

## DEVON AUDIT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

14 July 2020

Present:-

Devon County Council:-

Councillors J Clatworthy and G Gribble

Other Council Representatives

Councillor Robert Loxton, Torbay Council  
Councillor Margaret Corvid, Plymouth City Council  
Councillor Lorraine Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Plymouth City Council  
Councillor Philip Hackett, Torridge District Council  
Councillor Bob Evans, Mid Devon District Council  
Councillor Claire Hodson, Torridge District Council  
Councillor Andrew Moore, Mid Devon District Council  
Councillor Ian Roome, North Devon District Council

Apologies:-

Councillors Davies, Heyse and Phillips

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### **Election of Chair**

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

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Gribble be elected Chair for the ensuing year.

\* 69

### **Election of Vice-Chair**

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

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Loxton (Torbay) be elected Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

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### **Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2020 be signed as a correct record.

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### **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

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### **Devon Audit Partnership - Revenue Outturn Position 2019/20**

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Devon Audit Partnership (CT/20/59) setting out the revenue outturn position and changes between Month 9 and year end, the balance sheet as at 31 March 2020, the Accounting Statement, the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2019/20 and the Annual Governance Statement.

Members noted:

- the Head of Partnership apologised for 2 minor errors in the report relating to section 1.4.2 (month 9 projection figure for Supplies, Services & Support) and in the table at section 2.1 (date of 31.3.2020 shown, should be 31.3.2019);
- a confirmed operating surplus of £8,781 made up of £4,331 with regards our Internal Audit and Risk Management services and £4,450 with regards Counter Fraud Services;
- South Hams and West Devon as non-voting partners did not feature in the balances for the Partnership;
- as a Teckal compliant organisation DAP's turnover with non-partners could not exceed 20% of it's overall turnover, which limited the work it could undertake with outside bodies; and
- South West Audit Partnership completed an internal audit of the 2019/20 DAP accounts and confirmed positive arrangements and assurance.

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

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the Devon Audit Partnership Revenue Outturn Position Report 2019/20 be noted;
- (b) that the Devon Audit Partnership balance sheet as at 31 March 2020 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; and
- (e) that the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2019/20 be noted.

\* 73

**Devon Audit Partnership - COVID Update Report**

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Devon Audit Partnership (CT/20/60) describing the action taken by Devon Audit Partnership to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

Members noted:

- 5 DAP staff had been redeployed to other roles during the pandemic;
- the delay to the appointment of a new Audit Manager until 5 October 2020 and the subsequent cost saving;
- impact of COVID-19 on fraud detection and Council Tax collection rates;
- impact on audit work, with some physical checks not being completed during COVID-19, but that DAP could still provide good coverage over the majority of controls and the overall control environment; and
- preparedness for a (possible) second wave of the pandemic was good.

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

- (a) that the actions and response by the Devon Audit Partnership in relation to the COVID-19 crisis be noted;
- (b) that Internal Audit plans for partners are likely to be affected from the impacts of COVID-19, be noted;
- (c) that the potential risks to the financial position of DAP and the action by Partnership Management to reduce such risks to an acceptable level, whilst still supporting the COVID-19 response when called upon be noted;
- (d) that a report be presented to the 17 November 2020 Committee on impact of COVID-19 on fraud detection and Council Tax collection rates.

\* **74**      **Devon Audit Partnership - Annual Report 2019/20**

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Devon Audit Partnership (CT/20/61) 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:

- added value and how quantifiable this could be in terms of savings achieved;
- work to grow the Partnership's business, for example with the non-maintained school sector;
- impact on chargeable time with COVID-19 in terms of sickness and productivity; and
- the need for a balance between DAP staff continuity against some turnover of staff being healthy for the organisation.

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

**RESOLVED**

(a) that progress made by the Devon Audit Partnership during the 2019/20 financial year be noted.

(b) that the continued high level of customer satisfaction achieved by the Partnership be noted.

\* **75**      **Future Meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for 17 November 2020.

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

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 11.45 am