

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Committee held in the Coltman VC Room at the Town Hall, Burton upon Trent on 9th February 2023.

Present:

Councillors E. Barker (Chairman), A. A. Chaudhry, M. Fitzpatrick, S. Gaskin, T. Hadley, P. Hudson, C. Sylvester and Mrs B. Toon.

Officers Present:

The Head of Service (Sal Khan), the Chief Accountant and the Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present:

S. Jassel (Grant Thornton).

35/23 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest at the commencement of the meeting.

36/23 **MINUTES**

That the Minutes of the meetings held 7th December 2022 were approved and signed as a correct record.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor E Barker		
Councillor A A Chaudhry		
Councillor M Fitzpatrick		
S Gaskin		
T Hadley		
P Hudson		
C Sylvester		
Councillor Mrs B Toon		

37/23 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business submitted to the meeting pursuant to Rule 12.

38/23 **EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS UPDATE**

(Grant Thornton) The representative from Grant Thornton informed Members that in November 2022 they reported their preliminary findings to the Audit Committee and set out the areas of work in progress. She reported that since then they had continued to work closely with the Council's finance team and its property valuer to resolve outstanding queries on the valuations of plant, property and equipment (PPE) and

investment properties. The property valuer had addressed some but not all the audit queries and therefore their work was still ongoing.

She also gave an update on the key audit deliverables including the recent certification of the Housing Benefits Subsidy Claim in line with the national timeframes.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

39/23 **MID-YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT**

The Chief Accountant presented the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and the Annual Investment Strategy 2023/24, which fulfils various statutory requirements and best practice guidelines in respect of the Council's Treasury activities and also its capital investment plans.

An opportunity for questions followed.

Resolved:

That Members recommended that full Council approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision, and the Annual Investment Strategy 2023/24 set out in Appendix A to the report, and did not make any comments or observations to full Council.

An opportunity for questions followed.

Resolved:

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor E Barker		
Councillor A A Chaudhry		
Councillor M Fitzpatrick		
S Gaskin		
T Hadley		
P Hudson		
C Sylvester		
Councillor Mrs B Toon		

40/23 **UPDATE ON APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS 2023/24 TO 2027/28**

The Chief Accountant updated Members on the Update of Appointment of External Auditors for 2023/24 to 2027/28.

She informed Members that they may recall a report was submitted and approved at Council regarding the Authority opting in the national procurement exercise operated by PSAA, in terms of the appointment of external auditors. On 19th December 2022 the Council had notification from the PSAA that Azzets Audit Services has been appointed to be the Council's external auditors for the period 2023/24 through to 2027/28.

She informed Members that she would keep the Committee updated on their progress.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

41/23 **QUESTIONS**

There were no questions submitted to the Committee prior to the meeting.

42/22 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:

To be confirmed.

Chairman