

Agenda for a meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee to be held on Friday 27 November 2015 at 1100 in Committee Room 1, City Hall, Bradford

Members of the Committee – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	THE INDEPENDENTS
Eaton	L Smith (Ch)	Naylor
	Thornton (DCh)	
	Swallow	

Alternates:

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	THE INDEPENDENTS
Ellis	Farley	Hawkesworth
	K Hussain	

Notes:

- This agenda can be made available in Braille, large print or audio format on request by contacting the Agenda contact shown below.
- The taking of photographs, filming and sound recording of the meeting is allowed except if Councillors vote to exclude the public to discuss confidential matters covered by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Recording activity should be respectful to the conduct of the meeting and behaviour that disrupts the meeting (such as oral commentary) will not be permitted. Anyone attending the meeting who wishes to record or film the meeting's proceedings is advised to liaise with the Agenda Contact who will provide guidance and ensure that any necessary arrangements are in place. Those present who are invited to make spoken contributions to the meeting should be aware that they may be filmed or sound recorded.
- If any further information is required about any item on this agenda, please contact the officer named at the foot of that agenda item.

From:

Dermot Pearson
 Interim City Solicitor
 Agenda Contact: Fatima Butt
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To:



A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

The City Solicitor will report the names of alternate Members who are attending the meeting in place of appointed Members.

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

(Members Code of Conduct - Part 4A of the Constitution)

To receive disclosures of interests from members and co-opted members on matters to be considered at the meeting. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

Notes:

- (1) Members may remain in the meeting and take part fully in discussion and voting unless the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or an interest which the Member feels would call into question their compliance with the wider principles set out in the Code of Conduct. Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.
- (2) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (3) Members are also welcome to disclose interests which are not disclosable pecuniary interests but which they consider should be made in the interest of clarity.
- (4) Officers must disclose interests in accordance with Council Standing Order 44.

3 MINUTES

Recommended –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2015 be signed as a correct record (previously circulated).



4. **INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS**

(Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 3B of the Constitution)

Reports and background papers for agenda items may be inspected by contacting the person shown after each agenda item. Certain reports and background papers may be restricted.

Any request to remove the restriction on a report or background paper should be made to the relevant Director or Assistant Director whose name is shown on the front page of the report.

If that request is refused, there is a right of appeal to this meeting.

Please contact the officer shown below in advance of the meeting if you wish to appeal.

(Fatima Butt - 01274 432227)

B. BUSINESS ITEMS

5. **THE ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER FOR THE 2014/15 AUDITS OF CITY OF BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL AND WEST YORKSHIRE PENSION FUND**

The External Auditor will submit the Annual Audit Letter (**Document “AA”**) which summarises the key issues arising from the audits of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and West Yorkshire Pension Fund for 2014/15.

Recommended-

That the Annual Audit Letter for the 2014/15 audits of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and West Yorkshire Pension Fund be considered.

(Steve Appleton – 01274 431995)

6. **A REVISED SANCTIONS POLICY, IN RESPECT OF THOSE WHO COMMIT OFFENCES OF FRAUD, CORRUPTION, THEFT OR OTHER FINANCIAL IRREGULARITY, AGAINST THE COUNCIL**

The Council has been applying sanctions and bringing prosecutions for offences of Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB) fraud since 1999 under a Committee approved policy. Over time offences such as Council Tax Single Person Discount (SPD) and Misuse of Disabled Persons Blue Badge Scheme were added to the policy as the remit of the Revenues and Benefits Investigation team expanded.

As the responsibility for the investigation, sanction and prosecution of Housing Benefit transferred to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) in April 2015, the policy now requires revision to both remove reference to Housing Benefit fraud and to account for the types of fraud that the single Corporate Fraud



Unit are now investigating. The revised policy also needs to consider the criteria used to determine whether a prosecution or an alternative to prosecution sanction is appropriate.

The Finance Director will submit **Document “AB”** which seeks approval on a revised Council policy in respect of applying sanctions and/or pursuing criminal action, through the Courts, to those who commit offences of fraud, corruption, theft or other financial irregularity against the Council.

Recommended-

That the revised Sanctions Policy (Appendix A to Document “AB”) be approved.

(Tracey Banfield – 01274 434794)

7. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Previous Reference: Council Minute 58 (2015/16)

The Council on 20 October 2015 referred the Motion on “Council Standing Orders – Report of the Leader of Council” to the Governance and Audit Committee.

In accordance with the above the Interim City Solicitor will submit **Document “AC”** which sets out the terms of the Motion so that the Governance and Audit Committee may make appropriate recommendations to Council.

Recommended-

That Committee make recommendations to Council on the amendments to the Constitution of the Council proposed in the Motion.

(Dermot Pearson – 01274 432496)

8. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2015/16 – MONITORING REPORT AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2015

Previous Reference: Minute 16 (2015/16)

The Director of Finance will submit **Document “AD”** which brings to the attention of members of the Committee any significant issues arising from the audit work undertaken to date and to inform them about the progress made up to 30 September 2015, against the Internal Audit Plan, which was approved by the Committee on 24 July 2015.



Recommended-

That the Committee:

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

(Mark St Romaine – 01274 432888)

