

## ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

9 FEBRUARY 2016

### PRESENT

Councillor A. Mitchell (in the Chair).

Councillors J. Baugh, C. Boyes, B. Brotherton, D. Butt (Vice-Chairman), N. Evans and T. Ross

#### In attendance

Director of Finance	(I. Duncan)
Head of Partnerships & Communities	(K. Purnell)
Audit and Assurance Manager	(M. Foster)
Information Governance Manager	(P. Fox)
Principal Audit & Assurance Team Leader	(J. Miller)
Democratic & Scrutiny Officer	(C. Gaffey)

#### Also in attendance

M. Heap, Grant Thornton UK LLP

H. Stevenson, Grant Thornton UK LLP

### 36. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Chairman confirmed that this would be the Director of Finance's final Accounts & Audit Committee meeting. The Committee thanked him for all of his hard work and support and wished him well for the future.

The Committee also welcomed Mark Heap, Grant Thornton LLP's new Engagement Lead for Trafford.

### 37. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2015, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 38. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2014/15 - UPDATE ON SIGNIFICANT GOVERNANCE ISSUE : INFORMATION GOVERNANCE

The Committee received a report of the Information Governance Manager. The report included an extract from the 2014/15 Annual Governance Statement outlining one of the significant governance issues identified for further development through 2014/15 i.e. Information Governance. The report provided an update on work undertaken to date and further work planned in respect of this issue.

Members discussed the Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received by the Council, which included public requests, commercial requests and journalistic requests. The Information Governance Manager agreed to provide Members with a statistical breakdown of FOI requests broken down by service.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**Accounts and Audit Committee**  
**9 February 2016**

**39. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2014/15 - UPDATE ON SIGNIFICANT GOVERNANCE ISSUE : LOCALITY WORKING**

The Committee received a report of the Head of Partnerships and Communities. The report included an extract from the 2014/15 Annual Governance Statement outlining one of the significant governance issues identified for further development through 2014/15 i.e. Locality Working. The report provided an update on work undertaken to date and further work planned in respect of this issue.

The report highlighted the progress made on the Locality Projects as well as the Locality Partnerships and Enabling Groups. Members were advised of the virtual teams of community builders established in the four localities, and discussions were had regarding the training provided for the community builders and connectors. The Committee also discussed the development of the Trafford Service Directory and the Info Trafford site.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**40. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2016/17 - 2018/19**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Member for Finance and Director of Finance. The report outlined the strategy to be followed during the period 2016/17 – 2018/19 for investments and borrowing, the outlook for interest rates, the management of associated risks, the policy to be adopted on Minimum Revenue Provision, and the Prudential Indicators.

The Director of Finance provided Members with an additional document detailing some amendments made to the original report reflecting the Council's updated Capital Investment Programme, the draft version of which had now been agreed and published.

Members were advised of the Council's updated borrowing position, with funds expected to be borrowed to support certain projects such as the LED rollout and the possible building of new depot to replace the Carrington site.

RESOLVED: That the Accounts & Audit Committee recommend to Council for approval the:

- (i) policy on debt strategy for 2016/17 to 2018/19 as set out in section 3;
- (ii) investment strategy for 2016/17 to 2018/19 as set out in section 5;
- (iii) Prudential Indicators and limits including the Authorised Limit (as required by section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003), Operational Boundary, Minimum Revenue Provision Statement and Investment criteria as detailed in Appendix 3.

**Accounts and Audit Committee  
9 February 2016**

**41. ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT AND EMERGING ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS FOR TRAFFORD COUNCIL (FEBRUARY 2016)**

The Committee received a report of Grant Thornton UK LLP on the progress at February 2016 in delivering its responsibilities as the Authority's external auditor. The report also highlighted key emerging national issues and developments and a number of challenge questions in respect of the emerging issues.

The report provided details on the Value for Money (VfM) conclusion, as well as the Housing Benefit Subsidiary Claim for 2014/15. It was confirmed that the full audit plan would be brought to the next Committee meeting, and Members discussed how the upcoming changes to the Highways Network Asset would affect the Council. The Director of Finance answered Members' questions on the Council's medium term financial plan.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**42. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2015/16 : APPROACH AND TIMETABLE**

The Committee received a report of the Audit and Assurance Manager setting out the action plan and timetable to ensure compliance with the production of an Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16.

RESOLVED:

(i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That the Committee agree to delegate responsibility for reviewing the robustness of the Annual Governance Statement to a working group made up of the Chairman, Vice Chairman and opposition spokesperson.

**43. AUDIT AND ASSURANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2015 (Q3)**

The Committee received a report of the Audit and Assurance Manager providing a summary of the work of Audit and Assurance during the period October to December 2015, as well as providing ongoing assurance to the Council on the adequacy of its control environment.

Audits completed during the period included two reviews relating to the Stockport, Trafford and Rochdale (STAR) Shared Procurement Service which Stockport Council led on. The terms of reference for these reviews had been agreed with Trafford and Rochdale Internal Audit teams.

It was also noted that a number of school follow up audits were completed and good progress was being made by the respective schools in implementing previous recommendations. The report also provided a resources update, as well as an update on the planned work for quarter 4 of 2015/16.

**Accounts and Audit Committee  
9 February 2016**

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**44. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2015/16 - PERIOD 8 (APRIL TO NOVEMBER 2015)**

The Committee received a report of The Executive Member for Finance and the Director of Finance detailing the outcomes of the monitoring of the Council's revenue budget for period 8 (April to November 2015).

Members were advised of the release of the unallocated contingency provision for savings of £0.5 million into the general savings, and it was confirmed that the £1.2 million airport dividend would be used to support the current budget proposals. The Committee also discussed the Council's position regarding the Delegated Schools Grant (DSG).

Finally, there was some discussion regarding the format of the Budget Revenue Monitor and whether this could possibly be reviewed in future.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**45. ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME - 2015/16**

The Committee received a report of the Audit and Assurance Manager setting out the updated work plan for the Committee for the 2015/16 municipal year.

The Chairman noted that the Committee had not received an update on the One Trafford Partnership for a significant period of time, and requested that an Amey Director be invited to provide a verbal update to the Committee at a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the report be noted.
- (ii) That a verbal update on the One Trafford Partnership by an Amey Director be added to the work programme.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and finished at 7.50 pm