

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
AUDIT COMMITTEE
THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,
KIDDERMINSTER
29th JUNE 2009 (6:00PM)

Present:

Councillors: J Holden (Chairman), A J Buckley (Vice-Chairman), J Aston, P Dyke, D J Millis, Mrs F M Oborski, K H Prosser, M A Salter, and N J Thomas.

Observers:

Councillor J-P Campion, Councillor N J Desmond, and Councillor Mrs H Dyke.

AUD.51 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

AUD.52 Appointment of Substitutes

No Substitutes were appointed.

AUD.53 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

AUD.54 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2009 be confirmed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

AUD.55 Annual Governance Statement 2007/2008 Action Plan

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) on the Annual Governance Statement 2007/2008. The purpose of the report was to present the current position in relation to the Action Plan, which was developed to address the weakness identified within the 2007/2008 Annual Governance Statement.

Decision: The current position of the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan for 2007/2008 be noted and approved.

AUD.56 Internal Audit – Compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) on the Compliance with The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice for Internal Audit. The purpose of the

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plan was to inform Members of how the Internal Audit Section complied with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit.

The Director of Resources outlined the contents of the report and explained to the Committee that the self assessment was usually carried out every three years, however due to significant changes this had been updated.

In response to questions, the Committee were advised that all audit staff made formal declarations of interest.

Decision: The completed checklist showing Internal Audit – Compliance with the CIPFA Code Practice for Internal Audit, as detailed in the Appendix to the report be noted and approved.

AUD.57 Corporate Governance Framework

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) on the Corporate Governance Framework. The purpose of the report was to present the outcome of the self assessment of the Council's Governance arrangements against the Corporate Governance Framework adopted with effect from 1st April 2008.

The Director of Resources outlined the content of the report and advised the Committee that there were six core principles that underpinned the governance of a local authority. These were explained and the Committee was advised on how well the Council met each of these principles and the areas for improvement and further action.

In response to questions the Committee were advised that in relation to the Benefits Section, benchmarking had been undertaken and that careful consideration was being given to efficiencies, although this had to be balanced with high performance at a lower cost. Members were reassured that efficiencies would not reduce the quality of the service. Moreover sole home working would be considered, and thought would be given to the security of information.

Decision: The outcomes of the self assessment undertaken of the Council's Corporate Governance arrangements as attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

AUD.58 Exclusion of the Press and Public

At this point in the meeting the Chairman agreed that the exempt agenda items would now be considered. It was then moved that the press and public would be excluded.

Decision: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt business as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 of the Act.

AUD.59 Summary of Minutes

The following proceedings were considered after the press and the public had been excluded from the meeting. A summary of the minutes relating to those items has been made, as exempt information would be disclosed if the minutes were published in full.

AUD.60 Internal Audit Monitoring Report – Quarter ended 31st March 2009.

The Committee received the Internal Audit Report for the Quarter ended 31st March 2009. (Copies of which had been circulated)

At the conclusion of this item the Chairman agreed to resume the open part of the meeting.

AUD.61 Annual Report from Section 151 Officer 2008/2009

The Committee considered a report to inform members of the Annual Report from the Section 151 Officer for 2008/2009 (copies of which had been circulated).

The Director of Resources advised that the Annual Report gave the year position and that senior management restructure was likely to have an impact.

Decision: The Annual report from the Section 151 Officer for 2008/2009 attached as Appendix 1 be approved and to RECOMMEND Approval to Cabinet.

AUD.62 Risk Management – Quarter ended 31st March 2009

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated), the purpose of which was to inform members of the Audit Committee of the “Red” Risks included within the Corporate Risk Register for the Quarter ended 31st March 2009.

Members were advised that reviews of the risks were ongoing.

Decision:

- 1. The “Red” Risks included within the Corporate Risk Register for the Quarter ended 31st March 2009, as detailed in the Appendix to the report, be noted together with the current progress.**
- 2. The requirement to review the Corporate Risk Register be approved.**

AUD.63 Annual Governance Statement 2008/2009

The Committee considered a report to explain the requirement for the Authority to produce an Annual Governance Statement declaring the degree to which it met the Governance Framework.

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The Director of Resources outlined the content of the report and explained that strategic risk would be reviewed in line with the significant changes that the Council was undertaking.

In response to questions regarding standards of conduct, Members were advised that any relevant issues would be referred to the Ethics and Standards Committee.

Decision: The Annual Governance Statement, attached at Appendix A to the report be approved.

AUD.64 Statement of Accounts 2008/2009

The Committee considered a report (copies of which were tabled) on the Final Accounts 2008/09. The purpose of the report was to approve a pre-audit of the Council's Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2008/2009.

The Director of Resources explained the purpose of the report and drew the Committee's attention to Appendix 2 of the report and the identification of significant variances against the revised budget for 2008/2009. Member's attention was also drawn to Paragraph 4.4 of the report where the variances were detailed. Members were reassured that strict accountancy rules were followed and that impairment was based on set values.

Decision:

- 1. The pre-audit Statement of Accounts, 2008/2009 be approved.**
- 2. The additional reserves of £46,080 generated from the 2008/2009 surplus will be reconsidered in accordance with the Council's Finance Strategy, as part of the 2010/2013 Budget Process.**

AUD.65 External Funding Position Statement for Q1 2009

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) on the External Funding Position Statement for Q1 2009. The purpose of the report was to update the Committee on the amount of external funding being attracted into the District and the variety of projects for which the said funding was contributing towards the benefit of the District and its residents.

The Committee noted the content of the report and welcomed the good news.

Decision: The amount of external funding being attracted into the District stated at Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 18:47.