

MINUTES OF THE JOINT AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES CORKS LANE HADLEIGH ON MONDAY 4  
NOVEMBER 2013 AT 9.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

**BABERGH**

**MID SUFFOLK**

Mr P D Burgoyne  
Mr D M Busby (Chairman)  
Mr J R Cartlidge  
Mr B Riley  
Mr C A Roberts  
Mr D C Rose

Mr G M Brewster  
Mr D Burn  
Mr T A Curran  
Mrs E B Gibson-Harries  
Mr D J MacPherson

1 SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES

The following Members were unable to be present:

**BABERGH**

**MID SUFFOLK**

Miss D L Kendall  
Mr L H Young

Mr S J Gemmill  
Mrs P M R Godden  
Mrs J C Storey

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None received.

3 MINUTES

**RESOLVED**

**That the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.**

4 PETITIONS

None received.

5 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

6 JOINT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Members had before them the finalised version of the Joint Annual Governance Statement for 2012/13 (Paper JAC12) which incorporated amendments arising from the Committee's consideration of the Statement on 2 September.

**RESOLVED**

**That the contents of the finalised Joint Annual Governance Statement (Paper JAC12) signed by the Chief Executive and the Council Leaders be noted.**

7 INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2013/14

John Snell, Corporate Manager – Internal Audit, introduced a report from the Head of Corporate Organisation ([Paper JAC13](#)) outlining the work undertaken for the period 1 April to 30 September 2013.

Members were advised that although some of the non-fundamental audits originally scheduled for the current year could not be carried out because of resource issues, work on the Core Financial Systems would be completed within the second six-month period of 2013/14. The Corporate Manager and the Head of Corporate Resources responded to various issues raised by Members, including:-

Resources

The Corporate Manager would ensure that all available resources are focused on meeting the Councils' statutory responsibilities with regard to systems of internal control for the remainder of the year and was confident that these audits would be completed.

Tree Audit

Follow-up report to previous audit – issues around the tree inspection data have now been resolved by the implementation of the new software.

ICT

John Snell confirmed that the Corporate Manager – Information Management and ICT (Carl Reeder) is currently looking at the policy and procedure requirements, and JMIB is overseeing the integration of the HR/ICT/public access arrangements to succeed the current CSD arrangements from April 2014. In response to a suggestion that Carl Reeder be asked to report direct to the JAC, Members noted that he is briefing the relevant TEG on a regular basis, and that a large volume of work is currently being undertaken by him and his team to address shared service and other issues.

Procurement Issues

These are currently under review by the relevant Corporate Manager, with particular reference to the establishment of a corporate framework.

Robustness of Decision Making

Work in progress – will be undertaken next year.

Financial Management

The Corporate Manager – Internal Audit will be reviewing the key workflows during the implementation of the new financial system.

Communities Officer – Funding

Members noted that this post has been advertised. They emphasised the importance of making an appointment as soon as possible in order to access potential funding for projects. In response to a request for this area to be audited, John Snell advised that this would not be productive in advance of the new officer having been in post for a reasonable period of time.

**RESOLVED**

**That the contents of the Interim Internal Audit report for the first 6 months of 2013/14 (as outlined in Paper JAC13) be noted and endorsed.**

Note: Councillors Mrs E Gibson-Harries, T A Curran and Mrs P Godden abstained from voting in respect of the above decision and requested that this be recorded in the Minutes.

8 MID YEAR REPORT ON TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2013/2014

The Head of Corporate Resources submitted a report ([Paper JAC14](#)) setting out treasury management activity for the first six months of 2013/14, as required by the Code of Practice on Treasury Management. Members were asked to review the information contained in the report, following which they agreed to recommend both full Councils to note the position.

The Head of Corporate Resources responded to Members' questions on various aspects of the information provided, including the following:-

Appendix A – paragraph 1.5

The extent to which the Councils place money with other Local Authorities, and the safeguards which exist for such deposits.

Appendix D – paragraph 1.2

Setting of Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt – based around historic levels of debt, and taking into account the effect of changes in the HRA.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

**That the treasury management activity for the first six months of 2013/14 as set out in Paper JAC14 be noted.**

9 NON-SALARY EXPENSES

The Head of Corporate Resources submitted a report ([Paper JAC15](#)) to enable Members to review the non-salary expenses of the senior managers across Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils.

During the course of the Committee's consideration, a further breakdown was requested for the item relating to 'Other Expenses' in Appendix A to the report, to be circulated to Members outside the meeting by the Head of Corporate Resources.

**RESOLVED**

**That the information contained within Paper JAC15 be noted.**

10 UPDATE ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE LOCALISM ACT 2011

The Monitoring Officer presented a report ([Paper JAC16](#)) updating the Committee on the measures taken to comply with the requirements within Chapter 7 of the Localism Act. Members were asked to identify any further actions required to secure compliance.

Members were aware from paragraph 8.2.1 of Paper JAC16 that Register of Interest forms from two Babergh District Councillors remained outstanding. After debating the matter, it was agreed that if the position is unchanged at the end of the year, the Committee at its January meeting would wish to make a recommendation to full Council to take appropriate action.

With regard to the forms which were awaited from those Parishes referred to in paragraph 8.2.3 of the report, it was suggested that relevant District Councillors could be asked to encourage their Parishes to return the outstanding forms, in addition to contact being made through Parish Clerks.

**RESOLVED**

**That the measures taken to comply with the requirements within Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011, as set out in Paper JAC16, together with the approach referred to above, be noted and that a further update be made to the next meeting.**

11 STANDARDS MONITORING REPORT: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS/GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY (JUNE TO SEPTEMBER 2013)

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report ([Paper JAC17](#)) setting out the relevant information for monitoring purposes.

**RESOLVED**

**That the information relating to Members' Interests declared at meetings (Appendices 1A and 1B to Paper JAC17) and Gifts and Hospitality (Appendices 2A and 2B) for the period 1 June 2013 to 30 September 2013 be noted.**

12 COMPLAINTS MONITORING REPORT

The Monitoring Officer submitted [Paper JAC18](#) detailing Code of Conduct complaints for the last quarter.

**RESOLVED**

**That the content of Paper JAC18 be noted.**

13 WORK PLAN

The Head of Corporate Organisation submitted a report ([Paper JAC19](#)) relating to items that had been identified on the Committee Work Plan. During the discussion the Committee identified items to be added to the Work Plan, as referred to below.

The Head of Corporate Resources reported that the January meeting might need to be replaced by separate Babergh and Mid Suffolk Audit Committee meetings to consider the respective Treasury Management Strategies for 2014/15.

**RESOLVED**

**(1) That the contents of Paper JAC19 be noted.**

**(2) That the following items be included in future Work Plans:-**

- **a further update on Compliance with the Localism Act 2011 for the next meeting, with a view to making any appropriate recommendation to each Council**
- **Non-Salary expenses – update**
- **Textile recycling bag scheme – to review in relation to Business Plan forecast**

The business of the meeting was concluded at 11.00 a.m.

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Chairman