

MINUTES OF THE JOINT AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, CORKS LANE, HADLEIGH ON MONDAY 16
MARCH 2015 AT 10:00 A.M.

PRESENT: **BABERGH**

MID SUFFOLK

Dave Busby (Chairman)
Len Young

David Burn
Stuart Gemmill
Elizabeth Gibson-Harries
Patricia Godden
Kathie Guthrie
Jane Storey

1 SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillors Gerard Brewster, James Cartlidge, Frank Lawrenson, Robert Lindsay, Duncan Macpherson, Brian Riley, Tony Roberts and David Rose.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None declared.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4 PETITIONS

None received.

5 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None received

6 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

7 MANAGING THE RISK OF FRAUD AND CORRUPTION – ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2014/15

John Snell, Corporate Manager – Internal Audit introduced Paper JAC47 which explained the current arrangements to minimise the risk of fraud and corruption. Laura Whiteheart, Audit Manager (Fraud Team) at Ipswich Borough Council was also present at the meeting, and both officers answered questions from Members on various related matters, including –

- Counter Fraud Fund – a further bid would be made if a funding opportunity arose.
- Universal Credit – no firm indication of when this might be introduced, but unlikely to be this year, as a further round of pilots is planned. Peter Quirk, Head of Corporate Organisation, to provide feedback outside the meeting on any progress.
- Protection for whistleblowers – not in cases of malice.
- Transfer of IBC staff to DWP from 1 May 2015 – some information has been circulated to Members via the Newsletter. Staff re-location details are not yet known, but it is hoped that local knowledge will not be lost. The effect of data protection and other issues regarding confidentiality under the new arrangements were noted.
- Right to buy – fraud investigation remains with the relevant District Council.
- Importance of targeting resources in 2015/16 in view of the national arrangements for counter fraud, and funding changes – Corporate Manager will monitor on an on-going basis.

RESOLVED

That the progress made in ensuring there are effective arrangements and measures in place across both Councils to minimise the risk of fraud and corruption, as outlined in Paper JAC47, be noted.

8 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2015/16

The Corporate Manager – Internal Audit introduced Paper [JAC48](#). He referred to the main aim of the Plan, which was to support areas identified as high risk. Members were asked to review and assess the proposed Internal Audit Plan attached as Appendix A to the report, prior to its approval.

In response to questions from Members, the Corporate Manager confirmed that assurance mapping and other issues such as those relevant to the Councils' Delivery Plan were part of the Internal Audit remit and that the arrangements for dealing with CIL applications, including delegation, would also be addressed.

RESOLVED

That the Internal Audit Plan for 2015/16 as detailed in Appendix A to Paper JAC48 be approved.

9 PREVENTION OF FINANCIAL CRIME POLICY

The Corporate Manager – Internal Audit introduced Paper [JAC49](#) seeking Member approval to a Policy (Appendix A to the report) which brings together the Councils' existing anti-fraud and corruption documents.

RESOLVED

That the combined revised prevention of Financial Crime Policy (previously called the Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Whistleblowing Policy) attached as Appendix A to Paper JAC49 be approved.

10 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE JOINT AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE 2014/15

Members had before them a draft report, Paper [JAC50](#), for their consideration, prior to submission of the finalised report to the Annual Council meetings.

Members noted that the contents of Paper JAC50 set out the main areas covered during the year, but expressed the view that further detail on the results of the Committee's consideration should be added. It was agreed that Peter Quirk and John Snell would amend the draft accordingly, and circulate a revised document to the members of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the contents of Paper JAC50 be noted and a revised draft of the Annual Report of the Committee for 2014/15, taking account of the matters referred to above, be circulated to the Members of the Committee prior to the Report being finalised for submission to the Annual Council meetings in May.

11 COMPLAINTS MONITORING REPORT

Jonathan Reed, Senior Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer, presented Paper [JAC51](#) on Code of Conduct complaints received or determined in the last quarter.

In relation to a concern raised about the notification of decisions where no further action was to be taken, Members were aware that they could contact the relevant officer for further information. However, in relation to a specific matter regarding Stradbroke Parish Council, Peter Quirk would investigate outside the meeting whether it was possible to make any further details available. Members generally considered that the process for dealing with complaints was somewhat lengthy and that it would be helpful to make as much information available as possible after the investigation was concluded.

RESOLVED

That the information provided in Paper JAC51 be noted.

12 UPDATE ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE LOCALISM ACT 2011

Jonathan Reed introduced Paper [JAC52](#) and reported further progress regarding the return of forms from Aldham Parish Council and that this continued to be followed up by the officers.

RESOLVED

That the measures taken to comply with the requirements within Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 outlined in Paper JAC52, together with the information reported at the meeting, be noted.

13 STANDARDS MONITORING REPORT; DECLARATION OF INTERESTS/GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY (1 NOVEMBER 2014 TO 28 FEBRUARY 2015)

RESOLVED

That the contents of Paper JAC53 be noted.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 11.20 a.m.

.....
Chairman