

AUDIT COMMITTEE

6.00 P.M.

16TH DECEMBER 2003

PRESENT:- Councillors, J. M. Thomas (Chairman), J. Ravetz, P. Robinson (Substitute for I. S. Barker) and A. Stone.

Officers in attendance:

Corporate Director (Central Services)
Accountancy Services Manager (part)
Internal Audit Manager

Apologies for absence:

Councillors I. S. Barker, J. Barry, D. Kerr and G. Wilson.

Also in attendance:

Ms F. Blatcher – Audit Commission.

14 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2003 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

15 AUDIT OF 2002/03 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Ms. F. Blatcher presented the Audit Commission report outlining the Council's Audit Of 2002/03 Statement of Accounts. Members were informed that the Council was responsible for the preparation of financial statements that present its financial position fairly as at 31 March 2003 and its income and expenditure in the year then ended.

Members were also informed that the Council was responsible for the preparation of a Statement of Internal Control in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom: a Statement of Recommended Practice.

Members were further informed that the Council had submitted draft financial statements on the 1st September 2003 and the Audit Commission had now substantially completed the Council's audit on these statements.

It was proposed by Councillor A. Stone 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.

16 CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY

The Internal Audit Manager submitted a report to Members incorporating, in line with the approved Code of Corporate Governance, a number of steps that had been taken to develop the Council's approach to risk management.

It was reported that the steps included the establishment of a Risk Management Steering Group, the extension of the Insurance Manager's role to incorporate risk management and the engagement of a consultant to instigate a series of corporate priority and risk management workshops.

The Internal Audit Manager informed Members that risk identification, assessment and mitigation work had continued since the workshops held in September and October 2003, with Members being informed of the development of corporate priorities. It was noted that the identification of key activities and the significant risks associated with emerging priorities would be fundamental to the development of Service Business Plans later in the planning cycle.

Members asked the Internal Audit Manager a number of questions on the draft Corporate Risk Management Policy and Strategy that had been attached to the report.

Members agreed that the following words be added to the third bullet point from the bottom of Appendix B, page 4/10:

“Partnerships and Relevant External Agencies”

It was proposed by Councillor P. Robinson and seconded by Councillor J. Ravetz:

“That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.”

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 Corporate Risk Management Policy and Strategy are approved.
- (2) That the Committee notes the intention to promote the policy and strategy and to educate Officer and elected Member groups in their identified roles and responsibilities.
- (3) That the words “Partnerships and Relevant External Agencies” be added to the third bullet point from the bottom of Appendix B, page 4/10.

17 INTERNAL AUDIT MONITORING

The Internal Audit Manager submitted a report to Members on the current progress with the Internal Audit Plan for 2003/04 and to seek Members approval for the proposed revisions to the plan.

Members were reminded that they had approved the current year's Internal Audit Plan at their meeting held on 24 June 2003. Members were also reminded that the Internal Audit Manager gave a verbal update on the progress at the previous meeting of the Committee held on the 26 August 2003, where it was reported that there were no significant matters to be addressed.

Members were provided with a number of proposed changes to the Internal Audit Plan for 2003/04 as detailed in the report. Members asked the Internal Audit Manager a number of questions with regard to the implications and reasons for some of the alterations to the plan.

Members agreed that the Committee delegate authority to make further variations to the Internal Audit Plan for 2003/04, during the final quarter, to the Internal Audit Manager, the Head of Financial Services and the Chairman of the Audit Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor M. Thomas and seconded by Councillor A. Stone:

“That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.”

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 proposed revisions to the plan are approved.
- (2) That the Committee delegate authority to make further variations to the Internal Audit Plan for 2003/04, during the final quarter, to the Internal Audit Manager, the Head of Financial Services and the Chairman of the Audit Committee.

18 **RESULTS OF INTERNAL AUDIT WORK**

The Internal Audit Manager submitted a report informing Members of the results of Internal Audit work for the period. A summary report from each completed audit and follow-up review was submitted for Members' consideration.

It was proposed by the Chairman with the agreement of many Members:

“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 is noted.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.35 p.m.)

***Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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