

DEVON AUDIT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

8 July 2021

Present:-

Councillors Hall, Scott, Mahony, Craigie, Hackett, Loxton, Penny, White, Austen, Roome and Phillips

Apologies:-

Councillors Bingley, Kennedy, Davies, Ewings and Holway

* **1** **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 Torbay Council's turn to hold the post of Chair for one year from the date of this meeting.

RESOLVED

that Councillor Loxton be elected Chair for the ensuing year.

* **2** **Election of Vice-Chair**

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

RESOLVED

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

* **3** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2021 be signed as a correct record.

* **4** **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

* **5** **Devon Audit Partnership - Revenue Outturn Position 2020/21**

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Devon Audit Partnership (CT/21/61) setting out the revenue outturn position 2020/21, the balance sheet as at 31 March 2021, the Accounting Statement, the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2020/21 and the Annual Governance Statement.

Members noted:

- a 'zero' revenue outturn position for 2020/21 for the Partnership overall.
- the proposed uplift to the audit programme for schools, which will replace some of the school audit work lost in 2020/21.
- the revenue outturn position of DAP for 2020/21 is 'zero' meaning that there will be no surplus to allocate to Partners but also no requirement to draw from the DAP reserves for any potential "loss".
- reserves remain at a healthy £221k.
- the requirement for a small bodies return has been removed, however the return contained some good elements of governance and enabled effective year on year comparisons to take place and will therefore remain "good practice" to continue.

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

RESOLVED

- (a) that the DAP 2020/21 revenue outturn position be noted.
- (b) that the DAP balance sheet as at 31 March 2021 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 2020/21 be noted.

* **6** **Devon Audit Partnership - Annual Report 2020/21**

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Devon Audit Partnership (CT/21/62) 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:

- the immense challenge the pandemic brought to the last year, but also how responsive the team has been working with partners during the crisis.
- customer survey results for 2020/21 remain very good with near 98% satisfied or better. The Head of Devon Audit Partnership uses any feedback which is less positive to identify at an early stage where expectations have not been met and acts accordingly.
- analysis of internal audit performance for 2020/21 shows that, overall, performance is generally as expected.
- staff turnover has been higher than in previous years. Members raised concern about a loss of experience to DAP. The Head of Devon Audit Partnership advised that there exists a limited pool of auditors in the area, and it remained an imperative of the business to 'grow your own'.
- staff turnover also allows for a re-refresh in ideas and approaches, and a progression of staff within the team.
- challenge of online staff induction.
- time saving for staff undertaking audits remotely and the need for less travelling.
- the retirement of the Deputy Head of Devon Audit Partnership, and the appointment of a new Audit Manager.

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

RESOLVED

(a) that progress made by the Devon Audit Partnership during the 2020/21 financial year be noted.

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

* 7

Devon Audit Partnership - Further Update Report June 2021

The Head of Devon Audit Partnership presented the June 2021 update report to Committee.

Members noted:

- the Deputy Head of DAP post would hopefully be recruited to by mid-September 2021, leaving only a slight gap following his retirement on 31 July 2021.
- a lack of consensus currently amongst the Partners as to progressing the Redmond Review recommendation that Independent Members should be recruited to Audit Committees, with the aim of bringing in specialist, technical knowledge to support the other elected Committee members.

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

RESOLVED

- (a) That members note the role of the Chair of the Management Board of Devon Audit Partnership (DAP).
- (b) That members note the current process with regards recruitment of a replacement Deputy Head of Partnership.
- (c) That members note the update provided with regards action from the Redmond Review.

* **8** **Future Meetings**

The next meetings were scheduled for 15 November 2021 and 8 March 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 11.10 am