

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Held at Ryedale House, Malton
on Thursday 14 April 2011

Present

Councillors Mrs Shields (In the Chair), Raper, Wilford and Windress

In Attendance

Mrs L Carter and Mrs C Slater
Mr J Ingham – North Yorkshire Audit Partnership
Mr A Lince - Deloitte

Minutes

74 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andrews, Cottam, Clark, Cussons and Maud.

75 Minutes of the meeting held on the 17 February 2011

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 17 February 2011 (previously circulated) were presented.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 17 February 2011 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

76 Urgent Business

The Chairman reported that there were no items to be considered as a matter of urgency by virtue of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

77 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

78 Certification of Claims and Returns 2009/10

The Chairman welcomed Mr Alastair Lince of Deloitte LLP, the Council's auditors, to the meeting.

Mr Lince presented the Annual Report prepared in February 2011 by Deloitte in respect of Certification of claims and returns 2009/10.

The report detailed the following:

- Grant Claims and Returns Certified for 2009/10
- Adjustments and Qualification Letters Issued
- Commentary on Housing and Council Tax Benefit Claims
- Observations and Recommendations Arising from the Certification Work
- Closing Remarks

The report had been discussed and agreed with the Corporate Director (s151). Deloitte expressed their appreciation for the assistance and co-operation provided during the course of the certification work, and reported that their aim was to deliver a high standard of work, which makes a positive and practical contribution which supports the Authority's own agenda. Deloitte recognised the value of the Council's co-operation and support.

Resolved

That the report be accepted.

79

2011/12 Internal Audit Plan

The Audit Manager, North Yorkshire Audit Partnership, submitted a report (previously circulated), which presented the Internal Audit Plan for 2011/12 from the North Yorkshire Audit Partnership for approval. The Audit Manager drew attention to the salient points within the report.

Internal Audit was a legal requirement for Councils, and furthermore underpinned delivery of the Corporate Plan and the Council's strategic themes by ensuring that the control environment was reviewed on a structured and logical basis.

The CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government identified that the shared interests of the Audit Committee and internal audit required an effective working relationship. Part of that was the monitoring of progress against, the internal audit plan strategy and plan.

The Internal Audit Plan had been drafted using the Partnership's risk assessment model. This model considered various aspects appertaining to activities within the Authority and assessed the level of inherent risk. This then determined the relative frequency of audit.

The Council had for a number of years had an agreed plan of 265 days, and the range of work was therefore constrained by that limit. For 2011/12 this level was being reduced to 245 days to reflect the need to make savings in all aspects of the Council's activities.

The Committee welcomed the action to cut costs, which it was reported would result in a saving to the Authority of £4700.

The Plan was subject to consultation and had been agreed with the Corporate Director (s151). Members were reminded that it had been established that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee should act as an Audit Committee for the Council and, therefore was the body to receive the report.

Resolved

That the report be received and the Internal Audit Plan for 2012 be endorsed.

80 Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit

The Corporate Director (s151) submitted a report (previously circulated), which presented for approval the Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit from the North Yorkshire Audit Partnership.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 required all Councils to annually review their systems of internal control and to provide an adequate and effective Internal Audit function. The amendment in Statutory Instrument 2006/564, (further amended by Statutory Instrument 2011/817) introduced a requirement to undertake an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit on an annual basis. The amendment to Regulation 6 was set out in the report.

The report presented the Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit Report for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011 from the North Yorkshire Audit Partnership.

Overall, the report provided an assurance that the internal audit service provided through the North Yorkshire Audit Partnership met the criteria for an effective system of internal audit. It was not a 'carte blanche' but a balanced judgement.

Resolved

That the Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit 2010/2011 from the North Yorkshire Audit Partnership be approved.

81 Scrutiny Reviews Progress Report - Healthy Weight and Post Offices

The Head of Transformation submitted for information a report (previously circulated) in connection with progress achieved to date in respect of the scrutiny reviews on 'Healthy Weight' and 'Post Offices'.

Post Offices

A recent publication issued by the Department of Business Innovation and Skills 'Securing the Post Office Network in the Digital Age' stated that 'There will be no programme of Post Office closures under this Government'. The Department had confirmed that this statement included outreach services, which accounted for 38% of Ryedale's Post Office Services. The terms of reference had been amended by the Committee to take account of this.

Healthy Weight

The inaugural meeting of the Healthy Weight Review Task Group received a presentation from the Health Improvement Manager from NHS North Yorkshire and York. This presentation clarified the current position in Ryedale and the improvements being made, it also made clear the need to develop a very clear and focussed scope for the review. It was agreed that the scope for the review should focus on adults, as it was felt there were already effective initiatives in place to tackle childhood obesity. The group thought there was a gap in knowledge in relation to adults, specifically, young adults aged between 16 and 25. The terms of reference have been amended by the committee to take this into account.

Action Plans are in place for each of the reviews and progress was reported at the Task Group meetings.

The Head of Transformation reported that the next meetings of the task groups were to take place on Tuesday 12 July. The Post Office Review at 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm with the Healthy Weight Review following at 7.30 pm to 8.30 pm. Mr Lince, Deloitte, suggested that in order to provide advance notice for representatives involved in the task groups, it would be useful to draw up a programme of future meetings.

Resolved

That progress on the reviews, together with the future meeting dates, be noted.

82 Decisions from other Committees

Lists of decisions from the following Committees were submitted:

Commissioning Board held on 24 March 2011
Policy & Resources Committee held on 7 April 2011

Resolved

That the lists of decisions of the Commissioning Board held on the 24 March 2011 and the Policy & Resources Committee held on 7 April 2011 be received.

83 Any other business that the Chairman decides is urgent.

There being no urgent business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.00 pm.