



Audit & Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 12 April 2018 at 6.30pm

Present: Councillors A Hickman (Chairman), A Barrett, G Bell, Mrs. W Clark, J Dawson, Mrs. P Heseltine and J Kerr.

Officers: Dave Parker (Chief Officer) and Wendy Allsopp (Administration and Member Services Manager).

Prior to the meeting new Cllr, Anthony (Tony) Barrett, was welcomed to his first meeting of this Committee.

1. To accept representations from the Public between 6.30pm and 6.45pm.

None

2. To accept apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr M Emmerson due to work commitments.

3. To record declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in items on the agenda.

Cllr Kerr declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Council's Internal Auditor also acts as his accountant.

Cllr Barrett declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Council's Internal Auditor also acts as his accountant and he is Chair of Governors of Ermysteds School.

4. To consider the recommendations of the Chief Officer relating to requests for dispensations to Members on items requiring a declaration of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.

None

5. To approve the minutes from the previous meeting held on 26 October 2017.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes from the Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 October 2017 as a true and accurate record of what transpired at that meeting.

6. To report information arising from the minutes of items not on the agenda from Members and the Chief Officer.

Changes to Data Protection legislation – The Chief Officer advised that Craven District Council would be providing assistance to the Town Council in satisfying obligations under changes in legislation. The Chief Officer will update Members with full details, including cost, very soon.

Sheep Day expenditure – It was **NOTED** that the newly formed Events & Tourism Committee would be delegated to discuss this matter during the 2018-19 civic year.

7. To undertake the annual review of the Council's Financial Risk Assessment.

Members reviewed the Risk Management Schedule and **RESOLVED** that it should be submitted to Full Council for approval with the following amendments:

Senior staff leaving without due notice - *'Key staff members, while having their own remit, are apprised of the work of the others'* should read *'Managers have their own remit but are apprised of the work of others via regular Management Team meetings'* and; *'Banking practices and financial procedures are familiar to the Resources Manager and other administrative staff'* should read *'the Finance Manager, Finance Officer, Chief Officer and other administrative staff are familiar with banking and other general financial procedures'*.

Appointment of new staff – *'New members of staff are appointed subject to a robust recruitment process and appropriate references being obtained'* should read *'The Council follows a robust recruitment process, using an independent HR advisor. Appropriate references are obtained and probationary periods are adhered to'*.

Fidelity Guarantee - It was **AGREED** that it should be stated that an indemnity is in place to protect the Council and/or Councillors against potential losses and; the Chief Officer shall ask the insurers for advice on whether the insured figure of £500,000 is sufficient.

Cash Floats and Money – It was **AGREED** that the Chief Officer should consider amending the amounts relating to insuring possible losses. *'The internal auditor routinely inspects these on each visit'* shall be removed and the *'Audit and Scrutiny Committee'* should be replaced with *'Financial Transactions Working Group'* as that group is responsible for reviewing petty cash payments

Town Council Cheques – *‘Estate Manager’* should be replaced with *‘Finance Manager’* and; *‘in requirement to review and amend signatories after each set of scheduled elections’* should be included under this heading.

BACS and Bank Transfer Payments – *‘Resources Manager’* should read *‘Finance Manager or Finance Officer’*.

Salaries – *‘Resources Manager’* should read *‘Finance Manager’*.

Cash collection and banking – *‘at least, weekly’* should state *‘twice weekly’* and; *‘Market Officer’* should read *‘Market Manager’ or Market Officer*. It was **AGREED** that the Chief Officer should determine a revised maximum figure the Market Officer collects and amounts kept in the office safe.

Company Charge Card – *‘Resources Manager’* should be replaced with *‘Finance Manager’*.

Expense Claims – *‘paid at rates agreed by the Council’* should read *‘in line with NJC terms and conditions of employment where appropriate’* and; *‘Resources Manager’* should read *‘Finance Manager’*.

Office security – the statement *‘Key fob codes are changed periodically and whenever a member of staff leaves the employment of the Council’* should be included.

Lone Working - Grounds Maintenance Staff – It was suggested that a policy should be introduced ensuring that Grounds Maintenance staff telephone the office to ‘clock out’ at the end of their shift(s).

Regalia – Chains – *‘The Mayoral Chains are insured to be kept overnight at the Mayor’s residence on the night immediately preceding or following an official engagement only and with the prior approval of the Administration & Member Services Manager or Chief Officer’* should be included.

Regalia – Silver ware – *‘Resources Manager’* should read *‘Administration and Member Services Manager’*.

Regalia – other – *‘Items not listed remain on display in the Office meeting room/office reception or in safe’* should be replaced with *‘Items not on display at the Council’s offices are kept in secure storage in the safe or away from site’*.

Portraits and prints – *‘All prints are kept in store at the Council’s offices’* should read *‘All prints not on display are kept in secure storage away from site’*.

Petyt Library Collection – *‘the Petyt Library books are in a permanently locked room and are under the supervision of an appointed librarian. The Collection can be viewed only by appointment with the librarian’* should read *‘the arrangements for this are currently being reviewed as the collection will shortly need to be relocated from Skipton Library’*.

Office equipment – ‘all equipment is security marked using a ‘smart water’ DNA system’ should be noted.

Tractor, trailer, strimmer and other tools – It was **AGREED** to allow the Chief Officer to amend the wording for this heading as appropriate to reflect new arrangements and equipment.

It was **AGREED** that a working group should be formed to review the Financial Risk Assessment in detail during the 2018-19 civic year.

- 8. To note the process for the annual Internal Audit and submission of the Council’s Annual Return (Report attached)

Members **NOTED** the timetable and pre-set deadlines relating to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

It was **RESOLVED** to allow the Chief Officer’s to request an extension to the pre-set deadline, with approval of the Financial Statements and AGAR to be undertaken at an additional meeting of Full Council in the final week of June.

- 9. To consider any Freedom of Information requests/complaints/compliments received by the Council.

It was **NOTED** that one FOI request had been requested in relation to staff grievances. The Chief Officer had been unable to fully investigate this as it related to information shared between individuals.

Various complaints have been received about grass cutting (trimmings on road) and the Market (trader vans being parked on the setts).

- 10. To receive notification on matters that Members would like included on a future agenda.

Policies and procedures
Financial systems – focusing on specific risks.

Meeting Closed at 8.01 pm.

Chairman:

Signature: