

Minutes

Audit Committee

Date: 25 July 2025

Time: 10:30

Venue: FSHQ

Present:

Cllr Renshaw (in the chair) Cllrs Anwar, Buckley, Parnham and Wood

In Attendance:

Gareth Mills, Greg Charnley (External Auditors Grant Thornton), Simon Straker (Internal Auditor, Kirklees)

Apologies:

Cllr Carlisle. Paul Burnham (Independent Member Audit)

1. Minutes of last meeting held on 25 April 2025

Resolved

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2025 be signed by the Chair as a correct record

2. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

4. Admission of the public

There were no items requiring the exclusion of the public and press.

5. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest in relation to any item of business on the agenda.

6. Annual Governance Statement

Members considered a report from The Director of Finance and Procurement which presented the Annual Governance Statement. The report author brought members attention to the 3 new governance issues for 2024/25:

- Government White Paper on English Devolution
- Implementation of Recommendations from the Grenfell Phase 2 Enquiry
- Local Audit Reform and the Audit of the Statement of Accounts 2024/25

Resolved

That the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 is approved

7. Abridged Performance Management Report

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Corporate Services which informed members of the Authority's performance against Key Performance Indicators where targets are not being achieved during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 and 1 April 2025 to 8 June 2025.

Members discussed the increased number of fires and were assured the Service has resources to deal with the increases across all categories and also continue with the vital Safe and Well visits. Members expressed their willingness to provide any appropriate assistance to their District Commanders. Members were pleased to note that the figure relating to malicious false alarms had shown a decrease which could be attributed to the excellent education work done by the Youth Intervention Team.

Members were interested to learn if the increased number of fires could be related to electrical charging incidents and were informed there are on-going social media campaigns and education work going on across all districts to tackle this issue.

Resolved

That the report be noted

8. Risk Management Strategy Group Quarterly Report

Members were presented with a report from the Director of Corporate Services giving details of the risk management activity and developments reported to the Risk Management Strategy Group (RMSG) in June 2025 and highlighting any future risks or risk related areas.

Members were advised there are 43 risks on the register, including six very high risks. In the period considered, five risks have been reviewed, with three of those changing their score:

Risk VACC1.S - Vehicle accidents causing death, injury, repair costs, unavailability and reputational damage. The score has increased from 12 to 15.

Risk ECON1.S - Impact on the Authority of the national and international economic downturn. The risk score has reduced from 16 to 6.

Risk PRMS1.S - Failure to provide an effective commercial premises risk management system for operational response, which could have a significant impact on firefighter safety, operational effectiveness and organisational reputation. The risk score has reduced from 15 to 12.

Members discussed the risk of surface water flooding and were reassured that the service is well prepared and has the necessary resources.

Resolved

That the report be noted

9. Financial Outturn

The Director of Finance and Procurement presented a report which detailed the Authority's financial outturn for 2024/25, the Member Allowances paid in 2024/25 and presented the draft Statement of Accounts 2024/25.

Members requested and were given further information regarding:

- Uninsured injuries
- The outstanding dispute relating to the laundry contract
- Contingent assets and liabilities
- Short term creditors and claw back of the Home Office top up grant.

The External Auditors were pleased to note that the Draft Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement had been published in advance of the national deadline.

Resolved

That the report be noted

10. Internal Audit Quarterly Report

The Director of Finance and Procurement submitted a report which provided a summary of the audit activity for the period April to June 2025.

In the period one audit has been completed; The Audit of the Management of the High Risk Relating to Vehicle Accidents Responding to an Incident, which received substantial assurance.

Members challenged the report author on the completion date of the outstanding audit recommendation relating to the Staff Induction Process, which is delayed due to staff changes, including the Head of Human Resources.

Resolved

That the report be noted

11.External Audit Quarterly Update

Members received a brief verbal presentation from the External Auditors, Grant Thornton, updating members on the audit work currently on going and the national position regarding the audit backstops.

Members discussed the evolving devolution agenda and thanked the Auditors for the confidence they have brought to the Authority and their continued collaboration with Principal Officers.

Chair