

# GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Date: 24 March 2014

Venue: East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

Time: 7.30pm

Present: Councillors:

Sylvia Hobbs  
Barbara Jenney  
David Read

Robin Underwood  
Peter Wathen  
Colin Wright

## 435. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

### RESOLVED:

That Councillor Colin Wright be appointed Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the 2013-14 Municipal Year.

## 436. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

### RESOLVED:

That Councillor Peter Wathen be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the 2013-14 Municipal Year.

## 437. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

## 438. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

## 439. QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.3

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.3.

## 440. WELLAND INTERNAL AUDIT CONSORTIUM – ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2014/15

*Richard Gaughran (Head of Welland Internal Audit) and Nicola Scott (Audit Manager, Welland Internal Audit) attended for this item.*

The Audit Manager presented a report seeking endorsement of the proposed Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2014/15, explaining the basis of the planning process and the various elements making up the plan and indicating how the planning and delivery process would meet the mandatory requirements implicit in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

The Committee noted that risks might emerge during the Internal Audit Plan period and the Plan would need to be adaptable with any necessary revisions being made to enable these risks to be addressed. Such amendments to the Plan might need to be made outside of the Committee meeting timetable and it was considered that delegation should be given to make any amendments.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That the Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2014/15, attached at Appendix B to the report, be agreed.
- ii) That the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to revise the Internal Audit Plan if necessary to address emerging risks during the Plan period.

*(Reason: To ensure the Council meets its planning target and enables flexibility to adapt the plan should the need arise)*

**441. WELLAND INTERNAL AUDIT CONSORTIUM – INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN & PERFORMANCE UPDATE 2013/14**

*Richard Gaughran (Head of Welland Internal Audit) and Nicola Scott (Audit Manager, Welland Internal Audit) attended for this item.*

The Audit Manager presented a report outlining the progress made by the Welland Internal Audit Consortium (WIAC) on the delivery of the Annual Audit Plan for 2013/14 and associated measures of performance.

It was noted that each audit was subject to quality assurance processes by WIAC. Where a limited assurance had been given to the Council services audited, the control measures were considered to be not sufficiently effective and the audit recommendations needed to be implemented. The Committee noted that this limited assurance had been given to the Council's Licensing unit and the administration of Disabled Facilities Grants and the relevant Managers would be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide assurances that these issues had been addressed.

**RESOLVED:**

That the progress and performance of the Consortium be noted.

*(Reason – To demonstrate that the Committee is discharging its responsibilities in conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards).*

**442. EXTERNAL ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2013/14**

*Neil Bellamy and Yola Geen of the Council's External Auditors, KPMG, attended for this item.*

Neil Bellamy presented a report setting out the External Audit Plan 2013/14 and describing how KPMG would deliver the financial statement audit work and the approach to be taken to value for money work.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report and the External Audit Plan 2013/14 be approved.

*(Reason – this is a report which sets out the arrangements for 2013/14 External Audit of the Statement of Accounts)*

**443. GRANT CERTIFICATION 2012/13**

*Neil Bellamy and Yola Geen of the Council's External Auditors, KPMG, attended for this item.*

Yola Geen presented a report summarising the results of work on the certification of the Council's 2012/13 grant claims and returns.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report and the Certification of grants and returns 2012/13 be noted.

*(Reason – this is an information report which addresses the management of benefits and NNDR of the Council)*

**444. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED:**

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business because exempt information, as defined under paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, may be disclosed.

**445. PROTECTING THE PUBLIC PURSE FRAUD BRIEFING**

*Neil Bellamy and Yola Geen of the Council's External Auditors, KPMG, attended for this item.*

Yola Geen presented a report providing benchmarking data on fraud detection activities for the Council and comparisons with similar local authorities, together with briefing papers prepared by KPMG and the Audit Commission.

The briefing also contained a checklist of issues for those involved in governance matters to consider and members of the Committee would complete this as a self-assessment exercise for the next meeting of the Committee.

With reference to the data provided on fraud cases, the relevant Manager would be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee so that the Committee could assure itself that the measures in place to prevent fraudulent activity were robust.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report and briefing be noted.

*(Reason – this is an information report which provides benchmark information for East Northamptonshire Council to compare against others)*

**446. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT WORKING PARTY**

The Committee was requested to consider the appointment of a Working Party to guide the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.

**RESOLVED:**

That a Working Party comprised of all members of the Governance and Audit Committee be established to support the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.

**Chairman**