



Briefing Note - Internal Audit Services Provided to the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP)

Issued to: Anglia Revenue Partnership – Joint Committee

Issued by: Mrs Siobhan Martin, Head of Internal Audit (East Suffolk Council)

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1. Briefing Note Objectives

The purpose of the Briefing Note is to:

- a) Provide clarity to the ARP Operational Improvement Board and the Joint Committee over the functions of Internal Audit Services provided according to the 'Agreements' in operation, and
- b) Provide clarity over the responsibilities of the Operational Improvement Board and Joint Committee in relation to Internal Audit Reports.

This Briefing Note lists extracts from the 'Agreements' in operation and is not an opinion-based document. This paper was presented and discussed at the ARP Operational Improvement Board on 13 November 2019.

2. Background

The ARP is a group of five district councils (Breckland District Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, East Suffolk Council, Fenland District Council and West Suffolk Council) working together to provide a shared revenues and benefits service to their residents.

Over time ARP main systems have been centrally located (Breckland District Council), which has enabled all sovereign Councils Heads of Internal Audit to work collaboratively when planning work, to ensure efficient and effective reviews take place to support all stakeholders.

A Service Level Agreement for the provision of Internal Audit Services is in operation and was refreshed and agreed in 2019. This Service Level Agreement is supplementary and

complementary to the 'ARP Reconstitution Agreement 2015' currently under review and entitled 'ARP Reconstitution Agreement 2019'.

3. ARP Reconstitution Agreement

The ARP Reconstitution Agreement is the primary document which sets out the role of ARP Management, Operational Improvement Board (OIB) and Joint Committee (JC). All references to the ARP Reconstitution Agreement relate to the current draft 2019 as of 17.09.19.

Accounts and Audit

6.15 *Independent and objective internal audits of the JC Services shall be undertaken by the Five Councils in accordance with the provisions and schedules contained with the Service Level Agreement appended to this Agreement.*

Extract from ARP Reconstitution Agreement 2019:

The ARP Reconstitution Agreement 2019 is not specific over roles involving Internal Audit.

4. ARP Management Team and Operational Improvement Board (OIB)

The ARP Management Team receive Internal Audit Reports to aid performance review of ARP. This is to support performance responsibilities in accordance with the ARP Reconstitution Agreement 2019. S151 Officers also receive these Internal Audit Reports. The ARP Management Team will provide updates upon the Internal Audit reports and findings to the OIB. In addition, a summary report upon ARP Internal Audit findings is provided annually to the OIB. The OIB provides a tier of review which represents good governance practice.

5. Joint Committee (JC)

The JC may receive Internal Audit Reports by exception, escalated by the OIB to aid performance review of ARP, in accordance with the ARP Reconstitution Agreement 2019. The JC provides a tier of review which represents good governance practice.

6. Audit Committees

Each Sovereign Council (five named Councils listed at section 2 above) has an 'Audit Committee' sometimes called 'Audit and Governance Committee', prescribed within their Constitutions. These Committees provide a high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards. The Heads of Internal Audit at each sovereign Council report Internal Audit findings to the 'Audit Committee' for the Committees to fulfil their constitutional responsibilities.

7. Service Level Agreement for the Provision of Internal Audit Services of the Revenue and Benefit Services Delivered by the Anglia Revenues Partnership (2019)

The Agreement shall commence on 1 September 2019 for a term of three financial years expiring on 31 August 2022. This Agreement was a refresh of an earlier agreement which commenced on 1 April 2017.

The Heads of Internal Audit at East Suffolk, Fenland and West Suffolk jointly provide the Internal Audit Service to the five partner Councils in relation to the ARP. Internal Audit coverage is detailed in the Agreement Schedules.

8. Conclusion

If additional information is required, the Internal Audit Leads would be pleased to assist.