

AUDIT COMMITTEE

6.00 P.M.

26TH AUGUST 2003

PRESENT:- Councillors M. Thomas (Chairman), J. Ravetz (Vice-Chairman), J. Barry, A. Stone and G. K. Wilson.

Apologies for absence:

Councillor D. Kerr

Officers in attendance:

Corporate Director (Central Services)
Head of Financial Services
Internal Audit Manager
Corporate Finance Manager
L. Ellis – Democratic Support Officer

8 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24th June 2003 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

9 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2002/03

The Head of Financial Services submitted a report seeking Members' approval of the draft Statement of Accounts for 2002/03 and outlining the audit process for Members' information.

The Head of Financial Services advised Members that the Account and Audit Regulations had been updated to incorporate several new requirements, including the need for the Audit Committee's Chairman to sign the Accounts.

Members were further informed that if the Auditor decided that there were any significant matters arising from his audit of the Accounts, the Auditor was required to report directly to Members advising them of this.

It was proposed by Councillor G. K. Wilson and seconded by Councillor J. Ravetz:

"That the draft Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2003 be approved, and that the Chairman sign and date the Accounts accordingly."

On being put to the vote, all Members voted in favour of the proposal, whereupon the Chairman declared the motion to be unanimously carried.

It was further proposed by Councillor M. Thomas and seconded by Councillor G. K. Wilson:

"That the Committee note that an additional Committee meeting may need to be arranged for late October/ early November, in order that the Auditor can report back to Members on any significant matters arising."

On being put to the vote, all Members voted in favour of the proposal, whereupon the Chairman declared the motion to be unanimously carried.

Resolved:

- (1) That the draft Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2003 be approved, and that the Chairman sign and date the Accounts accordingly.
- (2) That the Committee note that an additional Committee meeting may need to be arranged for late October/ early November, in order that the Auditor can report back to Members on any significant matters arising.

10 RESULTS OF INTERNAL AUDIT WORK

The Internal Audit Manager submitted a report to Members incorporating the summary reports and agreed action plans produced on the completion of each audit and the reports produced following the six monthly review of progress.

Members were requested to consider the most appropriate method of presenting audit reports to the Committee. Members felt that it was important that they received audit reports as soon as they became available and discussed the benefits of e-mailing the documents to Committee Members and publicising them on the Council's Intranet so that all interested Members would have access to the reports.

The Internal Audit Manager advised Members that on certain issues where an audit report would not usually be produced, he wished to give a short presentation to future meetings. Members agreed that short presentations on procurement and risk management, two major areas of development, would be beneficial.

Several Members were concerned about the star rating priority given to certain risks and were advised by Officers that although individual items could be raised with the relevant Service Heads, the Committee would be given the opportunity at the six month follow up meeting to assess the progress made on all issues.

It was proposed by Councillor M. Thomas and seconded by Councillor J. Ravetz:

"That the report and the Committee's recommendations be noted."

On being put to the vote, all Members voted in favour of the proposal, whereupon the Chairman declared the motion to be unanimously carried.

Resolved:

- (1) That the report and the Committee's recommendations (2 & 3) be noted.
- (2) That audit reports, as soon as they become available, be e-mailed to Committee Members and publicised on the Council's Intranet so that all interested Members would have access to the reports.
- (3) That short presentations on other areas of audit work, such as procurement and risk management be given at a future meeting of the Committee.

11 INTERNAL AUDIT MONITORING

The Internal Audit Manager submitted a report informing Members of the progress made with the Internal Audit Plan for 2003/04.

It was proposed by Councillor G. K. Wilson and seconded by Councillor J. Ravetz:

"That the report be noted."

On being put to the vote, all Members voted in favour of the proposal, whereupon the Chairman declared the motion to be unanimously carried.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.50 p.m.)

***Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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on Lancaster 582047 or alternatively e-mail Lellis@lancaster.gov.uk***