



Minutes

Members Present

Mrs. L Duffy (Chairman), Mr P Grove (Vice-Chairman)
Mr M Broomfield, Mr A Fry, Mr P Gretton, Mrs A Hingley, Mr B Matthews,
Mr S Peters, Prof J Raine and Mr P Watts.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr S Cross and Mr P Sinclair-Knipe.

2 Named Substitutes

No substitutes were appointed.

3 Declaration of Interests (if any)

No declarations of interest were made.

4 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 17 April 2013 and the minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 23 January 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 Internal Audit Annual Report 2012/13

The Service Manager from Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service presented a report that provided the Committee with the overall results of meeting Internal Audit's objectives as set out in the Internal Audit Plan for 2012/13 and provided an audit opinion and commentary on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment.

Members were informed that the internal audit on the Asset Management Plan had been deferred until September 2013 in agreement with the Chief Accountant and it was noted that this audit had now taken place.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6 External Audit Annual Findings Report

The Authority's external auditors presented the External Audit Annual Findings

Report 2012/13.

The report highlighted the key matters arising from the audit of the Authority's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2013. The report also outlined the audit findings to management and those charged with governance in accordance with the requirements of International Standards on Auditing 260 (ISA).

The External Auditor confirmed it was his intention to issue an unqualified opinion on the Authority's financial statements and to give an unqualified value for money conclusion. Furthermore it was confirmed that there would be no changes to Audit Plan which had been presented to the Committee earlier in the year.

RESOLVED that the Audit and Standards Committee:

- (i) notes the External Audit Annual Findings Report 2012/13;**
- (ii) approves the letter of representation; and**
- (iii) agrees the response to the proposed action plan set out in the report.**

7 Statement of Accounts 2012/13

Prior to considering the Statement of Accounts 2012/13 the Committee received a short presentation from the Treasurer.

The Treasurer presented the accounts to the Committee and these were scrutinised by Members.

RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts 2012/13 be approved.

8 Draft Annual Governance Statement 2012/13

The Monitoring Officer presented the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2012/13 for approval.

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 require the Fire & Rescue Authority to review its arrangements for governance and systems for internal control on an annual basis. To meet this requirement the operation of the Authority's governance arrangements is subject to an annual self-assessment against the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and SOLACE (Society for Local Authority Chief Executives) framework.

Members scrutinised the Statement and noted that it was intended to address arrangements for the appraisal of the Chief Fire Officer.

RESOLVED that the draft Annual Governance Statement 2012/13 be approved.

9 Internal Audit Draft 2013/14 Plan

The Service Manager from Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service outlined the Internal Audit Draft Plan for 2013/14.

RESOLVED that the 2013/14 draft Internal Audit Plan be agreed.

10 Operational Assessment Action Plan 2013/14

The Head of Corporate Services presented a report that provided the Committee with a progress report on the Action Plan to address the areas for improvement arising from the Operational Assessment conducted in 2012.

RESOLVED that the Audit and Standards Committee notes progress on the Operational Assessment Action Plan 2013/14.

11 National Fraud Initiative 2012/13

The Treasurer presented a report that informed Members of the final outcomes of the National Fraud Initiative (NFI).

RESOLVED that the comprehensive action taken by the Authority in response to the National Fraud Initiative for 2012/13 be noted and it also be noted that once again no fraud has been identified.

12. Annual Statement of Assurance 2013-14

The Head of Corporate Services presented a report regarding the Draft Statement of Assurance 2012-14.

The Audit and Standards Committee had been asked to scrutinise the document prior to its consideration by the Authority in October 2013.

RESOLVED that the draft Annual Statement of Assurance 2013-14 be recommended to the FRA for approval.

The meeting concluded at 3.20 pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date: _____