

Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee  
11 June 2013

Report by the  
Secretary/Director of People

**COMMITTEE COMPOSITION 2013/14 AND  
TERMS OF REFERENCE -  
CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT TO FIRE AUTHORITY**

REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report confirms the composition of the Governance, Audit & Scrutiny Committee for the current year (2013/14).

As this is the first meeting of the Committee in a new cycle, a copy of the Committee's Terms of Reference extracted from the Constitution is attached for Members' information at Appendix 1.

In terms of reporting to the Fire Authority minutes of meetings of this Committee will be submitted to the next following meeting of the Fire Authority. The intention is that the minutes will be presented at the Fire Authority meeting by the Chair of the Committee. In addition, there will normally be a Chair's Report in respect to key matters considered by the Committee. The Committee also receives a feedback report from the Secretary and Chair of the Committee (arising from the relevant Authority meeting).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members are asked to consider and note this report.

## COMMITTEE COMPOSITION 2013/14

2. The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee comprises 8 Independent Co-opted Members as follows:

Martin Allingham \*  
Doug Chapman \*  
Gill Hardy <sup>△</sup>  
David Hughes <sup>△</sup>  
John Jepson <sup>△</sup>  
Mandy Thomlinson \*  
Clive Vertigans \*  
Vacancy

3. There is a vacancy on the Committee which is currently being recruited to. A Panel comprising the Chair of the Authority, a nomination from each of the Group Secretaries, the Chair of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee and the Secretary/Monitoring Officer has been established to progress the appointment.

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

4. For ease of reference, attached at Appendix 1 are the terms of reference of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee.
5. The Authority has a relatively new governance structure which will be reviewed by the Authority in late spring 2014, which will include the membership of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee. To that end, the recent appointments to the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (\*) will be to the end of April 2014, with a view to continuing as part of an initial term of office of three or four years as may be decided by the Authority. The three continuing Independent Co-opted Members (<sup>△</sup>) will continue until the end of April 2014, as part of that review.
6. In terms of reporting to the Fire Authority, the minutes of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee will go to the Fire Authority, with the Chairperson of the Committee presenting the minutes. In addition, 'red' audit issues will be reported directly to the Fire Authority. Elected Members of the Authority are invited as observers to meetings of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT TO FIRE AUTHORITY

7. In terms of reporting to the Fire Authority the minutes of meetings of this Committee will be submitted to the next following meeting of the Fire Authority. In doing so the Chairman may comment on any recommendations contained therein.

## STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

8. The Chairperson plays a key role in the leadership as laid down by the Constitution. Governance and leadership is a key enabler of the refreshed Strategic Plan.

## FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

9. None arising directly.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10. None arising directly.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

11. No direct actions required.

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

12. No direct actions required.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13. None arising directly.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

14. The membership of the Committee will be published.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

15. None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

16. None.

RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

17. Members are asked to appoint a Chairperson in accordance with this report.

**R GRAHAM**

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RG/SJ  
3 June 2013



## Article 6 – Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee

### 6.1 COMPOSITION

- (a) The membership of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting of the HFA. The size of the Committee shall be decided by the HFA.
- (b) The HFA may if it considers it necessary or desirable appoint such number of Independent Co-opted Members of the Committee as it shall determine who shall be selected for their relevant expertise, particularly in:
  - Audit and financial governance
  - Corporate governance
  - Scrutiny of decision making

The HFA will approve a selection process and criteria.

- (c) The Chairperson of the Committee may be appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting of the HFA or elected at the first meeting of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee following the Annual General Meeting.
- (d) The quorum for meetings of the committee shall be decided by the HFA at its AGM.

### 6.2 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

Meetings shall normally be held eight times each year to reflect the normal HFA cycle of meetings. The Schedule of meetings shall be agreed at the Annual General Meeting of the HFA or at such other times as the Committee or Chairperson of the Committee may determine.

### 6.3 FUNCTIONS

The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee shall have the following functions, unless decided otherwise by the HFA:

#### 6.3.1 Governance

- (a) To make observations to the HFA concerning its governance arrangements;
- (b) To assist the HFA in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Members, including Independent Co-opted Members, appointed Members of Committees and Officers;
- (c) Generally assisting the Members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (d) Providing views to the HFA on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (e) Advising, training or arranging to train Members and Officers on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;

- (f) The monitoring of and issues relating to the declaration of interests and offer/receipt of gifts and hospitality by Members and Officers;
- (g) Such other matters in connection with governance as may be specified under this Constitution, or that the HFA may ask the Committee to consider.

In addition the Committee shall receive reports on the following matters (the Committee shall have no delegated authority but may make observations to the Fire Authority):

#### 6.3.2 Internal Control and Risk Management

- (a) To consider the HFA's Annual Governance Statement prior to its adoption to the HFA.
- (b) To maintain an overview of the HFA's Constitution, particularly in respect to the contract procedure rules and financial procedure rules.
- (c) To review any issue referred to it by the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, S.151 Officer or Secretary, or the HFA.
- (d) To monitor the effective development and operation of corporate risk and project management and corporate governance in the HFA.
- (e) To monitor the effectiveness of the internal control environment.

#### 6.3.3 Internal Audit

The Committee shall consider and make observations to the HFA with regard to:

- (a) The Internal Audit Annual Work Programme;
- (b) Internal Audit reports;
- (c) The Internal Audit Annual Report;
- (d) The appointment of an effective and efficient Internal Audit Service; and
- (e) The performance of the Internal Audit Service.

#### 6.3.4 External Audit:

The Committee shall consider and make observations to the HFA with regard to:

- (a) The appointment of External Auditors;
- (b) The External Auditor's Annual Audit letter;
- (c) The Annual Financial Statements and Statement of Assurance;
- (d) Feedback to the External Auditor upon performance of the external audit;
- (e) All External Audit Assessments concerning the Authority;

- (f) The audit aspects of the draft annual financial statements. These aspects will include the External Audit Opinion, the Statement of Members' Responsibilities, the Annual Governance Statement and any relevant issue raised in respect to the annual auditing process. The Committee should, where appropriate, confirm with the Internal and External Auditors that the effectiveness of the internal control system has been reviewed, and comment on this in its Annual Report to the HFA.

#### 6.3.5 Performance Risk and Programme Management

The Committee shall consider and make observations to the HFA with regard to:

- (a) The effectiveness of performance management;
- (b) The achievement of Strategic Plan objectives;
- (c) The achievement of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) objectives;
- (d) The achievement of agreed performance indicators;
- (e) The effectiveness of corporate risk management processes;
- (f) The effectiveness of programme management processes;
- (g) The performance of the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service generally;

#### 6.3.6 Scrutiny - Generally

##### Scrutiny Function

- (a) The Committee shall receive proposed reports for HFA decisions prior to meetings of the Authority.
- (b) The role of the Committee will be to provide scrutiny to a report and pass any observations, as it sees fit, to the Authority (such observations will be considered by the Authority as part of its decision making process).
- (c) The Corporate Management Team may consider the observations of the Committee with regard to a particular report and may take into account any observations prior to submitting the report to the HFA. In such circumstances there will be no need for the report to go back to the Committee before being considered by the HFA.
- (d) The HFA may determine from time to time, the matters for discussion that the Committee will consider. For example, the Committee will not consider the Appointment of Senior Officers.
- (e) In exercising its scrutiny role, the Committee will ensure that any observations are non-political and are not designed to displace the functions or responsibility of the Authority. Observations should be constructive and supportive, aimed at providing an independent view, essentially on behalf of the communities of the Service.

- (f) Make such reports or recommendations to the HFA, or Corporate Management Team as it considers appropriate and in accordance within the functions specified in this Article 6;
- (g) Request the Secretary that a matter be added to any agenda for the HFA or Corporate Management Team, provided that at least 10 clear days' notice is given of such a request. All reasonable steps shall be taken to provide a written report on the matter to the meeting, but where this is not possible, an oral report shall be given;
- (h) The right to make a request under paragraph 6.3.6 (g) shall be vested in the Chairperson of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee or any three Members of that Committee;
- (i) Where the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee considers that a matter requires urgent consideration by the HFA then the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee shall have power to request a meeting of the HFA in accordance with Rule 6.3.6 (g).

#### 6.3.7 Additional Powers

- (a) The Committee is authorised to investigate any activity within its terms of reference and to seek any information it requires from any employee. All employees are directed to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.
- (b) The Committee is authorised to obtain outside legal or other independent advice and to secure the attendance of non-members with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary, normally in consultation with the Secretary, Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and Chairperson of the HFA. However, it may not incur direct expenditure in this respect without the prior approval of the HFA.

#### 6.4 **POWER TO ESTABLISH SUB-COMMITTEE OR PANELS**

- (a) The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee shall have the power to establish a sub-committee of the Members of the Committee and any such sub-committee shall be authorised solely to make recommendations to the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee.
- (b) The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee shall be entitled to establish such panels or groups as it considers necessary to assist in the discharge of its functions. No delegated authority shall be granted to such a panel and the composition of a panel shall not be confined to the Members of the Committee and the rules of political proportionality shall not need to apply.

#### 6.5 **ANNUAL REPORT AND MINUTES**

- (a) The Committee shall report annually to the HFA upon the discharge of its functions;
- (b) Minutes of the Committee will be circulated to all Members of the HFA and shall be included as an agenda item on the HFA;
- (c) The Chairperson of the Committee will be invited to present the minutes at the meeting of the HFA and to respond to any questions that the HFA may have in respect to any matter concerning the Committee.