

AT A MEETING of the HIWFRA Standards and Governance Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Monday,
11th December, 2023

Chairman:

* Councillor Derek Mellor

* Councillor David Harrison

Councillor Karen Lucioni

* Councillor David Drew

* Councillor Hugh Lumby

108. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Karen Lucioni.

109. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful of their duty to disclose at the meeting any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they had in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest was not already in the Authority's register of interests, and their ability to disclose any other personal interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

110. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

111. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations for the meeting.

112. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman highlighted a letter from EY that confirmed the changes to future value for money reporting for information.

113. CONTINGENT DECISIONS DELEGATION

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Financial Officer (item 6 in the minute book) on contingent decisions.

The Chief Financial Officer explained what a contingent decision was and how it would normally be the sort of thing that is delegated to help mitigate any challenges. Because there were clear rules and procedure around how contingent decisions worked, it avoided any risk of conflicts of interest for staff and also helped with consistency in how they were handled.

It was agreed that contributions and what the Fire Authority had control over could be picked up at a future APAG session.

RESOLVED

It was agreed that decision making on Contingent Decisions would be delegated by the Standards and Governance Committee to the Chief Fire Officer.

114. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report from the Chief Internal Auditor (item 7 in the minute book), which provided an overview of internal audit work completed in accordance with the approved audit plans and an overview of the status of 'live' reports.

The officer summarised the report, confirming that despite slight slippage in a few areas, the Authority was on track for the end of the year. Members learned that job titles rather than names were allocated against specific tasks to prevent them being missed in the event of a restructure or change in staff and Internal Audit were regularly updated in terms of role changes. 2024/25 was already being looked at and it was anticipated that a list of priorities would be ready around March.

The Committee noted the 34% of targets to be achieved, but were reassured that Internal Audit had no concerns around delays and further updates would follow after a heavy Q3/Q4 period. Further work would also be done around the risk of inconsistencies with paper-based systems.

RESOLVED

The progress in delivering the internal audit plan for 2023/24 and the outcomes to date was noted by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Authority Standards and Governance Committee.

115. INTERNAL AUDIT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report from the Chief Internal Auditor (item 8 in the minute book), which summarised medium and high internal audit management actions that had not been completed within the agreed target date and were now overdue.

The report was summarised and officers were confident the revised target of April would be met. Members discussed the Committee structure and whether this was the most effective way of supporting the Authority in its role and it was agreed that this would go to a future APAG meeting for discussion.

RESOLVED

The Standards and Governance Committee noted the progress made towards the implementation of the internal audit management actions and the delivery of the audit plan.

Chairman,