

## Minutes of Accounts & Audit Committee

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 27 March 2013 starting at 6.30pm  
Present: Councillor J B Hill (Chairman)

Councillors:

P Ainsworth	G Mirfin
S Bibby	R Newmark
I Brown	M Thomas
S Hore	N C Walsh

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Financial Services, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Georgia Jones (Grant Thornton).

### 759 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor R Bennett.

### 760 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Head of Financial Services referred to Minute 497 with regards to the Audit fee and informed Councillors that a further rebate of £5,640 had been received on the 2012/13 fees.

The Chairman also referred to Minute 501 and informed Georgia Jones that he had been kept fully informed with regard to this internal investigation.

### 761 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

### 762 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

### 763 CLOSURE OF ACCOUNTS TIMETABLE 2012/2013

The Director of Resources submitted a report reminding Members of the statutory requirement to close down our accounts by 30 June 2013 and to publish them including any certificate, opinion or report issued by the auditor by the 30 September 2013 and to inform Committee of the benefits of closing down the accounts by these deadlines, in particular the good governance aspects. He highlighted the principle matters covered in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 and 2006 and the further amendments made in 2009 and more recently consolidated in 2011. This included important procedural requirements as well as governance issues. The Head of Financial Services highlighted the principle

matters covered by the regulations relevant to accounts preparation and the various responsibilities. He highlighted the issues facing Ribble Valley which included budget pressures, some practical issues, resource implications and a timetable that must be strictly adhered to in order to achieve the deadlines required.

RESOLVED: That Committee endorse the suggested approach for the closure of the 2012/2013 accounts.

764 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN 2013/2014

The Director of Resources submitted a report informing Committee of the Internal Audit Plan for 2013/2014. This included the various audit areas and the planned number of working days for each of these areas. A brief explanation was given as to how the audit plan is arrived at following consultation with Directors, Heads of Service and Grant Thornton. It was also highlighted that with regard to risk management, the internal audit team would continue to have a monitoring role.

Members asked various questions with regard to the audit areas covered and in particular how the new plan compared with last year's plan.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the 2013/2014 Internal Audit Plan as outlined.

765 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2012/2013

The Director of Resources submitted a report outlining progress on the internal audit work for 2012/2013. A table setting out the assurance opinions issued from the audits carried out was included for Members information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

766 AUDIT PLAN 2012/2013

Georgia Jones (Grant Thornton) introduced the External Audit Plan for 2012/2013. She highlighted the areas covered by the plan which included the responsibilities of Grant Thornton, understanding the business, developments relevant to the business and audit focused on risks, significant generic risks identified, results of interim audit work which included internal audit, walk-through testing, review of information technology controls and journal entry controls, as well as value for money and fees and independence. She went into some detail as to how the fees were arrived at and in particular the grant certification fee.

Members asked that a briefing paper be produced on the value for money element of the audit for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

767 CERTIFICATION WORK REPORT 2011/2012

Georgia Jones presented a report on the certification of claims and returns. The report referred to the large sums of public money in grants and subsidies local

authorities receive from central government and other grant paying bodies and the returns they are required to complete providing financial information to government departments. They had certified two claims and returns for the financial year 2011/2012 relating to expenditure of £22 million. This was with reference to housing and council tax benefits and national non domestic rates returns. She informed Committee that there were a number of amendments required to the housing and council tax benefit grant claim as a result of the audit and a number of recommendations had been made to the Council in compiling accurate and timely claims for certification. Further meetings would be taking place between the auditors and the staff in that section. Committee requested to be informed on the outcome of the discussions and changes that were to take place in this regard.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

#### 768 RISK MANAGEMENT – UPDATE ON RED RISKS

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information with an update on the current areas of high risk for the Council as identified on the Risk Register.

At the time of reporting to Committee, there was only one red risk on the Council's Risk Register which was the same as reported to Committee at its meeting on 28 November 2012 and related to the delivery of the Council's paper and cardboard waste to Lancashire County Council's PFI facility. The risk status currently remained unchanged from that reported at the last meeting. He reminded Committee that this item was regularly reported and considered by Community Committee.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

#### 769 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Jane Pearson (414430).