

SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING 22 JANUARY 2014

REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27 NOVEMBER 2013

External Audit – Annual Audit Letter 2012/13

- Received confirmation that the External Auditors had issued an unqualified opinion / conclusion on our: accounts, arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in our use of resources, Whole of Government Accounts submission, and that our NNDR return had been certified without amendment
- Welcomed the External Auditors' view that this authority had a history of strong financial management and that our very strong performance had left us in a favourable position compared to others in our benchmarking group

External Audit – Governance Committee Update Report

- Received a report on progress made by Grant Thornton in delivering its responsibilities as our external auditor
- Provided with an overview of a number of emerging issues and developments and agreed that it would be helpful for officers to present to a future meeting on how some of the challenge questions posed in the report might be addressed
- Acknowledged that the picture on Business Rate collection was still unclear and might remain so as it would take some time to build up sufficient historical knowledge on which to base robust estimates

Treasury Management Activity – Mid-year Review 2013/14

- Received a report on performance and noted there were no proposals to make any changes to our Treasury and Investment Strategies at this stage
- Pleased that the Council was still pursuing the balance of its Heritable deposit

Budget Monitoring Statement – Month 6 (September) 2013/14

- Welcomed the number of efficiencies made and savings realised to date but encouraged further efforts to identify additional recurring savings in view of the challenges ahead, with the funding gap only set to increase in the coming years
- Noted the current level of spend on the Capital Programme and looked forward to receiving at our next meeting a report outlining details of any slippages, delays and cancellations of projects
- Observed that the current style of reporting did not allow over- or under-spends to be easily identified and asked for more detailed cashflow profiling of capital expenditure in future reports

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Review

- Received details of the findings of a recent inspection by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners of how the Council met its obligations relating to the use of investigatory powers and congratulated the officers concerned on the positive findings of the inspection

Forward Plan

- Noted the forward plan without further debate

I hereby commend the report to Council.

COUNCILLOR WARREN BENNETT
CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE