

## **Minutes of the Audit Committee**

**29 March 2012**

### **Present:**

Councillor Mrs M.J. Madams (Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs D.L. Grant (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors A.C. Patterson and C.V. Strong

**Apologies:** Councillors A. Ayub and A.E. Friday

### **89/12 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2011 were approved as a correct record.

### **90/12 External Audit Plan**

The Head of Audit Services explained that the External Audit Plan report set out the auditor's two main objectives relating to the audit of the financial statements and their value for money conclusion. The plan set out the key risks the auditors had identified, their approach to undertaking their work and reporting processes.

The Committee was pleased to note the reduction of approximately £10,000 in proposed audit fees for 2011/12, compared to the charge for 2010/11.

**RESOLVED** to note the External Audit Plan 2011/12.

### **91/12 External Auditors' Certification of Grants and Returns 2010-2011**

The Head of Audit Services presented the external auditors' certification of grants and returns 2010-2011 which confirmed the areas of work that the external auditors had looked at and their fees for this work. KPMG certified 3 grants and returns and all were unqualified with no amendment.

**RESOLVED** to note the External Auditors' Certification of Grants and Returns 2010-2011.

### **92/12 Corporate Risk Management**

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

The revised register was considered to be an accurate reflection of the high level risks affecting the Authority. Progress on actions was documented on the register. She highlighted two areas which had not been fully addressed relating to business continuity planning and emergency planning arrangements.

The Committee was concerned at the length of time that a number of issues relating to business continuity planning had remained unresolved. It agreed to

raise the matter with Councillor F. Ayers, whose Portfolio included this area of work, to address the outstanding work and ensure the Business Continuity Forum met in April 2012. The Committee requested an update report on this matter at its meeting on 3 May 2012.

The Senior Auditor also highlighted two new actions which had been added to the register to mitigate risks in relation to contractor performance and staff morale.

The Committee noted the current issues affecting staff morale and suggested that a staff survey be undertaken to assess the level of morale and assist in finding ways to enhance it.

The Committee requested that consideration be given at the next review of the Risk Register, to adding a new action in relation to the possibility of a drought being declared in the Borough.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. the contents of the Corporate Risk Register be noted and accepted;
2. Councillor F. Ayers be asked to address the outstanding matters in relation to business continuity planning;
3. an update report on progress on the outstanding matters relating to business continuity planning be brought to the May 2012 meeting of the Committee;
4. a staff survey be undertaken to assist in establishing the level of staff morale and finding ways to enhance it and
5. consideration be given at the next review of the Risk Register to adding a new action in relation to the possibility of a drought being declared in the Borough.

**93/12 Audit Services Annual Plan 2012-2013**

The Head of Audit Services outlined the Audit Services Annual Plan 2012-2013 which demonstrated how the authority would fulfil its statutory requirement to 'maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper internal audit practices.'

**RESOLVED** to note the Audit Services Annual Plan 2012-2013.

**94/12 Committee Work Programme**

The Committee considered its Work Programme for the 2012-2013 Municipal year.

The Committee noted that an additional meeting had been arranged for 3 May 2012 to consider a report on proposals for dealing with the provisions of the Localism Act in relation to standards. The meeting scheduled for 21 June 2012 was cancelled.

**RESOLVED** to note the Committee Work Programme 2012-2013.