

BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

At a meeting of the Business Efficiency Board held on Wednesday, 1 February 2017 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors M. Lloyd Jones (Chair), Joe Roberts (Vice-Chair), J. Bradshaw, Cole, C. Loftus, A. Lowe, MacManus, McDermott, N. Plumpton Walsh and J. Stockton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Wall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Dawson, M. Murphy, A. Scott and T. Dean

Also in attendance: Georgia Jones and Mark Heap, Grant Thornton External Auditors

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

BEB21 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2016 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

BEB22 EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE REPORT

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided an update from Grant Thornton (External Auditors), regarding:

- Progress made in delivering their responsibilities as the Council's External Auditors; and
- A summary of emerging national issues and developments that could be relevant to the work of the Board.

It was noted that from 2017/18, local authorities would need to publish their audited financial statements by 31 July each year, which was earlier than the current deadline of 30 September.

Georgia Jones, Audit Manager and Mark Heap, Engagement Lead from Grant Thornton, attended the

Action

meeting to present the report and then dealt with Members' questions.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

BEB23 PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE CORPORATE RISK REGISTER 2016-17

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided a progress update of actions in the Corporate Risk Register 2016/17.

The report outlined actions taken in relation to corporate risks for this year.

The Board reviewed the robustness of the Corporate Risk Register and the adequacy of the associated risk management arrangements.

RESOLVED: That the progress on actions be noted.

BEB24 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the planned programme of internal audit work for 2017/18.

A risk based Audit Plan had been prepared, designed to enable internal audit to deliver an overall opinion on the Council's risk management and control and governance arrangements.

A copy of the draft Audit Plan for 2017/18 was attached as an appendix to the report and provided information on the role of internal audit and the factors taken into account in developing the plan.

RESOLVED: That the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2017/18 be approved.

Operational
Director - Finance

BEB25 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- 1) Whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in

accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and

- 2) Whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

(N.B. The following Councillors declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business for the reasons stated: Councillor John Stockton was a Governor at St Martin's Primary School; Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh had a family member with a business connection with Tiny Steps Nursery, which paid rent to St Martin's Primary School)

BEB26 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT - QUARTER 3

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which provided Members with a summary of internal audit work completed since the last progress report in November 2016. The report also provided details of progress against the 2016/17 Internal Audit Plan.

It was noted that a total of fifteen Internal Audit reports had been finalised since the last progress report. An overall assurance opinion was provided for each engagement. In addition a number of follow up audit reviews had been planned for the first quarter of 2017/18.

RESOLVED: That the update on progress against the

Internal Audit Plan 2016/17 be received.

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Meeting ended at 7.23 p.m.