

**AUDIT & PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE**  
**24 JUNE 1998**

Present: Councillors Beadsley, Birch, Blatchford, Mrs Hayes,  
North, Mrs Shillcock and Wade

Substitutions: Councillor Adams for Councillor Good

Also in attendance: Councillor Mrs Keene

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Good and McCormack

**1 Election of Chairman**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Birch be elected Chairman of the Committee for the 1998/99 Municipal Year.

**COUNCILLOR BIRCH IN THE CHAIR**

**2. Appointment of Vice Chairman**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor North be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the 1998/99 Municipal Year.

**3. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit, Performance and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 February 1998 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**4. Audit Commission Citizen's Charter Performance Indicators for 1996/97 (Item 1)**

The Committee received a detailed report from the Head of Policy Development highlighting Bracknell Forest's performance against the Citizen's Charter Performance Indicators, following the recent publication by the Audit Commission of data relating to performance indicators for 1996/97 for all councils in England and Wales. The report compared Bracknell Forest's performance against neighbouring councils and the national average.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the performance of the Council against national indicators as indicated in Appendix 1 of the report be noted;
- (ii) future performance data be reported in a similar format for future years; and

- (iii) a new target of answering direct dial telephones within 10 seconds be introduced.

**5. Provision of Internal Audit Service from April 1999 (Item 2)**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Corporate Services examining the future options available for the delivery of the internal audit service from April 1999, when the current contract with Deloitte & Touche was due to expire. The two basic alternatives were either to continue the existing provision of a mixture of internal and external resources or to revert to providing the entire service internally. The report identified a number of advantages in having a contract with an external firm and set out proposed arrangements for retendering for the provision of the service by contract.

**RESOLVED** that the plan to invite tenders for the provision of the Council's internal audit services be approved for a period of three and five years.

**6. Member/Officer Protocol (Item 3)**

The Chief Executive introduced a report outlining a draft procedure/ protocol which was intended to govern relations between Members and Officers. This was in response to one of the key recommendations of the Nolan Report published last year, and had been considered in detail by the Joint Strategy & Policy/ Audit & Performance Review Member Focus Group. It was stressed that the protocol was of fundamental importance and, together with the Scheme of Management, would set the framework for the way in which the Council would operate in future.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the Member/ Officer Protocol set out in Annexe A to the report be approved subject to an addition to paragraph 6.1 –  
“which affect their ward, *including the Mayor's official engagements*”;
- (ii) copies of the Protocol be circulated to all Members and Senior Officers

**7. Standardised Corporate Complaints Procedure (Item 4)**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Policy Development outlining the proposed corporate Complaints Procedure for the Council. The procedure was a corporate system complementing any specific or statutory procedures, such as Education Appeals and Social Services complaints, for which there were separate procedures.

This procedure would be used when it had not been possible to resolve a complaint locally.

Following discussion on the role of Members in the complaints procedure, it was agreed that the Head of Policy Development would, as a first step, set up a Members' Seminar on complaints so that the issues could be fully explored.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the Corporate Complaints Procedure as set out in Annexe B to the report be adopted with immediate effect;
- (ii) the procedure be reviewed after one year of operation.

**8. Items Submitted for Information**

The committee received and noted the following items, which had been submitted for information:

- Audit Commission Publication and Reports (Item 5)
  - (i) “Home Alone” - The Role of Housing in Community Care
  - (ii) “Ghost in the Machine” - An Analysis of IT, Fraud and Abuse - subject of a separate item
  - (iii) “Worth More than Money” - The Role of the Finance Officer - also the subject of a separate report
  - (iv) “Misspent Youth ‘98” - The Challenge For Youth Justice
  - (v) “Year 2000 - A Stitch in Time” - facing the challenge of the Year 2000 Date Change.
- Ghost in the Machine - An Analysis of IT Fraud and Abuse (Item 6)
- Worth More than Money - The Role of the Finance Officer (Item 7)

The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.  
and concluded at 9.20 p.m.

**CHAIRMAN**