



MINUTES of a meeting of the GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE held in the MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on TUESDAY 5 JULY 2016 at 6.30PM

Present: Cllrs Northeast (Chair), Blanchard-Cooper, Squires and Warren QVRM

2016/2017

1. EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The evacuation procedures were noted.

2. FILMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS, USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND MOBILE PHONES

The procedures were noted.

3. APOLOGIES

There were apologies from Councillor Purchase.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. There were none.

5. MINUTES

It was noted that the Register of Complaints, Comments and Requests for Information had been instigated but that there was nothing to report at this time. The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2016 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

6. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

7. CHAIR'S REPORT AND URGENT ITEMS

There were none.

8. OFFICER'S REPORT

8.1 Internal Audit Update

8.1.1 The Chair welcomed the new Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), Laura Chrysostomou to the meeting. The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) which set out details of the final Internal Audit Report for the financial year 2015/16. The report had been compiled following interim visits by the Internal Auditor which took place in November 2015 and May 2016 and a final visit in June 2016. Whilst there were no issues arising warranting formal comment, the Auditor had highlighted some areas for improvement.

8.1.2 The Committee proceeded to review the main report in more detail and the Town Clerk and the RFO provided clarification on a number of points. Observing the

Auditors' comments about further strengthening the controls on the use of the business charge card, it was noted that the procedure would be reviewed. It was also noted that the Council's current Internal Audit contract was due for review. In view of the recent key staff changes it was recommended that Mulberry and Co. were retained as the Council's Internal Auditor for a further year. Observing the additional support that Mulberry and Co. had provided to the Council during the recent period of staff changes, the Committee considered it prudent to renew their contract as proposed. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) **Standing Orders be waived and Mulberry and Co. be reappointed as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for a further year (subject to confirmation of satisfactory fees).**
- 2) **The RFO take the necessary action to implement the Internal Auditor's recommendations and respond to him accordingly.**
- 3) **The contents of the final Internal Audit Report 2015/16 be noted.**

8.2 Draft Committee Work Plan

The Committee had before it a draft Work Plan setting out a timetable and proposals for key areas of work (previously circulated). It was noted that frequency of reviews was determined by a mixture of statutory requirements, best practice and the Council's Committee cycle. However, Members also considered that the appointment of the new RFO provided a new perspective on operating procedures which although beneficial, could also have an impact on the Committee's work plan. Observing that this would in all likelihood result in a further meeting later in the year, it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

The programme of work be reviewed and a revised Work Plan be presented to the Committee at the next meeting.

9. **MASTERPLAN – NORTH LITTLEHAMPTON**

The Town Clerk reported that the Steering Group had met earlier that day and received updates on the delivery of some of the key infrastructure projects which supported this development. Whilst the highways and drainage infrastructure projects were making good progress, there had been no movement at all on the promised new health centre. The failure of the Health Service to recognise the need for improvement in these facilities for both current and incoming residents to the new development was lamented. It was noted that the Steering Group was focussed on bringing pressure to bear on the Health Service for a speedy resolution. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The update be noted.

10. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7pm.

CHAIR