

**Bristol City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Committee
6th March 2015 at 11.00 am**

Present:

Councillors Lesley Alexander, Charlie Bolton, Mark Brain, Barbara Janke and Olly Mead;

Independent Members – Ken Guy and Brenda McLennan

Also in attendance:

Tony Whitlock – Principal Accountant, Alison Mullis and Melanie Henchy-McCarthy - Chief Internal Auditors; Barrie Morris and Julie Masci - Grant Thornton.

71. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions (Agenda Item No. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Phil Hanby and Christopher Eskell – Independent Standards Member.

72. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item No. 2)

There were none.

73. Minutes of the Audit Committee held on the 16th January 2015 (Agenda Item No. 3)

Resolved - that the Minutes be agreed as a correct record of the Meeting and signed by the Chair.

74. Public Forum (Agenda Item No. 4)

Nothing was received.

75. Action Sheet (Agenda Item No. 5)

It was noted that reports on Bristol 2015 and the Markets Service will be presented to the Committee at its Meeting on 24th April 2015.

76. Work Programme (Agenda Item No. 6)

It was noted that the 2015/16 Audit Fee Letter would come from BDO.

77. Members Conduct – Standard Item (Agenda Item No. 6)

There was no report under this item.

The Chair stated that he had been advised by the Service Director, Legal and Democratic Services that a report would be presented to the Committee in the next Municipal Year.

78. Annual Governance Statement 2013/14 – Action Plan Update (Agenda Item No. 7)

The Committee considered the above report.

The Chief Internal Auditor introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.

During the debate the following points were made:

- In relation to the Metrobus Scheme, the Principal Accountant explained that any additional expenditure has to be agreed by the Capital Programme Board before being approved by Cabinet. He would find out what the present position is concerning additional expenditure and advise Members of the Committee accordingly.
- It was agreed that scrutinising the Metrobus project in terms of value for money and cost expenditure could be a future item for the Audit Committee
- It was noted that in relation to the engagement of consultants, the BCC Accounts could include an additional disclosure line concerning the cost of consultants. The Audit Committee could receive a report on the definition and costs of consultants
- The Principal Accountant confirmed that BCC are fully compliant with the HMRC Regulations concerning the engagement of consultants

Resolved – that the progress of actions undertaken to address the significant issues as identified in the 2013/14 Annual Governance Statement, as detailed in the report and the attached action plane be noted.

79. Grant Thornton – 2014-15 Progress report (Agenda Item No. 8)

The Committee considered the above report.

Barrie Morris introduced the report and summarised it for everyone. He confirmed that the links in the report would be provided so that they can be forwarded to all Members of Council.

Julie Masci summarised the accounting and audit issues.

It was noted that Revenues and Benefits dealing with the Business Rates Appeal changes.

It was confirmed that partnership issues are being considered and worked on with procedures being developed.

Referring to page 57 of the papers for the Meeting, Julie Masci confirmed that the accounting deadline for 2017/18 has now been brought forward to the end of July 2018.

Resolved – that Grant Thornton’s progress for 2014/15 be noted.

The meeting ended at 12.15 pm..

Chair