

## **MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**18 DECEMBER 2007**

### **Present:**

Councillor J.D. Pinkerton (Chairman)  
Councillor K. Chouhan (Vice-Chairman)

### Councillors:

M.L. Bouquet	E. O'Hara
M.J. Collis	H.A. Thomson

### **411/07 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2007 were approved as a correct record, subject to the name of "Thompson" being amended to read "Thomson" in the list of Councillors present at the meeting.

### **412/07 AUDIT SERVICES REPORT: AUGUST – NOVEMBER 2007**

The Head of Audit Services presented her report which outlined the work undertaken by Audit Services during the period August – November 2007 and responded to questions from Members. She highlighted significant areas of work including the internal audit partnership with Surrey Heath, Risk Management Training for Members, Risk Assessments, Corporate Governance and the Business Improvement Programme.

She reported that other authorities were interested in joining the audit partnership and that she would be able to report further on this at the next meeting of the Committee.

Members had asked about the risks associated with the Rent Deposit scheme at the last meeting and were advised that Audit Services had completed a review of the system and that key controls were in place. The Internal Auditor detailed some statistics of the scheme and answered members' questions.

The Head of Audit Services also gave assurance to members on the following matters:

- That the issues around duplicate payments, highlighted in the report on Creditors, had been addressed and action taken to avoid a similar occurrence.
- That following the theft of a PC, all Council laptops were now fitted with security cables and the rooms in which they were located were kept locked when not in use, with the exception of the Council Chamber, which was needed as a route for fire escape.

**RESOLVED** to note and approve the contents of the Audit Services Report: August-November 2007.

**413/07 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER**

The Senior Auditor reported that the Corporate Risk Register had undergone a quarterly review and update by the Corporate Risk Management Group to ensure actions were being taken on identified risks.

She outlined the areas where progress had been made on actions proposed, since the last review and those where there had been a lack of progress.

Members sought clarification and assurance on Audit Services' approach to the lack of progress in risk assessment for contaminated land and testing of the IT disaster recovery plan.

In view of the fact that several target dates for completing actions had not been met, it was proposed that the Head of Audit Services, in liaison with the Chair of the Audit Committee, invite the relevant Heads of Service to attend the next meeting of the Committee to explain why the proposed actions had not been completed on time.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the contents of the Corporate Risk Register be noted and approved.
2. That in cases where action had not been taken to address high level corporate risks the Head of Audit Services, in liaison with the Chair of the Audit Committee, invite the relevant Head of Service to attend the next meeting of the Committee to explain why target dates had not been met.

**414/07 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING CODE (WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY)**

The Head of Audit Services explained that the Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing Policy) formed part of the Council's Constitution and set out how to raise serious concerns about any aspect of the Council's work and the legal protection against reprisals under the Public Interest Disclosure Act.

The Code was available on the Intranet, a leaflet had been placed on every notice board and regular reminders were given to staff of its existence.

No concerns had been raised by staff with specific reference to the 'Confidential Reporting Code'.

**RESOLVED** to note the Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing Policy) as submitted.

**415/07 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2008**

The Committee considered its Work Programme for March 2008.

**RESOLVED** that the Work Programme as submitted be approved, subject to:

- a) amendment to the date of the next meeting, which would be taking place on 27 March 2008 and not 20 March as shown on the Work Programme.

- b) the addition of updates from Heads of Service as resolved in Minute 413/07 above.

**416/07 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

This item was taken following item 4 of the agenda, Matters arising from the minutes, with the agreement of the Committee.

**RESOLVED** that under section 100a(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph of part 1 of schedule 12a of the Act [as amended] and as indicated below.

**417/07 CAR PARK INVESTIGATIONS**

*(Paragraph 7 - Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.)*

The Committee considered an exempt report on Car Park investigations undertaken by Audit Services. Members asked questions of the Head of Environment Services and were satisfied that the issues had been dealt with appropriately.

**RESOLVED** that the report of Audit Services on Car Park Investigations be noted with concern.

**418/07 SEASONS GREETINGS**

The Chairman thanked members and officers for their assistance during the year and wished them all a Merry Christmas.