

## DECISIONS OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

5 FEBRUARY 2009

### COMMITTEE:

\*Councillor Jeremy Davies BA (Hons) CPFA (Chairman)

\*Councillor Daniel Webb (Vice-Chairman)

### Councillors:

\* Danish Chopra

\* Geof Cooke

\* Mukesh Depala

\* Tom Davey

\* Dean Cohen (substituting for Councillor  
Marina Yannakoudakis BSc (Hons) MA)

\*denotes Member present

\$ denotes Member absent on Council Business

#### 1. MINUTES:

RESOLVED – That the decisions of the meeting held on 9 December 2008 be approved as a correct record.

#### 2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS:

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Marina Yannakoudakis.

#### 3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:

There were no public questions.

#### 4. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS:

No interests were declared.

#### 5. MEMBERS TRAINING

Members received training from Elizabeth Humphrey of Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy on the purposes of the Audit Committee, terms of reference, the role of the Chairman, the role of directors and officers, making the committee work effectively, working with auditors and decoding assurance levels.

#### 6. MEMBERS' ITEM – COUNCILLOR DANISH CHOPRA – DEPOT REPLACEMENT PROJECT (Agenda Item 6):

RESOLVED –

(1) That the Depot Replacement Project be included in the Internal Audit Annual Plan.

(2) That an internal audit on the Depot Replacement Project and its governance be completed.

#### 7. EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT ON DATA QUALITY (Report of the Director of Resources – Item 7)

Martin Ellender from Grant Thornton LLP delivered a short presentation in support of the report on Data Quality.

During the discussion, the Committee expressed concern at the risk issues raised by the Best Value Performance Indicators in the Data Quality Spot Checks. These included the speed of processing a new claim, the speed of processing changes of circumstances to the Housing Benefit and Council Tax department as well as average length of stay in hostel accommodation.

The Chairman of the Committee felt that this needed to be brought to the attention of the Cabinet Member for Policy and Performance.

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the Committee note the recommendations of the external auditor's report and the agreed action plan.
- (2) That the Chairman of the Committee write to the Cabinet Member for Policy and Performance and communicate the risk management concerns raised in the report.
- (3) That an update report on Data Quality be submitted at a future meeting.

**8. EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT ON GRANTS SUBMISSION PROCESS (Report of the Head of Finance – Item 7)**

The Committee expressed concern regarding the performance levels attained with amended and qualified claims, particularly with the Housing Subsidy Revenue Claim as this could risk securing funding from external parties. The Committee also expressed concern at the late delivery of the data.

The Head of Finance said that the queries raised by the Committee would be noted and dealt with accordingly.

The Acting Head of Internal Audit and Ethical Governance referred to the recent appointment to the post of Head of Housing & Environmental Health and stated that the new risk management assessments in the audits for the Housing Service would be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the matters raised by the external auditor relating to the grants submission and certification process be noted.
- (2) That the officer response to the matters raised by the external auditors be noted.
- (3) That the issues raised in the report be forwarded to the Head of Housing & Environmental Health and that she be asked to provide a written response to the Chairman.

**9. USE OF RESOURCES 2009 (Agenda Item 8)**

Richard Tremeer from Grant Thornton LLP updated the Committee on the Use of Resources report that had been finalised (subject to appeal) and was scheduled to be reported to the next meeting of the Audit Committee.

The meeting closed at 9.19pm