report would be looked at in further detail at a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

- a) The Statement of Accounts for 2016/17 were approved
- b) The letters of representation for Hampshire County Council and the Hampshire Pension Fund were signed
- c) It was agreed that delegate authority would be given to the Director of Corporate Resources to approve any minor amendments to the Statement of Accounts prior to the issue of the final audit opinion and publication of the Statement of Accounts.
- d) The Audit Committee noted the change in the statutory accounts timetable from the 2017/18 financial year and the requirement to approve the Statement of Accounts by the earlier date of 31 July each year.
- e) A report would come to a future Committee meeting, which would detail the approaches to self insurance and general liabilities cover.

30. MINUTES OF THE HAMPSHIRE PENSION FUND PANEL AND BOARD MEETINGS (NON-EXEMPT)

The Minutes from the Pension Fund Panel and Board were approved.

31. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 1 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

32. MINUTES OF THE HAMPSHIRE PENSION FUND PANEL AND BOARD MEETINGS (EXEMPT)

The exempt Minutes of the Pension Fund Panel and Board meeting were approved.

Chairman,