

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT
ON WEDNESDAY, 26 MARCH 2014**

PRESENT: Councillor Roberts (in the Chair)
Councillor McGinnity (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Lord Fearn, John Joseph Kelly, Mclvor,
Papworth, Shaw and Weavers

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Dorgan and Kermode

36. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brennan, Maher, Mahon and Moncur.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

38. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

39. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for that part of the following item of business when details of individual debts are being considered on the grounds that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act. The Public Interest Test has been applied and favoured exclusion of the information from the press and public.

**40. REVENUES - WRITE OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS WITH
BALANCES OVER £10,000**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which sought approval to write off irrecoverable debts with balances over £10,000.

RESOLVED:

That approval be given to 42 non-domestic rate debts amounting to £1,047,182.79; 4 sundry debts amounting to £97,358.73; and 2 overpaid Housing Benefit debts amounting to £31,373.22 being written-off (total amount for write-off being £1,175, 914.74). .

41. TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2013/14 - POSITION TO FEBRUARY 2014

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which provided details of the Treasury Management activities undertaken in the current financial year up until 28 February 2014, in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2013/14.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

42. AUDIT PLAN 2013/14 - INTERNAL AUDIT PERFORMANCE REPORT APRIL 2013 TO FEBRUARY 2014

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which provided a summary of internal audit work undertaken during the period April 2013 to February 2014. The Committee was required to be informed of and review Internal Audit work as part of its review of the internal control environment and overall Governance arrangements.

The report also provided details of the performance trend of Arvato's Benefit Fraud Investigation Team.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

43. RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES - QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which provided an update on the Corporate Risk Register and matters relating to Risk Management Services.

The actual Corporate Risk Register was confidential and would be considered in the restricted part of the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

44. DRAFT INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2014/15

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT on a draft Internal Audit Plan for 2014/15 which would be subject to consultation with the Strategic Leadership Team in order to identify the key areas of risk for the forthcoming financial year and ensure that appropriate coverage of Council services is undertaken in order to enable an opinion on the effectiveness of the overall control environment to be formed at the end of 2014/15. Following the consultation process, it was intended to submit an amended Plan for approval to the meeting of the Committee to be held in June 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the draft Annual Audit Plan for 2014/15 be noted.

45. INTERNAL AUDIT FRAUD REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which provided a summary of the proactive and anti-fraud and corruption and investigation work undertaken during 2013/14 by the Internal Audit Team.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

46. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2013/14

The Committee considered a report by PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Council's external auditors, setting out the framework for the audit and inspection work to be undertaken for the 2013/14 financial year, including an analysis of any areas of heightened risk including fraud, the proposed audit strategy approach to be taken by the external auditors, the reporting and audit timetable and details of the indicative audit fee for 2013/14.

RESOLVED:

That the External Audit Plan 2013/14 be approved.

47. EXTERNAL AUDIT CERTIFICATION REPORT 2012/13

The Committee considered the annual certification report of PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Council's external auditors, setting out the results of the certification work undertaken for the Council in 2012/13; the certification fees; and the adequacy of the proposed management action plan for 2012/13.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

48. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act. The Public Interest Test has been applied and favoured exclusion of the information from the press and public.

49. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER - QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT on the work undertaken on the management and mitigation of risk within the Council since the last meeting of the Committee. The report also provided details of the Corporate Risk Register which had been reviewed and refreshed to reflect the Council's current risks and the associated controls in place. No new risks had been added to the Register.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

50. INTERNAL AUDIT FRAUD REPORT - ONGOING INVESTIGATIONS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which provided a summary of the ongoing investigations and new referrals of suspected fraud dealt with by the Internal Audit Team since the last meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.