

MINUTES OF AUDIT & IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

10 September 2008

7.30pm-9.23pm

PRESENT

COUNCILLORS

David Carter (Chairman)

Joel Charles

Tony Durcan (Vice Chairman)

Mark Gough

Shona Johnson

Clive Souter

Lorna Spenceley

APOLOGIES

Nick Macy

Mark Wilkinson

SUBSTITUTES

Jean Clark

ALSO PRESENT

Simon Carter

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

23. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2008 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

24. MATTERS ARISING

None.

25. WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

None.

26. **COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PLAN**

RESOLVED that the Work Plan be noted, subject to the report on the use of Consultants being allocated to the next meeting of the Committee in November 2008.

27. **AUDIT COMMISSION REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BUDGET PREPARATION ARRANGEMENTS**

The Committee received a report from Ian Davidson, District Auditor, on the Audit Commission's review of the Council's budget preparation arrangements.

The Committee was pleased to learn that all of the recommendations in the Action Plan (Appendix 2) had been agreed and implementation had either commenced or was completed.

RESOLVED to note

- (i) the Audit Commission's report on the Council's Budget Preparation Arrangements, as presented in Appendix 1;
- (ii) the progress against the Action Plan (or recommendations contained in the Audit Commission's report), shown in Appendix 2.

28. **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

The District Auditor, Paul King, gave a verbal update on the Annual Accounts for 2007/08.

The Committee noted that there were some minor issues that needed to be resolved before the District Auditor would be able to present his final statement on the Annual Accounts to the Policy and Resources Committee on 25 September 2008.

RESOLVED to note the verbal update.

29. **PLAYHOUSE BUDGET**

The Committee received a report, which was a standing item on the agenda, giving an update on the Playhouse budget at the end of period 4 for 2008/2009.

The Committee noted the current budgetary position. Arising from a number of questions about personnel issues at the Playhouse, the Community Services Manager confirmed that the Playhouse Manager post was being advertised and it was hoped that a new manager would be in post shortly. Reassurance was given that the day to day management of the Playhouse and its budget would continue to be closely monitored at an appropriate management level.

RESOLVED to note the report.

30. **STRATEGIC RISKS UPDATE**

The Committee received a report providing an update on a previous report which had been presented to the Committee in November 2007 and June 2008 on Zurich Municipal's review of the Council's significant or strategic business risks.

The Committee welcomed the proposed actions to mitigate the risks, but were concerned that whilst Officers had participated in the review process, Members had not.

RESOLVED to

- (i) note the action taken (and/or proposed) to mitigate against strategic risks, as identified in Appendix 1;
- (ii) note the risks number 5, 3, 11 and 14 continue to remain outside the acceptable tolerance zone for reasons described in paragraph 7;
- (iii) appoint three members from the Committee (one from each political party) to participate in the next review by Zurich Municipal's of the risk register.

31. **QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT (Q1)**

The Committee received a report providing an analysis of the Council's performance for the period 1 April 2008 – 30 June 2008, together with action plans for those indicators failing to meet the prescribed targets.

A number of suggestions were made for improvements to the presentation of the data to make the information clearer and these were noted by Officers.

RESOLVED

- (i) to note the report;
- (ii) to approve the action plans attached in Appendix 1 of the report.

32. **REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

None.

33. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE