

Minutes of a meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held on Friday 21 November 2014 at City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 1105
Concluded 1200

PRESENT – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Eaton	L Smith	J Sunderland
	Swallow	

Observers: Councillor Green and Councillor Naylor

Councillor L Smith in the Chair

39. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

40. MINUTES

Resolved -

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September, 10 and 24 October 2014 be signed as a correct record.

41. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.



42. PRODUCER CITY GOVERNANCE

Previous Reference: Minute 17 (2014/15)

Members were reminded that this Committee at its meeting held on 25 July 2014 considered a report on the Producer City Strategy and Governance and resolved:

- (1) *That the progress to establish a Producer City Board and the three supporting partnership boards be noted.*
- (2) *That a further report be presented to this Committee at its meeting on 21 November 2014 which includes information on composition of the boards; identification, delivery and measurement of the objectives; financial management and governance arrangements; interface with Overview and Scrutiny; accountability; how well the boards are doing in relation to their objectives and growth aspirations.*
- (3) *That the observation/comments made by the Committee on the content of the report be referred to the Producer City Board and constituent Boards for their consideration.*

In accordance with resolution 2 above the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Culture submitted **Document "Y"** which provided an update on progress to establish governance structures to deliver the Producer City strategy through the creation of a new Producer City Board and associated delivery boards.

Members commented on a number of issues which included:

- That they felt reassured that no duplication was taking place within the various boards.
- Pleased with the work being undertaken and the vision the strategy had.
- Highlighted the importance of communication with elected Members and keeping them informed of the work being undertaken by the various boards.
- Needed to make it easier for Members to access the information relating to the boards.
- Concerned about board meetings being held in private; needed a mechanism where Members could have easy access to the meetings.
- Bradford should be mentioned at national level; needed to look at influencing national politics on issues relating to Bradford; Local politicians needed to do more to raise Bradford's profile on a national scale.
- Concerned about the lack of female representatives on the boards.
- Frustrated that the Government were considering Manchester, Leeds and Hull as the only cities in the North.
- Concerned that decisions were being taken about Bradford by people outside Bradford who knew very little about it.

In response to the comments raised the Leader:

- Accepted the point in relation to having the board meeting in public and having easier access to the minutes and dates of board meetings.
- Ways of making parts of a meeting in public needed looking at.
- A number of women were approached to sit on the boards but why they did not apply would be looked into further.

Resolved –

- (1) That the progress to establish the Producer City Board and the three supporting partnership boards be noted.**
- (2) That the proposals for the delivery of the Producer City and the associated governance arrangements be endorsed.**
- (3) That Members observations/comments on the content of the report be referred to the Producer City Board and constituent Boards for their consideration.**

ACTION: Strategic Director, Regeneration and Culture

43. THE ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER FOR THE 2013/14 AUDITS OF CITY OF BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL AND WEST YORKSHIRE PENSION FUND

Previous Reference: Minute 26 (2014/2015)

The External Auditor submitted **Document “V”** which summarised the key issues arising from the Annual Audit Letter for the 2013/14 Audits of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and the West Yorkshire Pension Fund which had been reported previously to the Committee during the year.

The letter also summarised the key issues detailed in the Audit Completion Reports which were presented to the Committee on 19 September 2014.

Members acknowledged the findings of the audit and were pleased with the outcome of the Audit considering the financial challenges the Council was facing.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Annual Audit Letter for the 2013/14 Audits of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and the West Yorkshire Pension Fund was considered.**
- (2) That the External Auditor and the Director of Finance and his staff be thanked for the level of effort involved in concluding the Annual Audit process in a satisfactory and professional manner.**

44. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2014/15– MONITORING REPORT AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2014

Previous Reference: Minute 77 (2013/14)

The Director of Finance submitted **Document “W”** which brought to the attention of members of the Committee any significant issues arising from the audit work undertaken to date and informed them about the progress made up to 30 September 2014, against the Internal Audit Plan, which was approved by the Committee on 4 April 2014.

It was reported that the Health and Wellbeing Board should be considering issues relating to Continuing Healthcare paragraph 3.3.4 and S117 Mental Health Aftercare paragraph 3.3.5 of the report.

Resolved –

- (1) **That assurance be taken from the results to date that show that the control environment of the authority is overall satisfactory.**
- (2) **That the anticipated coverage and changes of Internal Audit work during the year be endorsed.**
- (3) **That Internal Audit be required to monitor the control environment and continue to assess areas of control weakness and the ability of management to deliver improvements to the control environment when required.**
- (4) **That Internal Audit be required to monitor its resourcing levels to ensure that they are sufficient and appropriate to support an effective Internal Audit function.**

ACTION: *Director of Finance*

45. USE OF COUNCIL RESOURCES FOR ELECTION PURPOSES

Previous Reference: Minute 31 (2014/15)
Council Minute 38 (2014/15)

Members were reminded that on 10 October 2014 the Monitoring Officer submitted a statutory report under Section 5 of the Local Government Act 1989 on the use of Council resources for election purposes to the meeting of the Committee. The Committee requested additional information and resolved that a further report be submitted in November which addresses the issues raised at the meeting.

In accordance with the above the Assistant City Solicitor submitted **Document “X”** which provided the further information sought by the Committee at its meeting on 10 October 2014.

The Assistant City Solicitor reported that the further information requested by the Committee was detailed in paragraph 3 of the report. He also stated that the officer time spent should be 7 hours 30 minutes and not 7 hours as stated in the report and that the total figure should be £99.38 and not £92.75.

It was reported that the outcome of the Standards Process was that the Chair of the Standards Committee in consultation with the Monitoring Officer had determined that the Member should be given 28 days in which to provide an apology to all Members of the Council. No further action would be taken once the Member had done so.

Members were informed that the Protocol on Members and officer relations did not directly deal with circumstances where officers were subject to matrix management, namely where officers work to the direction of a member but were also line-managed by a more senior officer.

The Chair stated that as there seemed to be a dispute in relation to the amount of Council resources that had been used the authority's internal auditors needed to look into the matter and resolve it. She reported that the discrepancy seemed to be somewhere between finance and legal.

The Chair emphasised that the relevant protocols on Members' Use of Council Resources needed revisiting and reported that these be submitted to the Committee.

Resolved –

- (1) That the issues relating to the discrepancies in relation to the amount of Council resources that had been used be referred to Internal Audit for it to be included in the Internal Audit Plan.**
- (2) That in light of the issues highlighted in the report (Document "X") the Protocols on Members Use of Council Resources, Member-Officer Relations and the Members Code of Conduct be revisited and submitted to this Committee for consideration.**

ACTION: Assistant City Solicitor/Director of Finance

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Committee.