

**AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE
14 OCTOBER 1998**

Present: Councillor North (Vice Chairman), Councillors Beadsley,
Blatchford, Good, Mrs Hayes, McCormack and Wade

Apologies for Absence:
Councillors Birch and Mrs Shillcock

Councillors Egan and Wheaton attended as Substitute Members for Councillors Birch and Mrs Shillcock respectively.

VICE CHAIRMAN IN THE CHAIR

9. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 June 1998 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

10. Progress on Developing Performance and Financial Management Programme (Item 1)

The Committee was advised that it was responsible for monitoring progress on the corporate Performance and Financial Management Programme and thus would receive regular monitoring reports on the development of the Programme. The Committee noted that as a first step overview questionnaires had been circulated to relevant departments covering all the services provided by the Council. At its next meeting the Committee would consider the outcome of the overview exercise to assist in the identification of priorities for a programme of fundamental reviews.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the progress in developing the Council's Performance and Financial Management Programme be noted;
- (ii) a report be submitted to the next meeting on the outcome of the current overview exercise;
- (iii) a report be submitted to the next meeting on effective systems and processes to monitor performance against the Programme; and
- (iv) it be noted that the new programme is consistent with proposals in the Government's White Paper "In Touch with the People" and officers be requested to monitor and report regularly on the development of 'Best Value' nationally.

11. **Internal Audit Assurance Report: April – June 1998 (Item 2)**

The Committee considered the Quarterly Assurance Report, which provided a summary of Internal Audit activity in the period from April to June 1998. During this period as part of the Annual Audit Plan, 82 audits were completed. The Committee was advised that a satisfactory assurance opinion had been given in almost all cases.

RESOLVED that the progress made by Internal Audit in the first quarter of the new unitary authority towards completing the Annual Audit Plan and the overall satisfactory assurance opinion be noted.

12. **1997/98 – Audit Commission Performance Indicators (Item 3)**

The Committee considered a report which included the Council's Performance Indicators for 1997/98, together with the Performance Indicators for 1996/97 for comparison. A revised set of Indicators was circulated at the meeting, which incorporated previously unavailable information. The Committee gave detailed consideration to the Indicators and was advised that this data would form a core element in the Council's Performance and Financial Management Programme. There was specific discussion on the need to review issues surrounding the Council's response to the Equal Opportunities Indicators.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the data on the performance of the Council against the Audit Commission Performance Indicators for 1997/98, attached as Annexe A to the report (as revised at the meeting), be received;
- (ii) the data for each service be referred for consideration and comment by the appropriate service committee; and
- (iii) in addition to the figures being published in a local newspaper, the figures, together with background and relevant information, be published in a forthcoming edition of Town and Country.

13. **Audit Commission Consultation on the Local Authority Performance Indicators (Item 4)**

The Head of Policy Development reported on the Audit Commission's consultations with local authorities on a revised format for Performance Indicators. The main elements of the consultation were the linking of Performance Indicators with 'Best Value' legislation; the introduction of a set of common 'General Health' and 'Priority Service' Indicators; and bringing forward the date by which Indicators are submitted to the Commission from 31 December to 31 July of each year. The Committee agreed the proposed response to the consultation document.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the key issues in the Audit Commission's consultation document be noted; and

- (ii) the response to the issues raised in the consultation document, as outlined in the report at Item 4 of the agenda, be approved.

14. **Information Item**

The Committee noted the following item submitted for information only:

Audit Commission Publication and Reports (Item 5)

15. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following Item which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following categories of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (7) Information relating to the financial affairs of a particular person
- (9) Terms proposed by the authority for the supply of goods or services

16. **Select List of Tenderers – Internal Audit Services (Item 6)**

In a report containing exempt information, the Committee was advised on the arrangements for tendering for the provision of Internal Audit services from 1 April 1998.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chairman of the Audit and Performance Review Committee, be authorised to invite at least five tenders from the firms listed in paragraph 4.4 of the report at Item 6 of the agenda, on the basis of technical and financial references received; and
- (ii) the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chairman of the Audit and Performance Review Committee, be authorised to accept the lowest economically advantageous tender for the service.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and concluded at 8.20pm.

CHAIRMAN