

AUDIT COMMITTEE

28 March 2018

Present:-

Councillors J Mathews (Chair), J Berry, J Brazil, R Peart and A Saywell

Apologies:-

Councillors I Hall and E Brennan

* 19

Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2017 be signed as a correct record.

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Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Grant Thornton, the County Council's external auditors, reported that the 2016/17 accounts had now been signed off following a delay after an objection from a member of the public. Grant Thornton did not uphold the objection and the audit certificate has now been issued.

* 21

Devon County Council External Audit Plan

The Committee received the report of Grant Thornton setting out the external auditors' audit plan covering 2017/18, including challenges and opportunities for the Council; developments relevant to the Council's business; materiality; significant risks; value for money; results of interim audit work; key dates for the audit work; and external auditors' fees.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Berry, **SECONDED** by Councillor Saywell and

RESOLVED that the report and findings be noted.

* 22

Devon Pension Fund External Audit Plan

The Committee received the report of Grant Thornton setting out the external audit plan covering 2017/18, including challenges and opportunities for the Council, wider developments relevant to the Council's business, significant risks, results of interim audit work, key dates for the audit work and the external auditors' fees.

Members identified the need for the plan also to be included on the agenda of the Investment and Pension Fund Committee.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Brazil, **SECONDED** by Councillor Peart and

RESOLVED that the report and findings be noted.

* 23

External Audit Progress Report and Update

The Committee received the report of Grant Thornton outlining the progress made in delivering their responsibilities as the Council's external auditors. The report also included a summary of emerging national issues and developments that may be relevant to the Council including the new obligations for the County Council in terms of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Members expressed concern relating to the National Audit Office report on the adult social care workforce in England.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Saywell, **SECONDED** by Councillor Brazil and

RESOLVED

- (a) That Council note the Committee's concern in terms of pressure on the adult social care workforce and its ability to meet users' needs for care now and in the future.
- (b) That members of the Committee be provided with a briefing on GDPR.
- (c) that the report and findings be noted.

* **24** **Internal Audit Plan 2018/19**

The Committee considered the report of the County Treasurer outlining key challenges and opportunities arising from the Council's corporate goals and strategic risk registers, overview of audit coverage, core activity including coverage days, annual governance framework, proposed reviews and associated risks and deferred reviews.

Members noted the number of planned days for internal audit activity in relation to Children's Services and felt that this could be increased. The Committee also highlighted the work undertaken by Scrutiny in reviewing the Internal Audit Plan and referenced the review on homelessness in 16/17 year olds which Children's Scrutiny had recommended to be raised from a low to a high priority for review.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Peart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Berry and

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Plan for 2018/19 be endorsed.

* **25** **Devon County Council - Control Environment**

The Committee received the report of the County Treasurer on the yearly requirement of the Audit Committee and Section 151 Officer to respond to enquiries from the external auditors (Grant Thornton) regarding the overall control environment of the Council, with particular focus on the arrangements in place to ensure that the financial statements were free of material error.

The Committee will be required to authorise the accounts in July following careful consideration of the auditors' report. The letters, attached to the Report, from the Chairman and the Section 151 Officer set out the details of the control environment.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Saywell, **SECONDED** by Councillor Peart and

RESOLVED

- (a) that the report be noted and that the conclusion of the County Treasurer that the authority's accounts be prepared on a Going Concern basis be endorsed;
- (b) that the letter from the Chairman to the external auditors (Grant Thornton) be endorsed.

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

AUDIT COMMITTEE
28/03/18