

DEVON AUDIT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE - VIRTUAL

12 July 2022

Present:-

Councillors R Craigie, P Hackett, R Loxton, K Kennedy, N Davey, K Ball, B Spencer, M Hartnell, I Roome, J Phillips, L Finn and A Luggar

Apologies:-

Councillors R Scott and M Davies

* **28** **Election of Chair**

The Chair should be held on a rotational basis with each Council having a Member serve alternately for one year. Devon County Council had recently held the Chair and it was therefore North Devon Council's turn to hold the post of Chair for one year from the date of this meeting.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Phillips, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hackett and

RESOLVED that Councillor Roome (North Devon) be elected Chair for the ensuing year.

* **29** **Election of Vice-Chair**

The Vice-Chair was elected from a Council other than that which currently held the Chair.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hackett, **SECONDED** by Councillor Loxton and

RESOLVED that Councillor Finn (Plymouth) be elected Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

* **30** **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

* **31** **Announcements**

The Committee were provided with an update on recruitment as follows:

- (a) Jon Triggs was the Section 151 Officer at North Devon Council, and also the new Chair of the Devon Audit Partnership Management Board.

- (b) Rob Hutchins had left his role as Head of Devon Audit Partnership at the end of June and Tony Rose had been appointed to the role of Head of Devon Audit Partnership as from 1 July 2022.

* **32** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2022 be signed as a correct record.

* **33** **Devon Audit Partnership - Revenue Outturn Position 2021/22**

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Devon Audit Partnership (DF/22/57) setting out the revenue outturn position 2021/22, the balance sheet as at 31 March 2022, the Accounting Statement, the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2021/22 and the Annual Governance Statement.

Members noted in particular:

- The outturn position for 2021/22 showed a small financial surplus of £1,200.
- Increased costs due to temporary staff recruited to meet additional request for services from partners and clients.
- Transport costs had been considerably less than expected due to staff working from home during the pandemic.
- The overspend on Supplies and Services was mainly due to costs relating to ICT support and the purchase of additional laptops to aid employees as they continued to work from home.
- Reserves remained at a healthy £222k.
- The requirement for a small bodies return had been removed, however the return contained some good elements of governance and enabled effective year on year comparisons to take place and would therefore remain "good practice" to continue.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hackett, **SECONDED** by Councillor Finn and

RESOLVED

- (a) that the DAP 2021/22 revenue outturn position be noted.
- (b) that the DAP balance sheet as at 31 March 2022 and the balances contained be noted.
- (c) that the Accounting Statement, prepared in accordance with the (former) small bodies return format, be noted.
- (d) that approval be given for the Chair to sign the Annual Governance Statement.

(e) that the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2021/22 be noted.

* **34** **Devon Audit Partnership - Annual Report 2021/22**

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Devon Audit Partnership (DF/22/58) outlining the progress made by the Partnership during the year; the ongoing development of arrangements with partners; and the continued high level of customer satisfaction achieved.

Members noted in particular:

- The outturn position for 2021/22 showing a small financial surplus (£1,200), despite the pandemic and other challenges.
- The continuing success of the Partnership's EU grant work.
- A bid had been submitted to be accepted on the Government of Jersey Framework for provision of internal audit and assurance services.
- New staff had been employed (including apprentices) to help meet demand, build skills and to ensure business continuity.
- Customer survey results for 2021/22 remained good with 97% identified as Satisfied.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Loxton, **SECONDED** by Councillor Finn and

RESOLVED

- (a) that progress made by the Devon Audit Partnership during the 2021/22 financial year be noted.
- (b) that the continued high level of customer satisfaction achieved by the Partnership be noted.

* **35** **Proposal for Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service to join the Devon Audit Partnership**

(Councillor Room declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of being a member of the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service and abstained from voting.)

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Devon Audit Partnership (DF/22/59) outlining the proposal for Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (DSFRS) to join the Devon Audit Partnership (DAP).

The internal audit provision for DSFRS was currently delivered by way of in-house staff supported by DAP, who had provided support to them since 2009. DSFRS had now made formal application to join DAP.

There were no expected financial risks from the proposal as the contribution from DSFRS (in the region of £55k) would cover the service delivery by DAP.

If approved, it was envisaged that DSFRS would join DAP on or around 1st October 2022, with any TUPE affected staff also transferring to DAP on that date.

It was **RESOLVED** by Councillor Hackett, **SECONDED** by Councillor Lugger and

RESOLVED that

- (a) approval be given for the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service to join the Devon Audit Partnership during the 2022/23 financial year; and
- (b) it be noted that the actual date of commencement will be dependent upon governance and HR issues that will need to be fully addressed prior to commencement, with a joining date of 1 October 2022 being aimed for.

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Future Meetings

The next meeting was set for 29 November 2022.

NOTES:

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

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

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 11.01 am