



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Audit, Risk and Standards Committee

Minutes

Monday, 02 October 2023 at 10:00

PRESENT:-

Councillor Carpenter (in the Chair), Councillor Capewell, Councillor Galer, Councillor Lawn, Councillor Newcombe, Councillor Stenhouse, Councillor Wainwright
Karen Sly (Executive Director – Resources), Kaye E. Bate (Corporate Risk Officer), Lorna Snow (Financial Services Manager), Debbie Hanson (EY), Andrea Krout (Democratic Services Officer).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence given at the meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest given at the meeting.

3 MINUTES

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

4 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the above minutes.

5 ANNUAL REPORT ON RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS 2022/2023

The Committee received and considered the report from the Corporate Risk Officer. The Corporate Risk Officer reported that the report provided details of the key risk management developments during 2022/2023 for the Committee's review. The report would provide a significant source of evidence to enable the Committee to approve the Annual Governance Statement.

The Corporate Risk Officer reported that over the last year, the Corporate Risk Officer and the Management Team had undertaken further steps towards establishing the Risk Management Framework which together with the Council's culture, ensured effective and consistent risk management as an integral part of the authority's activities. Fundamental to the successful implementation of risk management was an adherence to the principles as set out within the framework. At the time of writing the report, there were no significant non-compliance issues to report with regards to corporate risk management.

The Corporate Risk Officer identified the progress that had been made over the last year and outlined the Risk Management Arrangements Action Plan for 2023/2024.

The Corporate Risk Officer gave a reasonable risk rating overall.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee noted and approved the annual report on the Council's Risk Management arrangements.

6 2022/23 DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Committee received and considered the report from the Corporate Risk Officer, which had been deferred from the previous meeting.

The Corporate Risk Officer reported that GYBC has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government. This statement explains how GYBC has complied with the code and also meets the requirement of regulation 4(2) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 in relation to conducting a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control.

The Corporate Risk Officer outlined the arrangements that are in place for ensuring good governance and the management of risk. The Annual Governance Statement has been informed by the Code of Corporate Governance and the assurance statements that are completed by members of the Management Team. It also recognises any gaps that were identified during 2022/2023 and the actions that will be taken to address these areas of concern during 2023/2024.

The AGS is for 2022/2023 and refers to the Committee form of Governance that was in operation at that time. In future there will be a move to the Cabinet and Scrutiny on the AGS and the associated governance arrangements.

The Annual Governance Report makes reference to the action plan for the previous year 2021/2022. Outstanding actions have been carried over, along with new actions for 2023/2024 and these are detailed in the report.

Over the coming year steps will be taken to address the matter identified in the report to further enhance the governance arrangements. These steps will address the need for improvements that were identified during the review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of the next annual review

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee considered and approved the 2022/2023 Annual Governance Statement.

7 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

A verbal update was given by the Executive Director-Resources and Debbie Hanson, EY.

The Executive Director – Resources reported that last year when the draft statements were presented to the Committee, there were still a few areas to be finalised including the VFM work which is still outstanding with further work ongoing.

The audit of the 2020/2021 financial statements is now complete. A number of adjustments have been made and these have all been agreed.

Three areas of significant risk were identified: management of the GYN contract, management of the Market Place redevelopment and issues regarding housing stock. The Council has subsequently taken action to address these issues.

The report was unable to be completed until the independent report had been received.

Councillor Wainwright queried whether the delay in the 2021/2022 financial statement would have an implication for fees.

Debbie Hanson advised that it would have an impact but she had worked with the council and it would have no impact on valuations.

The Executive Director-Resources advised that there was a significant backlog of audits nationwide which was a problem that needed to be addressed and recent proposals have been announced to address the backlog, although these have not been finalised.

In response to a question from the committee, the Executive Director-Resources advised that a funding announcement was expected later this month. Funding is a challenging issue and painful decisions would have to be made. This would be considered internally and be brought back to the Committee at a later date.

The Chairman queried when this was likely to be.

Debbie Hanson advised that it was hoped plans on how to move forward would be ready by the end of October.

8 WORK PROGRAMME

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that there was no other business being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration at the meeting.

The meeting ended at: TBC