

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2018 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Simon Day (Chairman); Councillors Bambridge, Buckley, Braidwood, Campbell, Connor, Dexter, Dixon, Evans, Larkins, Messenger and Pugh.

In Attendance: Councillors L Piper and S Piper.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Dennis.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Campbell proposed, Councillor Larkins seconded and Members agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2018.

4. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2017-18

Mr Willis, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources, introduced the report which presented Grant Thornton's Annual Audit Letter summarising the work carried out at Thanet District Council for 2017-18.

Councillor Reverend Piper spoke under council procedure rule 20.1.

During consideration of the item it was noted that:

- The Letter confirmed that Grant Thornton gave an unqualified opinion on the Council's financial statements on 31 July 2018, and were satisfied that the Council had proper arrangements in place to ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.
- The Harbour and Port accounts had been audited by Grant Thornton as it formed part of the Council's accounts. They were also subject to an additional review by Grant Thornton in accordance with the Harbours Act 1964.
- The 2017/18 accounts that the Committee agreed at the last meeting were correct, they had been produced in accordance with all relevant legislation and had been confirmed as accurate by the external auditor. Mr Willis offered to meet with Members if they wished to seek clarification on any element of the 2017/18 accounts.

Members noted the report.

5. QUARTERLY INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE REPORT

Mr Webb, Deputy Head of the East Kent Audit Partnership (EKAP), introduced the report noting that there had been four internal audit assignments completed since the last committee meeting; three concluded substantial assurance and one concluded substantial/reasonable assurance. Five follow up reviews had also been completed. EKAP's performance was shown in appendix 4 of the report.

During consideration of the item, it was noted that:

- Since publication of the agenda, the East Kent Housing – Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Groups follow up review had been completed. The level of assurance had risen from reasonable/limited to reasonable.
- The next audit of East Kent Services - Business Rates would review the business rate retention scheme pilot.
- The Your Leisure and Museums audits had been postponed as these departments were currently undergoing an internal review. It was expected that these audits would be included in the 2019/20 audit plan.

Members agreed to note the report, and agreed that changes to the 2018-19 internal audit plan, resulting from changes in perceived risk, detailed at point 5.0 of Annex 1 of the report be approved.

6. CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT - QUARTERLY UPDATE

Mr Willis introduced the report which provided the Committee with an update of corporate risk in accordance with the risk strategy.

During consideration of the item it was noted that:

- The risk levels for the Local Plan, Health and Safety at Work and Information Governance had reduced since the last meeting of the Committee.
- The Homelessness risk level remained at 12, however a lot of work had been done to reduce homelessness within the District which appeared to be having a positive impact. It was hoped that this success may have led to a reduction in risk level when the Committee received the update at the next meeting.

Members noted the report.

Meeting concluded: 7.40pm