

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2015, 1400 HOURS, COMMITTEE ROOM 6, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM

PRESENT: - Councillor Phil Walkling in the Chair;

Councillors Tristan Chatfield, Sybil Spence, Jess Phillips,
Fergus Robinson & Randal Brew

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

787 Apologies were noted on behalf of Councillors Paulette Hamilton, Paul Tilsley

788 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

1. Councillor Randal Brew declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to his directorship role at Acivico
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PUBLIC MINUTES

789 **RESOLVED:-**

That the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 27th January 2015 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN'S REPORT CONCERNING MISS 'X'

A report of the Chief Executive & the Strategic Director for People was submitted:

Miranda Freeman, Chris Atkinson and Simon Wellman attended the meeting and in response to comments and questions by Members the following points were noted:-

- References were made to 3-3.1 to 3.2, 4-4.1 to 4.7, 5-5.1 to 5.3, 6-6.1 to 6.4 & 7-7.1 to 7.3
- General agreement that all future correspondence to parents relating to home to school transport should have the following:
 1. Clarity
 2. Prior Legal approval regarding the contents and layout
 3. Standard format in the main
- Concern over in excess of 700 remaining parents who did not complain
- Confirmed that claimants could only claim with a 12 month window effective from the date of receiving their letter

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RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the report be noted; and
 - (ii) That relevant officers be instructed to seek prior Legal advice as a matter of course regarding written correspondence to parents; and
 - (iii) That advice be sought from Legal to with regards to practicality of providing support as detailed above; and
 - (iv) That a briefing paper be circulated to all Members of the Committee regarding the rights of 'Home to School Transport'; and
 - (v) That update/s be provided to the Committee at future meeting/s
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CORPORATE RISK REGISTER UPDATE

A report of the Assistant Director, Audit & Risk Management was submitted:

Cynthia Carran attended the meeting and in response to comments and questions from Members the following point was noted:

References were made to the following information:

- 2-2.1 to 2.6
- Risk 59 (Page 18)
- Risk 60 (Page 18)
- Risk 61 (Page 21)

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RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the Committee note the increased risks as detailed below:

Risk 14b-Failure to obtain investment into schools stock.

Risk 45 - Loss of personal or sensitive data; and

(ii) That the Committee note the reduced risks as detailed below:

Risk 40 - Financial implications of failing to meet obligations regarding climate change and sustainability - carbon tax cost.

Risk 47 - Supply chain failure by reason of supplier withdrawal, liquidation or contract non-compliance: and

(iii) That the Committee approved three new risks as detailed below:

Risk 59 - Risk of enforcement action and fines of up to £500,000 by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for failure to comply with the 40 day timescale for responding to; Subject Access Requests (SARs).

Risk 60 - Insufficient resources or finance to agree the change programme and deliver what is needed.

Risk 61 - Inability to respond to the improvement agenda for Children: and

(iv) That the Committee noted that there were no proposed re-wordings / amendments to risks; and

(v) That the Committee confirmed the addition of a risk regarding the implications of the outcome of the Kerslake review; and

(vi) That the Committee approved the revisions to the Council's Risk Management Policy, Strategy and Methodology documents at Appendices B, C and D respectively

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT-PROGRESS

A report of the Director of Finance was submitted:

Sarah Dunlavey attended the meeting and in response to comments and questions from Members the following points were noted:

- References made in relation to Appendix 1-pages 1 to 7

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RESOLVED:-

(i) That the report be noted; and

- (ii) That a briefing be provided to the Committee at a future meeting regarding equal pay claims including the implications of a European ruling about annual leave and overtime in relation to Birmingham City Council
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INFORMING THE AUDIT RISK ASSESSMENT

A report of the External Auditor & Director of Finance was submitted:

Richard Percival & Phil W Jones attended the meeting and in response to comments and questions from Members the following points were noted:

References made to the following:

- Page 4- items under 'Communication'
- Pages 5 to 8
- Pages 12 to 14
- Pages 21 to 24 (Group Accounts)

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RESOLVED:-

That the report be noted

GRANT THORNTON-AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

A report of the External Auditor was submitted:

Richard Percival & Phil W Jones attended the meeting and in response to comments and questions from Members the following points were noted:

References were made to the following:

- Pages 5 & 6
- Confirmation of 'Letter of electors relating to challenge to the 2013-2014 accounts' being circulated to Members of the Committee
- Page 13-Appendix 1 (Accounting for LA maintained schools)
- Pages 7 to 16

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RESOLVED:-

That the report be noted

AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

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RESOLVED:-

That the Chairman (or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairman if appropriate) be and is hereby authorised to act until the next meeting of the Committee except in respect of the exercise of the Council's non-Executive functions, the appropriate Chief Officers are hereby authorised to act in consultation with the Chairman and that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to affix the Corporate Seal to any document necessary to give effect to a decision of the said officers acting in pursuance of the power hereby delegated to them; further that a report of all action taken under this authority be submitted to the next meeting and that such report shall explain why this authority was used.

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

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Members of the Committee expressed their thanks for the support and guidance of the Chairman during the year.

The meeting concluded at 15:01 hours.

Chairman