

# Minutes

---

## **Audit and Scrutiny Committee Monday, 9th March, 2015**

### **Attendance**

Cllr Clark (Chair)

Cllr Barrett (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Chilvers

Cllr Mrs Hones

Cllr Dr Naylor

### **Substitute Present**

Cllr Hossack (substituting for Kerslake) under Overview and Scrutiny procedure rule 1.3

Cllr Quirk (substituting for Mrs Squirrel)

Cllr Ms Sanders (substituting for Sleep) under Overview and Scrutiny procedure rule 1.3

### **Also Present**

Cllr Kerslake

Cllr Aspinell

Cllr Mrs Hubbard

Cllr Kendall

Cllr Mrs McKinlay

Cllr Mynott

Cllr Reed

### **External Witnesses for Agenda Item 3**

Martin Lazenby

Brenadette Benn

Brian Darwood

Miss Hickman

### **Officers Present**

Ben Bix

Christine Connolly

Zoey Foakes

Debbie Hanson

Claire Hayden

Richard Haynes

Corporate and Democratic Services Manager

Ernst & Young, External Audit

Governance & Member Support Officer

Ernst & Young, External Audit

Governance and Member Support Officer

BDO, Internal Audit

Chris Leslie	Financial Services Manager
Liana Nicholson	BDO, Internal Audit
John Parling	Strategic Asset Manager
Chris Potter	Monitoring Officer & Head of Support Services
Steve Summers	Head of Customer Services

#### **482. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Squirrell with Cllr Quirk in attendance as substitute; and under Overview and Scrutiny procedure rule 1.3 Cllrs Kerlake and Sleep were precluded from the meeting with Cllrs Hossack and Sanders in attendance respectively.

#### **483. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015 were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

#### **484. Call-in of decision 458 of the Asset and Enterprise Committee 18 February 2015, Hutton Community Centre - New Lease**

Cllr Hossack was invited to present the reasons for the call in followed by Cllr Aspinell as representative of the decision taking committee.

The meeting was also attended by 6 witnesses who spoke for a maximum of 3 minutes each followed by a question and answer session based on their participation at the Asset and Enterprise Committee on Hutton Community Centre on 18 February 2015.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Clark and **SECONDED** by Cllr Quirk to receive recommendation 2.1 in the report (*To allow the decision to be implemented without further delay*).

Following a discussion a recorded vote was requested in accordance with Rule 9.5 of the Council's Procedure Rules. Members voted as follows:

FOR: Cllrs Barrett, Clark, Chilvers, Quirk (4)

AGAINST: Cllrs Mrs Hones, Hossack, Dr Naylor, Ms Sanders (4)

On the casting vote of the Chair the **MOTION** was **CARRIED** that:

- 1. The decision by the Asset & Enterprise Committee (18 February 2015) be implemented without further delay.** (*That delegated authority be granted to the Strategic Asset Manager after consultation with the Chair of Asset and Enterprise Committee to negotiate and enter into a lease of the Hutton Community Centre with Essex Boys and Girls Clubs*).

#### **REASON FOR DECISION**

To comply with Part 4.4 of the Council's Constitution – Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

#### **485. Audit Plan 2014/15**

The Audit Plan before Members set out how Ernst & Young intended to carry out their responsibilities as the Council's External Auditor.

The plan summarised the initial assessment of the key risks driving the development of an effective audit function for the Council, and outlined the planned audit strategy in response to any risks.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Clark and **SECONDED** by Cllr Barrett to receive the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken by show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

- 1. Members received and noted the content of the reports.**

#### **REASON FOR DECISION**

The Audit Plan informs the statutory audit opinion.

#### **486. Internal Audit Plan 2014-17**

The report outlined the proposed work programme for Internal Audit for 2014-17, including the operational plan for 2015/16.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Clark and **SECONDED** by Cllr Barrett to receive the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

- 1. The Committee approved the Internal Audit Plan for 2014-17 and the Operational Plan for 2015/16.**

#### **REASON FOR DECISION**

To approve the work programme for Internal Audit for 2014-17, including the Operational Plan for 2015/16.

#### **487. Internal Audit Progress Report**

The report detailed the progress to date against the internal audit plan that was agreed by the then Audit Committee in March 2014.

The report also included an update on the progress of the implementation of the recommendations raised by the previous internal auditors and the progress of implementation of recommendations raised in the current year.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Clark and **SECONDED** by Cllr Hossack to receive the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

**1. The Committee received and noted the contents of the reports.**

#### **REASON FOR DECISION**

To monitor the progress of work against the internal audit plan.

#### **488. Internal Audit Charter**

The Charter was a requirement of Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). It formally defined internal audit's purpose, authority and responsibility. It also established the position of the internal audit within Brentwood Borough Council and defined the scope of internal audit activities.

The Charter was presented to the Committee in March 2014 and had been updated for 2015/16.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Clark and **SECONDED** by Cllr Barrett to receive the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

**1. The Committee noted and approved the Internal Audit Charter for 2015/16.**

#### **REASON FOR DECISION**

The Charter is a requirement of Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). It formally defines internal audit's purpose, authority and responsibility.

#### **489. Referrals to the Committee under Regulation 6 of the Local Authorities (Committee System) (England) Regulations 2012**

The following referrals were made to the Committee under Regulation 6 of the Local Authorities (Committee System) (England) Regulations 2012 by Cllr Kerslake:

a) **The Appointment of an Interim Chief Executive and Designation as Head of Paid Service (Ordinary Council 4 February Minute 442).**

b) **Revenues and Benefits – Shared Services Partnership (Finance and Resources Committee 11 February Minute 453).**

Councillor Kerslake was of the opinion that Members were not adequately furnished with sufficient relevant information in order to make informed decisions.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Clark and **SECONDED** by Cllr Hossack.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Scrutiny Work Programme be amended to include officer reports on the referrals of (a) Appointment of an interim Chief Executive; and (b) Revenues and Benefits – Shared Services Partnership in consultation with Cllrs Clark and Kerslake.

#### **490. Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15**

The Audit and Scrutiny Committee was invited to consider its 2015/16 scrutiny work programme.

The Chair invited Cllr Kerslake to comment on whether the Brentwood Community Transport item he had put forward should be withdrawn from the work programme due to the workload of the Committee. Cllr Kerslake concurred.

Cllr Clark put forward a new item for consideration on the work programme for the creation of a Task and Finish Group to investigate Member engagement with the press with regard to the Member Code of Conduct and the reputation of the Council, following a recent article in the national press.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Clark and **SECONDED** by Cllr Barrett to receive the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

1. **The Audit and Scrutiny Committee agreed its scrutiny work programme 2015/16 to include:**

- a) **An officer report on the Appointment of an Interim Chief Executive and Designation as Head of Paid Service (Ordinary Council 4 February Minute 442)**
  
- b) **An officer report on the Revenues and Benefits – shared Services Partnership (Finance and Resources Committee 11 February 2015 Minute 453)**
  
- c) **The creation of a task and finish group to consider member engagement with the press with regard to the Member Code of Conduct and the reputation of the Council.**
  
- d) **The withdrawal of the Brentwood Community Transport item**

**REASON FOR DECISION**

To enact the provisions of Part 4.4 of the Constitution that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee agrees its scrutiny work programme at each meeting of the Committee.

**491. Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business to consider.

The meeting concluded at 22.40.

---