

**SEDGEMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit & Standards Committee held in the Sedgemoor Room,  
Bridgwater House, Bridgwater on Friday 24 March 2023 at 2.30pm**

**Councillors** Julie Pay (Chairman)  
**Present:** Will Human (Deputy Chairman)  
Hilary Bruce Alan Matthews  
Mike Facey Lisa Methley  
Liz Leavy

**Town & Parish Council Representative** Mr J Taylor

**Apologies:** Cllrs Lilley & Rodrigues and Mrs V Horman

**42. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 13 February 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**43. URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**44. PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

**45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**46. CONTRACT WAIVERS**

The Committee received a report on the waivers, under £250,000, that had been approved by the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer during the last 18 months.

Members noted that 22 waivers had been granted totalling £1,036,269.80. Three of which had been for specialist vehicles. The Officer confirmed that since the report had

been published a further 3 waivers had been granted totalling £94,466.

**Resolved:**

To note the report.

**47. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee received an update on the internal audit activity undertaken by the South West Audit Partnership (SWAP).

They noted the audits had been completed since the last meeting, with the following assurances given:

- |                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| ▪ Firmstep                   | - Reasonable |
| ▪ Housing Rent Calculations  | - Advisory   |
| ▪ Business Support Programme | - Reasonable |

**Resolved:**

To note the update.

Cllr H Bruce joined the meeting.

**48. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL OPINION REPORT 2022-2023**

Members received SWAPs Internal Audit Annual Opinion and were advised that overall a reasonable assurance had been given and that no high corporate risks had been identified during 2022-2023.

**Resolved:**

To note the report.

**49. OVERDUE SWAP AUDIT ACTIONS**

The Committee received a report on overdue SWAP audit actions and again welcomed that there were currently no overdue high risk actions outstanding.

**Resolved:**

To note that there were no overdue high risk SWAP audit actions.

**50. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022-2023**

The Committee received the Annual Governance Statement which set out a review of the effectiveness of the organisations internal control, as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Members noted that they were receiving this report earlier than they normally because all of the Somerset districts councils had agreed to sign off their own governance statements prior to vesting day.

**Resolved:**

To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2022-2023

**51. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

Members considered the report which gave an overview of the work of the Committee in relation to ethical standards.

They noted that 6 formal complaints had been made to the Monitoring Officer, These all related to town and parish councils.

The Monitoring Officer wished to thank the Committee, Mr J Taylor the Town and Parish Council representative and Mr G Lewis and Mrs V Horman the Independent Persons for all of their help over the years.

**Resolved:**

To note the report.

**52. GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

The Committee received and an update regarding the registration of gifts and hospitality by Members and Officers.

They were advised that that there had been no declarations of gifts or hospitality recorded by Members since 1 December 2022 and no declarations from officers since the last report.

**Resolved:**

To note the report.

**53. OFFICER REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

The Committee received a report setting out an update on the Officer Register of Interests.

The Monitoring officer was pleased to report that interest forms had been completed by all of the Council's employees, with just the exception of those on long term sick.

**Resolved:**

To note the report.

In closing the meeting the Chairman wished to thank everyone for the support that they had given her and she wished everyone going forward to the new unitary authority good luck.

The meeting ended at 2.25pm.

**CHAIRMAN**