

COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

At a **MEETING** of the **AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE** held at Fire Service Headquarters, on **31 July 2019 at 10.00 am.**

PRESENT:
DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL:
DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL:

Cllr J Turnbull in the Chair
 Cllrs B Avery, D Bell and L Marshall
 Cllr G Lee

OFFICERS:
INTERNAL AUDIT:
MAZARS:

T Hope and S Nattrass
 S Carter
 G Barker, C Dearden and J Greener

Item

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr E Scott.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 May 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3 Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference

T Hope outlined the Audit and Risk Committee terms of reference for members information.

4 Audit Completion Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

G Barker presented the audit completion report which summarised the audit conclusions and circulated a letter detailing the conclusion of outstanding matters. Thanks were noted to all staff involved for their cooperation with a challenging process and timetable.

Cllr Lee requested clarity regarding pensions. G Barker confirmed that the pension liability had been increased but this would not affect the level of cash reserves.

ACTION: Members **noted** the Audit Completion Report and the conclusion of pending matters letter which confirmed completion of the audit of County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Authority and Group for the year ending 31 March 2019.

5 Statement of Accounts year ended 31 March 2019

T Hope presented the report to seek Members approval of the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2019.

ACTION: Members **approved** the Statement of Accounts for County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority for the financial year ended 31 March 2019.

6 Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

T Hope presented the report to seek Members approval of the 2018/19 Annual Governance Statement. The significant Governance issues were highlighted and it was agreed that a quarterly update report would be presented to the committee.

ACTION: Members **approved** the 2018/19 Annual Governance Statement.

7 Statement of Assurance 2018/19

S Natrass introduced the report to seek members approval of the 2018/19 Statement of Assurance prior to publication.

Members queried the Fire Service's input with planning applications and access requirements. S Natrass confirmed that the Service were able to advise on access but were not able to enforce.

ACTION: Members **approved** the 2018/19 Statement of Assurance.

8 Annual Internal Audit Opinion and Report 2018/19

S Carter introduced the report which set out details of the work carried out by Internal Audit during 2018/19. Internal Audit had issued a moderate overall assurance opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal control operating across the Authority in 2018/19.

ACTION: Members **considered** the Annual Internal Audit Report and the overall opinion provided on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's control environment for 2018/19 and **noted** that the report was presented to the Service Leadership Team at their meeting on 19 June 2019.

9 Annual Review of the System of Internal Audit

T Hope introduced the report which requested Members consider and comment on the annual review of the system of internal audit.

ACTION: Members **considered** the findings and conclusions of the 2018/19 review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit.

10 Internal Audit Charter

S Carter introduced the report to seek approval for the Internal Audit Charter initially agreed in July 2018 to be applied to all reviews undertaken as part of the Internal Audit plan for 2019/20. It was highlighted that no amendments had been made to the Internal Audit Charter.

ACTION: Members **agreed** the Internal Audit Charter for 2019 and **noted** that the report was presented to the Service Leadership Team at their meeting on 19 June 2019.

11 Fraud and Corruption Annual Report

S Carter presented the report which provided advice and assurance to members regarding the work being undertaken within the Authority in seeking to identify, control and prevent fraud and corruption.

ACTION: Members **noted** the progress made and assurances provided in relation to the Authority's anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements.

The committee noted thanks to Mazars, Internal Audit and all staff involved in report preparations.

PART B

No reports were submitted to this meeting.

