



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Audit and Standards Committee

Wednesday, 20 July 2022, 14:00

Chairman: Mr M Hart

Vice-Chairman: Mr A Amos

Minutes

Members Present: Mr D Boatright, Mr S Bowen, Mr M Hart, Mrs E Marshall, Ms N McVey, Mr R J Morris

244 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A Amos, Cllr B Brookes, Cllr B Clayton, Cllr I Hardiman, Cllr A Hardman and Cllr D Toynbee.

245 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

246 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

247 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

248 External Audit Plan (2020/21 Accounts)

The External Auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP presented the Audit Plan which set out the work to be undertaken in 2022/23 in respect of the 2021/22 Audit.

Members noted that the Accounts would be signed off by the end of November as per the statutory deadlines for this year.

RESOLVED that the External Audit Plan 2022/23 (2021/22 Accounts

(including proposed Audit Fee) be noted.

249 Informing the Audit Risk Assessment 2021/22

The External Auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP presented Members with the Audit Risk Assessment report.

Members were pleased to note that there were no specific risks highlighted that were abnormal, or which caused the Treasurer or External Auditor particular concern.

RESOLVED that the External Auditor's "Informing the Audit Risk Assessment" report be noted.

250 Internal Audit Annual Report 2021/22

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented Members with the Internal Audit Annual Report 2021/22 which provided the overall results in terms of meeting Internal Audit's objectives as set out in the internal audit plan for 2021/2022, an audit opinion and commentary on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment and a copy of the current internal audit charter.

Members noted the Annual Report 2021/22, that the audit plan had provided an assurance level of "full" for three core financial areas, no limited or below assurance areas had been reported or any high priority recommendations had been made.

[Cllr D Boatright entered the meeting at 2.16pm].

RESOLVED that the Committee note the Internal Audit Charter, that the audit plan delivered in 2021/22 had provided an assurance level of "full" for three core financial areas and that no limited or below assurance areas had been reported or any high priority recommendations made.

251 Internal Audit Progress Report

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented Members with an update in regards to the delivery of the Internal Audit plan 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Members noted the completion of the 2021/22 Audit plan and that there were no high priority recommendations to report.

RESOLVED that the report is noted.

252 Equality Objectives 2021-2025 – Update for Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 2021-2022

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer Ade Elliott presented Members with a summary of progress against the Service's Equality Objectives 2021 - 2025 for Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 2021-2022.

Members noted the priorities for 2022-23 and were pleased with the progress the Service continued to make in furthering the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda for the benefit of employees and the local community.

RESOLVED that Members note the progress made against the Equality Objectives 2021-2025 for Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 2021-2022.

253 Risk Management and Strategic Risk Register – Annual Update

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer Guy Palmer presented Members with an annual update on the Risk Management Framework and Strategic Risk Register.

Members noted the annual update and that any significant changes would be reported to the Committee in a risk update.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

254 Prevention Cause of Concern – Action Plan Update

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer Ade Elliott presented Members with an update on the action plan created to discharge the Cause of Concern issued by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in relation to Prevention Activity.

Members were pleased with the work to date and noted that the key work streams on the Action Plan had been completed.

RESOLVED that the update on the action plan created to discharge the cause of concern in relation to Prevention activity is noted.

255 Health and Safety Committee Update: January to March 2022 (Quarter 4)

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer Guy Palmer presented Members with a Health & Safety update on activities and items of significance.

Members noted the contents of the report and that the next audit was

anticipated to be delivered during Quarter 2 of 2022-23.

[Cllr R Morris left the meeting at 15.02pm and returned at 15:04pm].

RESOLVED that the following issues, in particular, be noted:

i) The involvement of the Service in Health and Safety initiatives

ii) Health and Safety performance information recorded during January to March 2022 (Quarter 4)

iii) Workforce Health & Well being performance (Quarter 4)

The meeting concluded with the Chairman of the Audit and Standards Committee thanking Keith Chance for his service and assistance to the Committee and wished him a very happy retirement.

The Meeting ended at: 15:14

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman