

AUDIT & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2021

Present:

Councillor Martin E Thacker MBE JP (Chair) (in the Chair)

Councillor Stephen Clough
Councillor Nigel Barker
Councillor Gerry Morley

Councillor William Armitage
Councillor Pat Kerry

Also Present:

J Dethick	Assistant Director - Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer)
J Williams	Internal Audit Consortium Manager
N Calver	Governance Manager
A Bond	Governance Officer

AUD Apologies for Absence

49/2

1-22 Apologies for absence were received from Mike Norman (Mazars) and Councillor M Roe.

AUD Declarations of Interest

50/2

1-22 Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interest, not already on their register of interest, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

No declarations were made at this meeting.

AUD Minutes of Last Meeting

51/2

1-22 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee held on 22 September 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

AUD NEDDC Corporate Debt - 30 September 2021

52/2

1-22 The Head of Finance presented the report detailing a summary of the corporate debt position at 30 September 2021.

The report also contained details on Housing Benefit Overpayments which had been requested at the previous meeting.

It was clarified that an official error would constitute a mistake that was entirely the fault of the Council.

The Section 151 Officer informed Committee that they would provide official

figures on how much overpayment was not recovered as a result of official errors.

RESOLVED – That the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee noted the report concerning the Council’s corporate debt position as at 30 September 2021.

AUD **MTFP - Budget Monitoring April - September 2021 Q2**

53/2

1-22

The Section 151 Officer presented to Committee a summary of the budget position for the second quarter of 2021/2022 which would be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 25 November 2021.

RESOLVED – That the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee noted the report concerning the Council’s budget monitoring report for quarter 2 and made any comments that they believed to be appropriate concerning these matters.

AUD **NEDDC Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy**

53/2

1-

221

The Section 151 Officer presented an updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy to Committee for consideration.

The profile of Anti-Fraud and Corruption had been raised so that it was now included as part of the Risk Management Process and Committee would receive quarterly updates on this.

It was noted that there were low levels of fraud and corruption at the District Council.

Committee requested that further detail and consideration be given to the mitigation identified on the anti-fraud and corruption strategy action plan.

RESOLVED – That the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee approved the updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy subject to the amendment that further consideration be given to the mitigation identified on the anti-fraud and corruption strategy action plan.

AUD **Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee**

54/2

1-22

The Section 151 Officer presented information on CIPFA’s (Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy) “Audit Committees Practical Guidance for Local Authorities” and enabled the Committee to undertake a self-assessment.

The Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee undertakes a self-assessment every two years.

The Committee answered the self-assessment and reached the following conclusions:

- Committee suggested that the role and purpose of the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee was only partly understood across the organisation.
- It was agreed that the Chair of Committee possessed appropriate knowledge and skills.
- It was agreed that the Committee had good working relationships with key people and organisations.
- It was agreed that adequate secretary and admin support was provided to Committee.
- Committee believed that they were adding value to the organisation but that this had not been formally evaluated. It was agreed that a formal evaluation should be added to the work plan.

The completed self-assessment would be circulated with the Minutes of the meeting.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee noted the CIPFA guidance for Local Authority Audit Committees as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report.
2. That the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee undertook the self-assessment in Appendix 2 of the report.
3. That the completed self-assessment would be reviewed by the Committee and if necessary, an action plan would be presented to a future meeting.

AUD **MTFP - Revised Budget 2021/22**

55/2

1-22

The Section 151 Officer presented revisions to the 2021/22 budget for Committee to consider.

It was noted that the Covid-19 Pandemic was still having a detrimental impact across the Council's services but this was improving on a weekly basis.

All new growth had been absorbed other than the additional cost of bringing the waste recycling service in-house. The intention would be to fund this additional cost through the resilience fund this year, with any potential underspend being returned to the resilience fund. The ongoing yearly cost of this would need to be found within the MTFP.

A lengthy debate over the budget ensued resulting in Committee requesting that a member from the Growth Directorate be invited to a future meeting of the Committee to address the budget variance.

The Section 151 Officer suggested that they would bring forward an action plan as part of the MTFP to identify areas where savings could be demonstrated.

Committee also raised concerns over a lack of 106 repayments being made to the Council.

It was noted that the Internal Audit Consortium Manager was in the process of

a 106 audit and that this would be brought back to the Committee at a later stage.

RESOLVED – That the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee noted the report concerning the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan – Revised Budgets 2021/22 and made any comments that they believed to be appropriate concerning the budget to the Council’s Cabinet.

AUD **Committee Work Programme 2021-2022**

56/2

1-22

The Governance Manager presented the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal year 2021/2022.

It was agreed that a review into the impact and value that the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee had on the rest of the Council would be added into the Work Programme for the meeting on the 1st December.

It was agreed that the update on Cyber Security would be included in the meeting on the 1st December.

Committee requested that a member of the Growth Directorate be invited to the meeting on the 12th January.

Members asked for the Section 106 report to be included on the Work Programme for the meeting on the 12th January.

RESOLVED – That the Committee noted and approved the Audit and Corporate Governance Scrutiny Work Programme for the remainder of the 2021/2022 municipal year subject to the amendments outlined above.

AUD **Forward Plan of Executive Decisions**

57/2

1-22

RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions be noted.

AUD **To consider any other items which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.**

58/2

1-22

No urgent items were discussed at the meeting.

AUD **Date of Next Meeting**

59/2

1-22

The date of the next meeting was scheduled to take place on 01 December 2021.