

AUDIT COMMITTEE - 9 January 2023

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON MONDAY 9TH JANUARY 2023

Present: Councillors: M Brian, R Long (Vice Chairman) and A Sandison
Independent Members: Mr T Beirne (Chairman), Mr D Page, M Brain,
R Long (Vice-Chairman) and A Sandison

Officers: James Hughes – Democratic Services Officer
Sam Gilbert – Assistant Director – Finance & Property Services
Steve Sparkes – Head of Internal Audit
Olly Dodds – Audit Manager
Adam Paterson – Finance Manager
John Robinson – Treasury and Corporate Accountant
Zoe Covington – Counter Fraud Lead
Grant Paterson – Grant Thornton (External Auditor)

Apologies: Independent Members: Mr M Burnett
Officers: Paul Johnson - Director of Resources & Deputy Chief
Executive
Julie Cooper - Head of Financial Operations

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Michael Burnett (Independent Member) the Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Financial Operations.

2. PUBLIC MINUTES

The public minutes of the last meeting were unanimously agreed.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

4. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None received.

5. VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

The External Auditor informed the Committee that work was ongoing to complete the infrastructure reporting work after the Statutory Instrument came into force on Sunday 25th December 2022. He informed the Committee that it is likely that the Statutory Override is likely to be applied. Further to this he informed the Committee that the housing benefit claim work was ongoing, the teachers' pension work had been completed and that the accounts would likely be ready to sign off by the end of January.

6. AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT ON SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL 2021-22

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The External Auditor presented the *Auditor's Annual Report On Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council 2021-22*. Members asked the External Auditor questions relating to the report and were satisfied with the response. The Committee asked that the report not be sent to Full Council but be shared amongst all Councillors via the Members Briefing.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Auditor's Annual Report On Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council 2021-22.

7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2023/24 TO 2032/33

The Treasury and Corporate Accountant presented the report as set out in the Agenda Pack. Committee Members asked questions and were satisfied with the response.

RESOLVED:

The Committee recommends that Full Council approves: -

- The Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 to 2032/33 (Appendix A) including the Debt and Investment Strategy and Treasury and Prudential indicators contained within Page 37 Agenda Item 7 and specifically;
 - The Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator detailed within paragraph 3.2.2 of Appendix A;
 - The further Prudential Indicators for 2023/24 to 2032/33 contained within the extract from the Corporate Capital Strategy 2023/24 to 2032/33 (Appendix B);
 - The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement contained within the extract from the Corporate Capital Strategy 2023/24 to 2032/33 (Appendix B).

8. DRAFT WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The Council's Counter Fraud Lead presented the report as set out in the Agenda Pack. Committee Members asked questions and were satisfied with the response they received.

RESOLVED:

The Audit Committee noted the new wording of the Policy and endorsed the draft Policy, pending final approval by the Governance Committee.

9. MONITORING REPORT – INTERNAL AUDIT

The Head of Internal Audit presented the report as set out in the Agenda Pack and informed the Committee of the reports that would be presented to them at the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

The Audit Committee noted the work of Internal Audit and reviewed this information to inform the Committee's work.

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10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be now excluded from the remainder of the business to be transacted, on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

11. PRIVATE MINUTES

The Committee unanimously agreed the Private Minutes of the last meeting.

The meeting was closed at 2.45 pm.