



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Audit and Standards Committee

Monday, 04 July 2016, 10:30

Minutes

Members Present: Ms P Agar, Mr A Amos, Ms L R Duffy, Ms K S Guthrie, Mrs A T Hingley, Professor J W Raine, Mr G J Vickery, Mr S D Williams, Mr G C Yarranton

Substitutes: none

Absent: Mr Al Hardman

Apologies for Absence: Mr S C Cross, Mr R I Matthews

43 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee held on 13 April 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

44 Internal Audit Annual Report 2015/2016

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented a report detailing the achievement of the Internal Audit objectives, as set out in the Internal Audit Plan for 2015/16. The audit opinion and commentary on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment concluded that arrangements during 2015/16 effectively managed the principle risks and could be relied upon to meet corporate objectives. It was confirmed that there were sound systems of internal control in place and there were no high priority recommendations reported to the Committee. All audits undertaken had resulted in an assurance level of either 'significant' or 'moderate'.

RESOLVED that the Audit Plan for all relevant audits delivered in 2015/16 which provided an assurance level of 'significant' be noted.

45 Internal Audit Plan 2016/17

The Internal Auditor provided the draft Audit Plan for 2016/17 highlighting the timetable of scheduled audits to be undertaken during the year, the determination of which is measured on risk. Out turns from work will be brought to the Committee on a quarterly basis.

The Auditor drew Members' attention to an additional forward planing measure which identified and scheduled audit reviews through future years.

RESOLVED that the draft Internal Audit Plan 2016/17 be approved.

46 Strategic Risk Register

The Authority's arrangements for dealing with risk management had been the subject of an internal Audit Review in March 2016. The Audit had given an assurance level of 'moderate' that the Service had a sound system of internal control with the need for minor improvement in certain processes. Members were informed that significant progress had already been made in these areas and that the main issues had already been largely addressed.

Members were advised that a new methodology to record and monitor risk had been introduced and that the Senior Management Board were now considering the risk agenda on a quarterly basis. Some Members were concerned that they only had a single opportunity to input into the Strategic Risk Register and it was agreed that the Chairman of the Audit and Standards Committee would sit in on these quarterly discussions.

Members felt that the Authority would benefit from a workshop early 2017 covering the Strategic Risk Register in more detail.

RESOLVED that;

i. the Strategic Risk Register be approved; and

ii. the actions taken following recommendations made in the recent audit by Worcestershire Shared Service (March 2016) be noted.

47 Health and Safety Audit

Members were updated on the substantial progress against the twelve recommendations made from the CFOA West Midlands Regional Health and Safety Audit undertaken in January 2015. Officers emphasised that measures were fully embedded across the Service and that the four

remaining open recommendations will be continually monitored via the Health and Safety Committee until completion.

Members congratulated Officers on progress against the plan and requested further information relating to Health and Safety and wider community engagement.

RESOLVED that;

i. the substantial progress towards implementing the recommendations of the Health and Safety Audit undertaken by CFOA West Midlands Region in 2015 be noted; and

ii. the discharge of the remaining four recommendations from the audit be overseen by the Health and Safety Committee.

48 Provisional Annual Statement of Accounts 2015/2016

A draft of the Annual Statement of Accounts was presented for discussion and noting. The Treasurer gave a detailed presentation of the content of the Accounts. It was confirmed that the accounts had been signed off on 24 June 2016 and were now open for public inspection. Members would not be asked to approve the Statement of Accounts until after completion of the audit which was due to commence w/c 13 July 2016 and be completed by September 2016.

RESOLVED that the Treasurer bring back a further report following completion of the Audit.

49 Annual Governance Statement 2015/2016

Members were given a summary of the governance arrangements for 2015/16 and advised that under the New Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 there was now a requirement to publish a draft Annual Governance Statement with unaudited accounts for public inspection. It was confirmed that following a review undertaken against the CIPFA framework there were no areas of concern to report and no areas where immediate action was required. The Annual Governance Statement will be audited by internal and external auditors and a final draft will be presented in September for approval

RESOLVED that the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2015/16 be approved.

The Meeting ended at: 11:51

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman