

**A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE  
WAS HELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2015  
*Subject to Approval***

Councillors; Bateman (P), Burgess (P), Carter (P), Chegwyn, Mrs Cully (P), Dickson, Forder (P), Gill (P) Hicks (P) and Scard (P)

It was reported that in accordance with Standing Order 2.3.6, Councillors Burgess and Hicks had been nominated to replace Councillor Dickson and Chegwyn for this meeting.

**15. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Dickson and Chegwyn.

**16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**17. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards and Governance Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

**18. DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations

**19. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

**PART II**

**20. ERNST & YOUNG – AUDIT RESULTS REPORT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Council's external auditors Ernst & Young, which summarised the findings from the 2014/15 audit.

Members were advised that the audit was substantially complete and included the messages arising from the audit of the Council's financial statements and the results of the work Ernst & Young had undertaken to assess the Council's arrangements to secure value for money in its use of resources.

Members were informed that since the publication of the report additional issues had been further identified which needed to be corrected in the financial statements therefore, it was advised that an updated version of the report would be presented to the Policy & Organisation Board. It was clarified that the issues raised would have no material impact on the Balance Sheet or Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Account as previously reported.

Helen Thompson of Ernst & Young summarised the Audit Results report by sharing the 'Key Findings' advising Members that it was anticipated that an unqualified audit opinion would be issued by the statutory deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

It was further reported that Ernst & Young had yet to complete work on the value for money conclusion, but they expected to conclude that Gosport Borough Council had made appropriate arrangements to secure economy, efficiencies and effectiveness in the use of resources.

In conclusion Members were advised that Ernst & Young had not identified any significant issues of concern during the audit.

**RESOLVED:** That the conclusions set out in the Audit Results Report 2014/15 be noted.

**21. LETTER OF REPRESENTATION 2014/15**

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer which enabled Members of the Standards & Governance Committee to consider the draft Letter of Representation 2014/15 before its submission to the Policy and Organisation Board for consideration and approval.

**RESOLVED:** That the draft Letter of Representation 2014/15 be noted prior to final approval by the Policy and Organisation Board.

**22. INTERNAL AUDIT MONITORING STATEMENT TO 30.06.15**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Internal Audit & Risk Assurance which advised Members of the performance of the Internal Audit Section in the first three months of 2015/16 (1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015) against the agreed audit plan.

The report also provided Members with an update on the new team and their development.

Members were advised that the team were now at full capacity with both trainees enrolled in training towards gaining their professional qualifications.

**RESOLVED:** That

- a) The Standards and Governance Committee confirm the review of the performance of Internal Audit from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and;
- b) the developments in the team since the last meeting be noted.

**23. LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER 2014/15**

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Solicitor and Deputy Chief Executive on the Local Government Ombudsman's annual review for 2014/2015

The Ombudsman's Advice Team received sixteen complaints and enquiries during 2014/15. Of these, six were concerned with Corporate Services, four with Housing Services, two with Benefits and Tax, and one each with Adult Care Services, Environmental Services and Public Protection, Highways and Transport and Planning and Development.

Members of the Committee were advised that during this period nine of the complaints received by the Ombudsman were closed after initial enquiries, four were referred back to the Council for local resolution, and a decision was made on three cases, with two of these complaints being upheld.

Following a Member's question, it was clarified that members of the public could make a complaint direct to the Ombudsman with the general principle being that the Ombudsman would refer them back to the Local Authority if they had not been through the Council's own complaints process.

Members were further advised that complaints were monitored and investigated by the Chief Executive, Borough Solicitor and Deputy Chief Executive and Service Managers.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

**24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 18:55.

CHAIRMAN