

AUDIT COMMITTEE

(Port Talbot Civic Centre, Committee Rooms 1/2)

Members Present:

11 December 2015

Chairperson: Councillor Mrs.L.H.James

Vice Chairperson: Councillor J.D.Morgan

Councillors: M.Harvey, D.Keogh, A.R.Lockyer and Mrs.K.Lloyd

Officers In Attendance D.Rees, Miss A.O'Donnell, and Mrs.J.Woodman-Ralph

Representing the Wales Audit Office: Mrs.J.McNicholas

Voting Lay Member: Mrs.J.Jenkins

1. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 24TH SEPTEMBER 2015**

Cllr. J.D.Morgan chaired the meeting due to the unavailability of the Chairperson at the commencement of the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 24 September 2015, be noted.

2. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING 2015/16**

Members received an overview of the treasury management action and information reported to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Board on the 19 November 2015, as detailed in the circulated report.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

3. **INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES - PROGRESS REPORT TO MID-NOVEMBER 2015**

Members received details of the work undertaken by Audit for the period from the 1 September 2015 to mid November 2015 and an update on progress against the 2015/16 Internal Audit Plan, as detailed in the circulated report.

Discussion took place on the different levels of categories that are used by audit in measuring the degree of risk and Members asked that consideration be given as to whether an additional category could be added between levels 2 and 3. Officers advised that they would explore the feasibility of this request.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

4. **CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Head of Financial Services updated Members on the Corporate Risk Management Policy which had been approved by Cabinet on the 15th July 2015. Discussions took place on the role and responsibility of the Committee in discharging its duties, as detailed in the circulated report.

Members were supportive of the new policy and asked that consideration be given to ensuring that all the necessary training was provided to Audit Committee Members to enable them to undertake those duties.

The Head of Financial Services was tasked with developing an action plan to include training requirements for consideration at the next meeting of the Audit Committee and would be a standing item on all future agendas as part of the monitoring process.

Members were concerned that due to the current economic situation facing the Council and the loss of experienced managers it was vital that the Audit Team was maintained at current staffing levels to ensure that there was continued auditing and any risks mitigated.

It was also requested that the formula used in prioritising risks in the Corporate Risk Register should be included in Appendix 2 to the circulated report, for Members' information in future.

- RESOLVED:**
1. that the Corporate Risk Management Policy be noted;
 2. that approval be granted for Audit Committee to undertake its role and responsibilities as contained in the circulated report;
 3. that the Head of Financial Services develop a work programme to ensure that Audit Committee discharges the roles and responsibilities as contained within the Policy and to ensure that Audit Committee Members receive all the relevant training.

5. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

RESOLVED: that pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following item of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

6. **SPECIAL INVESTIGATION REPORT**

Members were provided with details of the special investigations and category 3 and 4 reports recently completed, together with a verbal update of the special investigations that were currently in progress.

Members asked that a letter be sent to relevant Directors and Heads of Service regarding the issues highlighted during the recent audits advising of the concern they felt at the points raised and that managers be advised that Audit Committee can request managers to attend future Audit Committees if required.

The Chairperson thanked the Audit Manager and her team for all the work they undertake within the Authority.

In addition, the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee thanked Mrs.J.McNicholas for all the support and assistance she had given the authority and wished her well in her new role.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

CHAIRPERSON