

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale on Monday 6th January, 2014 at 5 pm.

Present:

R.Hull – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors:

L M Adams	R Smith
(Mrs) A Calvert	J Watts
C Davies	P Wasley
M Griffiths	E Webster
K Montague	D Weeks
M Norris	

Officers in Attendance:

Mr P Griffiths – Service Director, Performance & Resources
Mr M Crumbie – Operational Audit Manager
Mr C Jones – Service Director, Legal & Democratic Services
Mr R Evans – Human Resources Manager
Mr J Davey – Senior Human Resources Officer

41. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the Committee meeting and took the opportunity to wish both Committee Members and Officers a Happy New Year.

42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors (Mrs) J Bunnage, J Davies, S Lloyd and B Stephens and Mr J Saunders, Wales Audit Office.

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct the following declaration was made pertaining to the agenda:-

Agenda Item 5 - County Borough Councillor K Montague made a personal but non prejudicial interest – “I am a staff member of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, who are partners in this service”.

44 MINUTES

RESOLVED – to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on the 20th November, 2013.

45 MATTERS ARISING

- a) Minute 37 (b) – the Operational Audit Manager confirmed that a review of the Rhondda Heritage Park was complete and a draft report had been issued to Management.
- b) Minute 37 (c) – The Operational Audit Manager confirmed that all Youth Centre bank accounts were now administered using the Council’s provider.
- c) Minute 39 (d) – Members were advised that the presentation in relation to pre-employment checks and the new DBS system was being presented at Item 3 on the agenda.
- d) Minute 40 (b) – It was confirmed that the ‘Financial Procedure Rules’ PowerPoint presentation slides had been emailed to all Members for information.
- e) Minute 40 (c) – The Operational Audit Manager provided the Committee with a brief update on the base case return from the Icelandic Banking Sector. From the £3 million initially invested, £2.892 million had been returned, the Operational Audit Manager confirmed that there was no evidence to suggest that any further material amounts would be received from this point forward.

46 DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE UPDATE

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation the Committee were provided with an overview of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), raising Members awareness of the E-Bulk system, the DBS update service and the single certificate.

The Human Resources Manager commenced the presentation by advising of the E-bulk process along with the services across the Council that have adopted the new system. The benefits of the new system and process were also noted: the new system has resulted in a reduction of costs and quicker turnaround times which in turn has reduced delays in the recruitment process. The Human Resources Manager commented upon the positive improvements noted in turnaround of applications, with 40% of results known within 24 hours and 75% of results known within 1 week.

The Senior Human Resources Officer continued the presentation by advising Members of the DBS update service, which allows applicants to keep their DBS certificate up to date online, therefore allowing employers to check a certificate online. The Officer advised that this provision was however individually led, and could not be imposed by the Council.

The Officer concluded his presentation by advising of the DBS single certificate and that the Council, along with all Registered Bodies, no longer receive copies of certificates. This also gives individuals an opportunity to appeal the content of their certificate. Information in relation to police filtering of certain convictions was also discussed and the Officer referred Members attention to a flow chart illustrating the new application process.

The Chairman thanked the officers for their PowerPoint presentation and opened up the item to Members comments.

One Member queried the procedure when individuals were unable to access the internet to complete the application process and the Senior Human Resources Officer advised that paper forms could be completed, with the information being inputted online on behalf of the applicant, or access to online facilities could be provided.

Members commented on their concerns with the Police filtering stage of the application and the Officers assured Members that this was filtered against a robust list of criteria illustrating what could or could not be filtered. Members of the Committee commented positively on the update service.

Following discussions it was **RESOLVED:-**

- a) To note the content of the report
- b) That the Committee's concerns in respect of filtering be provided to the DBS service.

REPORTS OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES

47 PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2013/14 AUDIT PLAN

The Operational Audit Manager referred Members to the report before them, which provided an update on the progress made by the Internal Audit Service in delivering the Audit Plan 2013/14, together with performance against targets for the service up to 30th November 2013.

It was reported that at 30th November 2013, 49% of the Audit Plan had been completed to report stage and that the performance indicators for the service did not raise any concerns.

A question was raised by Committee as to how much of the audit plan would be completed by the end of the financial year, The Operational

Audit Manager confirmed that 100% would not be achieved but provided assurance to the Committee that the Internal Audit Service would strive to complete as much of the audit plan as possible. The Operational Audit Manager also confirmed that audit reviews have been prioritised in consultation with the Wales Audit Office.

Following discussions the Committee **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the report.

48. FINALISED AUDIT ASSIGNMENTS 2013/14

The Committee were presented with a summary of audit assignments completed between 12th November and 13th December 2013. The report outlined a summary of the reviews undertaken and the audit opinions for each assignment.

The Committee considered the summarised audit assignments in respect of:

- Private Sector Housing Grants
- Trallwng Infants (Cheque Book)
- Hendreforgan Primary
- Grounds Maintenance – Schools
- Car Parking Enforcement
- Permitting Procedures

Following consideration of the above mentioned summaries, it was **RESOLVED:**

- a) To note the contents of the report;
- b) That the target timescale for processing applications for Private Sector Housing Grants be provided to Committee.
- c) The Committee receives an overview of how an applicant for a Private Sector Housing Grant is advised that a local land charge may be applied to the property in question.
- d) That the Director, Education & Lifelong Learning be invited to the next Committee to provide an outline of the action taken in relation to the issue identified within the Internal Audit Review of Trallwng Infants School.
- e) That the Operational Audit Manager undertake an audit review to provide assurance that no other members of staff have commenced duties within a school environment without the necessary processes having been followed.
- f) That the Audit Committee's concerns into school compliance with pre-employment checks be referred to the Education & Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee.
- g) The reason(s) for the agreed Management response dates for the Grounds Maintenance Audit Review be provided to the next Committee.

49 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT.

The Chairman advised Members of the potential change of date to the next scheduled meeting and added that Members would be made aware of the revised date, once confirmed.

**MR.ROGER HULL
CHAIRMAN**

The meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.

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