

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Audit Committee 25 September 2017 at 6.30pm

Present:

Councillor	K Sudan (Chair)
Councillor	C R Eade (Vice Chair)
Councillors	R D Burrett, I T Irvine and R Sharma

Also in Attendance:

Paul King, Director of Ernst and Young LLP

Officers Present:

Chris Corker	Corporate Benefit and Fraud Manager
Karen Hayes	Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits
Mez Matthews	Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for Absence:

Gillian Edwards	Audit and Risk Manager
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11. Members' Disclosure of Interests

No disclosures of interests were made.

12. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on [26 July 2017](#) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

A Committee member drew attention to the second paragraph of minute 3 (Minutes) which advised that information relating to grants would be circulated to the Committee by the Director of Ernst and Young LLP. The Committee acknowledged that it had received the information.

The Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits advised that follow ups relating to matters arising from minute 4 (Audit and Risk Manager's Annual Report 2016/2017) were detailed in report [FIN/419](#) which would be considered later on in the agenda.

13. Fraud and Investigation Team Report

The Committee considered report [FIN/420](#) of the Corporate Fraud and Investigations Manager.

The report indicated that the Team had continued to perform successfully. The Committee was provided with details of cases investigated and the Team's investigations, whilst a discussion took place on the Team's work generally. The Committee sought and received clarification on a number of points raised, including the Council's role in investigating fly-tipping, publicising prosecutions, non-occupancy and intelligence regarding fraudulent applications.

RESOLVED

That the Fraud and Investigation Team Report be noted.

14. Internal Audit Progress Report as at 31 August 2017 Incorporating Risk Management Update as at 12 September 2017

The Committee considered report [FIN/419](#) of the Audit and Risk Manager. The purpose of the report was primarily to update the Committee on the progress made towards the completion of the 2016/17 and 2017/18 Audit Plans, and to report on the progress made in implementing the previous recommendations. The report also included an update on the Council's Strategic Risks. Due to ill health, the Audit and Risk Manager was unable to attend the Committee meeting and therefore the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits presented the report in her absence.

The Committee discussed and noted the Audit Plan reviews in progress, along with other work detailed in the report and sought and received clarification on a number of points including asset valuation. The Committee's attention was drawn to paragraph 4.6 which detailed follow-ups from the previous meeting. The Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits informed the Committee of the information provided by the Head of Community Services in relation to the risk assessment of the ground floor of the Town Hall in the evening, now that the area was not staffed. The Committee considered the response, but still had concerns relating to security and were of the opinion that the issue required further investigation. The Chair agreed to write to the Leader to express the Committee's concern regarding Town Hall security during the evening and to request that he look in to the matter. Following a query from a Committee member, the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits provided further information regarding the Section 106 Agreements Audit.

The Committee then considered the update on Risk Management and sought and received clarification on several points. The Committee noted that at its meeting on 4 October 2017, the Cabinet would consider the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's recommendation that the risk register relating to the Town Hall redevelopment be included on future agendas of the Audit Committee, and if agreed such information would be included as a standing agenda item for future meetings of the Committee.

RESOLVED

1. That the Internal Audit Progress report as at 31 August 2017, Incorporating Risk Management Update as at 12 September 2017, be noted.
2. That the Chair write to the Leader to express the Committee's security concerns regarding not staffing the ground floor of the Town Hall during the evenings, and to ask him to look in to the matter.

15. Annual Audit Letter for the Year Ended 31 March 2017

The Committee considered the Annual Audit Letter from Ernst and Young LLP. The Letter was attached as [Enclosure D](#) to the agenda. The Director of Ernst and Young LLP presented the Letter which provided a summary of Ernst and Young's assessment of the Council for 2016/17 and highlighted the key issues. The Committee's attention was also drawn to the section which highlighted the new standards which would be applicable from 2018/19 financial year.

The Committee thanked the Finance Team for their dedication and hard work.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Audit Letter for the year ending 31 March 2017 be noted.

16. Local Government Audit Committee Briefing

The Committee considered the update on the Local Government Sector which was attached for the Committee's information as [Enclosure E](#) to the agenda. The Committee discussed the "key questions for the Audit Committee" which were set out in the report and expressed particular interest in conducting an audit to look at the number of women employed by the Council in senior roles, both currently and in the past, to ascertain whether it indicated a culture change within the Authority.

RESOLVED

That the Local Government Audit Committee briefing be noted.

17. Closure of Meeting

The meeting ended at 7.40pm.

K SUDAN
Chair