

JOINT BOARD

Wednesday, 29th November, 2023

held at NEDDC

Present:-

Councillor Barker (Chair) - NEDDC

Councillor Fritchley – BDC

Huw Bowen - CBC

Councillor Tricia Gilby – CBC

Lee Hickin - NEDDC

Councillor Pat Kerry -NEDDC

Karen Hanson - BDC

Councillor Amanda Serjeant – CBC

Jenny Williams

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

1 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations of interest were received.

2 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Neil Johnson (CBC).

3 **MINUTES**

The notes and the Record of Decisions of the Joint Board meeting held on 12 October, 2022 and 29 March, 2023 were noted.

4 **INTERNAL AUDIT CONSORTIUM PROGRESS REPORT 2021/2022
AND DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2022/2023**

The Internal Audit Consortium Manager presented a report to update the Joint Board on the progress made by the Internal Audit Consortium during 2022/23.

It was explained that plans had been impacted from COVID-19 along with staff vacancies and training of new staff, but the Internal Audit Consortium Manager had been able to confirm sufficient assurance for all 3 Councils

against the completed plans. The areas in the 2022/23 plan not completed are rolled forward to the 2023/24 financial year.

In May 2023 a self-assessment of compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards was completed and the review did not identify any areas of non-compliance.

The Consortium arrangement is working well, offers resilience with regular 1-1's, team meetings that are all working well.

Appendix 3 arose from the last external review and would be updated on an annual basis.

The performance indicators shown at 4.7 in the report for staff absence for the Consortium is high but it is a small team. Customer satisfaction rates are high for all 3 Councils and are reported to Audit Committees every quarter.

The budget for 2022/23 shows a surplus mainly due to staff costs and underspending on training. This year the £57k would be redistributed between the 3 Council's, in proportions paid in, with a retaining balance. See Appendix 1 for full details.

Staff recruitment difficulties are now resolved and is now fully staffed, but an advert had just gone live for a part time Auditor at Bolsover. Staff training is ongoing. The Consortium risk register had been updated and there are no red risks and had been reduced to amber.

The following questions and discussions were noted:

- The Committee wanted to place on record their thanks to the Internal Audit Consortium Manager and her team for the good service and value to the joint working partnership, as well as aligning the risks on the risk register which had resulted in high scores. New staff in the team had brought about a different approach to auditing and outcomes that resulted in some reviews not substantial. However, this had been welcomed and enabled staff to think about the review and any changes/further work needed.
- All 3 Audit Committees had worked well, but there are now pre-meets to help guide committee members. CBC is reviewing its

Member Development Programme, reflecting on the last 6 months and then adding on any changes identified to the programme.

RESOLVED –

That the annual report of the Internal Audit Consortium be approved.

5 INTERNAL AUDIT CONSORTIUM PROGRESS REPORT 2022/2023 AND DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2023/2024

The Internal Audit Consortium Manager presented a report to update the Joint Board on the progress made by the Internal Audit Consortium during 2022/23.

It was noted that the report had been originally planned for March this year, but the March meeting had to be rearranged, so the report had been brought to the meeting today to update the committee on the 2022/23 plan and business plan for 2023/24, including a part-time post for Bolsover.

A new Senior Auditor in BDC had been recruited who is CIFA qualified, so is an additional resource for any absence of the Internal Audit Consortium Manager. Staff undertake CPD and share ideas and are all hybrid working which had been appreciated by the team and is a good balance, with staff in the office 2-3 days per week. A service is still provided to Derbyshire Dales Council.

The Internal Audit Consortium Risk Register had been updated (see Appendix 3). There are no red risks now the Consortium is fully staffed, the risk in relation to recruitment is still present but had reduced.

The following questions and discussions were noted:

- Derbyshire Dales fee to be reviewed in discussion with the Accountancy team by the Internal Audit Consortium Manager with a possible view to increasing in the new financial year to reflect the uplifts across all Councils.
- Includes all CPD costs.

RESOLVED –

That the recommendations in the report be approved.

6 **DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the committee is to take place on Wednesday 27 March, 2024, 2.30pm at Bolsover District Council.