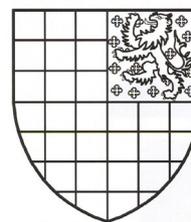


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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the **Audit & Governance Panel** held on **Wednesday 14th August 2019**, in the **Yarrow Room, Town Hall**, Lewes at **7:00pm**.

PRESENT Cllrs Bird; Catlin; Lamb; Maples; Milner (*Chairman*).

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*)

AudPan2019/01 ELECTION of CHAIRMAN:

Cllr Milner was elected as Chair of the Panel for the 2019/20 municipal year

AudPan2019/02 QUESTIONS: There were none at this point.

AudPan2019/03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: There were none.

AudPan2019/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were none.

AudPan2019/05 MINUTES: The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd January 2019 were received and signed as an accurate record.

AudPan2019/06 REMIT of the PANEL:

The remit was rehearsed as:

1. The Audit & Governance Panel comprises (6) Members, who are NOT also authorized to sign cheques or other financial instruments or appointed to the Finance Working Party.
2. The Panel is asked to meet at least 3 times per year, at a practical time following the ends of the 2nd, 3rd, and final financial quarters, with a remit to monitor treasury management and budgets. The Panel will act as a public complaints review panel should the need arise, making recommendations to Council as appropriate.
3. The Panel is delegated authority to carry-out on behalf of the Council those aspects of the prevailing national audit & governance regime that call for member oversight of details (*eg* routine bank reconciliation to ledgers, and recommendations to write-off bad debt). Any items where it is necessary to record a Member's signature are to be delegated to the presiding Chairman of the Panel. All such reviews and signatures are to be detailed in Panel minutes, and thereby reported to Council at the next appropriate meeting.

AudPan2019/07 BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:

TC outlined the annual cycle which began with budget preparation; setting of precept; daily operations and periodic scrutiny by the Panel and the Internal Auditor; culminating in the publication of annual accounts and the statutory Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for submission to the external auditors appointed on behalf of central government. He explained the in-built checks and balances in the Council's daily routines (*eg* scrutiny of supporting information before authorization of all payments by three signatories) and the role of the panel in oversight; which was itself overseen as part of the specialist assessment by the professional auditors and noted how these all worked together to produce the 'confidence' for Council to formally approve the statements that were required each year on the AGAR.

There were several questions and short discussions on various points of detail.

Routine financial monitoring: Members were furnished with detailed information (*copies in minute book*) following the end of the first quarter of the financial year 2019/20.

Budget monitoring update – this showed actual expenditure and income values as posted to the Council's *Sage* accounting system for all transactions processed in the period.

There was some discussion on salient points of detail, and TC responded with reference to the identified sources. Apparent variations were related to known events, such as specific payments in respect of works and purchases, or perceived 'overspend' which are attributable to Reserves in the final accounts prepared at year-end. There were no items of concern.

Oversight as required by the Governance & Accountability Code of Practice: TC introduced the file of periodic bank reconciliations, for review of the scrutiny already conducted. The Chairman appended his signature to verify this.

AudPan2019/08 CONCLUSIONS:

1 Members considered information on the Council's financial status and management, and found no items of concern.

2 In accordance with the national audit and governance guidelines: where member oversight is required, the Chairman of the Panel signed to attest the veracity of reconciliation records presented.

AudPan2019/09 There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.

The meeting closed at 8:45pm

Signed date

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