
Minutes of the meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee, held in Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Monday, 30 July 2018

Present:

Members:

Councillor T Cutmore	Chairman
Councillor A Davies	
Councillor A Erskine	
Councillor A Hedley	Vice-Chairman
Councillor R Mitchell	
Councillor Dr R Moore	
Councillor M Platt	
Councillor K Smith	
Councillor A Turrell	

Also Present:

Aaminah Aziz	Ernst and Young (external auditors)
Dan Cooke	Ernst and Young (external auditors)
Janet Dawson	Ernst and Young (external auditors)

ECC Officers:

Sam Andrews	Investment Manager (Essex Pension Fund)
Christine Golding	Chief Accountant
Andy Gribben	Senior Democratic Services Officer (clerk to the meeting)
Margaret Lee	Executive Director for Corporate and Customer Services
Paul Turner	Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer)

Councillor S Barker observed the meeting in her capacity as Chairman of the Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board and Chairman of the Investment Steering Committee.

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Chairman welcomed members of the committee, officers in attendance, representatives for Ernst and Young, Councillor Barker and members of the public to the meeting.

He reminded members that the meeting was being broadcast live over the internet and that the full discussion would be publicly available on the County Council's website after the meeting.

2. Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest.

The report of Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received, and it was noted that:

1. The membership of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee was noted.
2. Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Turrell. Councillor Maddocks (substitute) also regretted he was unable to attend.
3. No declarations of interest were made. The Chairman reminded members that any interests must be declared during the meeting if the need to do so arose.

3. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 June were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to a correction being made that noted the apology of Councillor Mitchell.

There were no matters arising.

4. Variation in the Order of Business

The Chairman of the committee, Councillor Cutmore, with the approval of the members present determined that the order of business be varied from that shown on the agenda, so that the audit reports should be considered in advance of the recommendations on the Statement of Accounts.

5. 2017/2018 Audit Results Report for Essex County Council

Members received a report (AGS/18/18 and appendix) from Margaret Lee, Executive Director for Corporate and Customer Services and a presentation from Janet Dawson of the external auditors Ernst and Young.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

6. 2017/2018 Audit Results Report for the Essex Pension Fund

Members received a report (AGS/17/18 and appendix) from Margaret Lee, Executive Director for Corporate and Customer Services and a presentation from Janet Dawson of the external auditors Ernst and Young.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

7. 2017/2018 Statement of Accounts

Members received a report (AGS/16/18 and appendix) from Margaret Lee, Executive Director for Corporate and Customer Services and a presentation from Christine Golding, Chief Accountant, Essex County Council.

The Chairman reminded members that the draft Annual Governance Statement was considered by the Committee at the June meeting and that the version presented to them reflected the comments made at that meeting and also comments made by the Corporate Governance Steering Board.

Resolved

That the committee:

- i. Note the matters raised in the External Auditor's Audit Results Reports;
- ii. Approve the updated draft of the 2017/18 Annual Governance Statement, which is included in the Statement of Accounts document; and
- iii. Approve the updated draft of the 2017/18 Statement of Accounts.
- iv. Note the representations that the Executive Director for Corporate and Customer Services will make on behalf of the Council and the Essex Pension Fund (as set out within the Letters of Representation appended to the Audit Results Reports).

8. Chairman's thanks to the external auditors, Ernst and Young

The Chairman, on behalf of the committee, expressed his gratitude to the representatives from the external auditors, Ernst and Young. He noted that this was to be their last public meeting as, once they conclude the year's audit, they would cease to be the Council's auditors. The Chairman reminded the Committee that BDO LLP will be the Council's external auditor from 2018/19.

9. Declarations of Interest

Members received a report (AGS/19/18) from Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance.

The report considered the current rules about when members who have declared an interest are required to leave the room and requested the committee to agree to consult members of the council on changing this rule.

Resolved

That all Members of the Council are consulted on proposals to amend the constitution and the Code of Conduct so that:

- a) Interested Members who would not be permitted to vote will continue to be required to leave the room for the duration of all discussion relating to that matter and be unable to vote.
- b) Members may nonetheless be present in the room for the part of that item of business if they are providing information to the committee and subsequently answering questions as part of the meeting as part of a procedure adopted by that Committee at which a member of the public would also be allowed to take part.

10 Date of next meeting

The members of the committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled to be on Monday 17 September 2018 at 10:00am, Committee Room 1, County Hall.

In addition, it was noted that there was a meeting scheduled for 10 December 2018 at 10:00am, Committee Room 1, County Hall.

11. Dates of 2019 meetings

Resolved

That the dates for meetings of the Committee in 2019 shall be 25 March, 3 June, 29 July, 16 September and 9 December.

The meeting closed at 11.05am.

.....
Chairman
17 September 2018