

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

Audit Committee

Minutes of the Meeting of Louth County Council Audit Committee held in Mellifont Room, County Hall, Dundalk on Monday 17th October 2016 at 2.30 p.m.

In attendance:

Dr. Philip Byrne (Chairman)

Mr. Billy Doyle

Mr. Richard Bowden

Councillor Conor Keelan

Councillor Kevin Callan

Mr. Joe McGuinness, Director of Services

Ms. Bernie Woods, Head of Finance

Ms. Fiona Downes, Administrative Officer, LCC

Mr. Alan Sherry, Senior Executive Officer, LCC

Mr. Alan Davidson, Capita

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th September, 2016, were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. Kevin Callan and seconded by Billy Doyle.

2. Matter Arising from the Minutes

The monthly financial report is to be circulated to the members for their information.

The 2016 work programme is to be amended and circulated to the members for their approval at the next meeting.

3. Conflicts of Interest

The Chairman, Dr. Philip Byrne offered the members an opportunity to raise at this point any matters where they felt there would be a conflict of interest in regard to items listed on the agenda. There were no conflicts noted.

4. Fire Service

Joe McGuinness, Director of Services outlined the main points of the report that had been circulated to the members. He then answered questions from the committee.

Joe undertook to establish what element of the fire service debt was non-recoverable.

The committee requested that the Council investigate the possibility of centralising all Council debt collection with one dedicated section and report back to it about the potential benefits or negatives.

Members also raised queries with Joe in relation to the legal opinion regarding waiving of housing rent arrears that had been circulated to members.

Joe undertook to establish how many tenants would not be in arrears if the retrospective interpretation had not been applied to their accounts. He also undertook to keep the committee informed of any further developments in relation to this issue.

5. Annual Financial Statement

Bernie Woods, Head of Finance undertook to inform the committee when the local government auditor had completed his audit of the 2015 accounts.

She then answered queries and questions from the committee in relation to the unaudited Annual Financial Statement for 2015.

6. Corporate Risk Register

Alan Sherry reported that there was no progress since the last meeting as the senior management team were scheduled to attend a workshop to finalise the corporate risk register in early November.

7. Audit Reports

- **Human Resources**

Alan Davidson, Capita advised that policies in relation to grievances, recruitment, selection and absenteeism were being developed nationally. He also reported that the level of non compliance with mandatory training did not warrant a limited assurance level.

- **Information Technology**

Alan Davidson highlighted the main high priority area in the IT Audit was the area that was outside the main Government systems as they hadn't been penetration tested. It was recommended to close the weakness and carry out checks on a yearly basis. A documented version of disaster recovery procedures was recommended. Philip Byrne queried the dependency on one IT specialist and that a backup should be in place.

- **Corporate Governance**

Alan Davidson highlighted areas of high priority to the committee. Alan added that the assurance level was limited due the findings and the lack of a strategic risk register. Alan advised that the council was positive in the area of corporate governance.

It was agreed to circulate the members with a copy of the Audit Committee Charter and Alan Davidson with a copy of S.I. No 244 of 2014 Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014.

The Audit Committee requested that corporate risk be included as a constant item on the agenda.

8. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the committee would be at 3.30 pm on Monday 21st November.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Confirmed at Meeting held on :

Chairman:

Meetings Administrator
