

## 15. Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority  
Audit and Standards Committee  
24 September 2014



### Minutes

#### Members Present

Mrs L Duffy (Chairman), Mr G Yarranton (Vice Chairman),  
Ms P Agar, Mr P Gretton, Mrs A Hingley, Mr B Matthews, Mr T Miller, Mr S  
Peters, and Mr G Vickery

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Stuart Cross, Ms K Guthrie,  
Prof J Raine 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 and Standards Committee  
meeting held on 30 June 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and  
signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman announced that item 6, the External Audit Findings Report  
2013-2014 would be considered prior to item 5, the Audited Statement of  
Accounts. The Chairman explained that item 6 may have a bearing on item  
5.

#### 5. Agenda Item 6. External Audit Findings Report 2013-14 Statement

The report was presented by external auditor Grant Patterson. Mr Patterson  
highlighted that there were no significant issues that needed to be brought to  
the attention of the Fire Authority and that the required statutory deadlines for  
issue and publishing would be met. The Committee were asked to note the  
report.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee:

- i) note the External Audit Annual Governance Report 2013/14,
- ii) approve the letter of representation on behalf of the Authority; and
- iii) agree the response to the proposed action plan set out in the attached report.

[Councillor P. Agar entered the meeting at 10:35]

**6. Agenda Item 5. Audited Statement of Accounts 2013/14**

The Treasurer provided a refresh of the presentation delivered at the last Audit and Standards Committee on 30 June 2014 and presented the Audited Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 to the Committee.

**RESOLVED** that the Statement of Accounts 2013/14 be approved.

**7. Draft Annual Governance Statement 2013/14**

The Head of Legal Services presented a report compiled during the self-assessment review providing assurances that supported the Annual Governance Statement. The Draft Statement was put forward for approval.

**RESOLVED** that the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2013/14 be approved.

**8. 2012 Operational Assessment – Progress Update**

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer provide Members with a progress report into collaborative areas identified for improvement arising from the Operational Assessment conducted in 2012. Whilst no further assessments of this type were scheduled, work was continually monitored and formal reports were submitted on a regular basis for review.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee:

- i) note the progress made in each of the areas identified for improvement in the 2012 Operational Assessment; and
- ii) note that internal Operational Assurance systems were utilised to carry out further Operational Assessments.

**9. Annual Statement of Assurance 2014-15**

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the Draft Statement of Assurance 2014-15 to the Committee.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee adopt the Draft Statement of Assurance 2014-15 and approve it for publication.

**10. Internal Audit Monitoring Report 2014-15**

The Internal Auditor presented the Audit Monitoring Report 2014/15 highlighting that there were no high priority recommendations and that all assurances had been delivered.

***RESOLVED*** that the Committee note the report.

**11. Constitution Update – Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014**

The Head of Legal Services presented a report that alerted members to new regulations that affect public meetings and noted the subsequent changes to Standing Orders.

***RESOLVED*** that the Committee:

- i) note the amendment to paragraph 7.4 of the Standing Orders for Conduct of Business, as attached at Appendix 1; and
- ii) note the requirement for officers to record delegated decisions taken either:
  - (a) under a specific express delegation; or
  - (b) under the general scheme of delegation where the effect of the decision is to:
    - i) grant a permission or licence;
    - ii) affect the rights of an individual; or
    - iii) award a contract or incur expenditure which materially affects the Authority's financial position.

[Councillor Matthews left the meeting at 12:07]

Councillor Duffy noted thanks to Chief Accountant Deborah Randall, the Treasurer and Auditors for comprehensive and much improved reports.

The meeting concluded at 12:10

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman