

**Draft Minutes of the Final Accounts & Audit Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2007 in Committee Rooms A, B and C, Monkton Park, Chippenham.**

**Present:**

Councillor S. Parker (Chairman)

Councillors R.L. Cinnamond, S.K. Doubell, A. Pier and R.L. Tonge.

**Others Present:**

Mr P. Bensfield, Mr B. Bethall and Mr C. Hackett from the Audit Commission

**Officers Present:** M. Helps (Interim Chief Accountant), S. McGregor (Section 151 Officer), S. Pangbourne (Deputy Chief Executive), L. Pullin (Policy and Democratic Services Officer), and J. Tavener (Head of Customer Relations)

**FA20. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K.A. Banks, V.H. Greenman and J.L. Hall.

**FA21. Membership of the Final Accounts & Audit Committee**

The Committee was notified of the following change of membership for one meeting only:

<b>Councillor to be Replaced</b>	<b>Replacement</b>	<b>Political Group</b>
K.A. Banks	S.K. Doubell	Liberal Democrats

**FA22. Public Question Time/Receipt of Petitions**

There were no public questions or petitions received.

**FA23. Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's Announcements.

**FA24. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Final Accounts and Audit Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2007 were considered.

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Final Accounts and Audit Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2007 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**FA25. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**FA26. Statement of Accounts**

Consideration was given to Report No. 7 (circulated on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2007) which set out the amendments to the Council's draft Accounts for 2006/07 and presented the audited Accounts for 2006/07.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- That a number of amendments had been made to the Council's draft accounts since they were presented to the Committee in June 2007;
- There were no material amendments to the "bottom line" of the accounts, but cumulatively the amendments did make a material change;
- An explanation of the misstatements; and
- That the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive would be required to resign the revised accounts.

**Resolved** that:

- (1) The Committee note that the external auditor intends to issue an unqualified opinion on the Council's Accounts for 2006/07.
- (2) The Head of Finance and Resources will take forward the actions as detailed in the District Audit Annual Governance report.
- (3) The Letter of Representation in response to the audit be sent forthwith.

**FA27. Annual Governance Report 2006/07**

Consideration was given to Report No. 8 (circulated on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2007) which presented the Annual Governance Report for 2006/07 which was produced by the Audit Commission.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- An explanation of why the report is produced and what information it contains;
- That the Action Plan contained within Appendix 1 to the Report would be completed and reported back to a future meeting of the Committee;

## Final Accounts and Audit Committee Minutes – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2007

- Due to staffing resource problems within the Finance section, reconciliation of the bank accounts had not been carried out regularly and in future it was hoped that this would be carried on at least a quarterly basis;
- Due to the Unitary status, procurement of a new financial computer package would not now proceed;
- Queries with the PFI Equalisation Fund; and
- Ongoing staffing resource issues within Finance.

### **Resolved that:**

- (1) The Committee note the Annual Governance Report for 2006/07.
- (2) The Action Plan set out in the Annual Governance Report be completed and presented to the Committee at its next meeting.
- (3) The Committee receive an update at their meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007 on the PFI Equalisation Fund.
- (4) The Committee receive a verbal update at their meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007 on the staffing and computer system issues within Finance.

### **FA28. Letter of Representation**

Consideration was given to the draft Letter of Representation (circulated as Report No. 9 on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2007).

**Resolved** that the Committee approval the Letter of Representation for dispatch to the Audit Commission.

### **FA29. Internal Audit Progress Report**

Consideration was given to Report No. 10, (circulated with the Agenda) which updated the Committee on progress against the 2007/2008 Internal Audit Plan.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- That progress for the first quarter of audit reports was light, but this was due to a number of reports carried over from last year being finalised;
- Officers had now caught up and would be back on track for the second quarter of audit reports; and
- That the outcome of audits are only brought before this Committee if the results shown are less than satisfactory.

**Resolved** that the Committee note the update.

**FA30. Audit Letter Action Plan**

Consideration was given to Report No. 11 (circulated with the Agenda), which presented a progress update against the agreed recommendations arising from the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter for 2005/06 and the associated Use of Resources Assessment of March 2007.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The progress made on the Action Plan since the last update; and
- That a further update on the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter to the Committee would not be required.

**Resolved** that the Action Plan progress update be noted.

**FA31. Customer Focus Inspection Report**

Consideration was given to Report No. 12 (circulated with the Agenda) which presented the findings of the Audit Commission's Customer Focus inspection report for 2006/07.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The background of the initial Customer Focus Inspection Report;
- The Audit Commission's view that very good progress had been made since the initial report;
- That the Action Plan would be updated following the recent outcomes of the Members Policy Day; and
- How improvements in the service are measured.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) The findings of the report be noted.
- 2) The need to continue work to affect the improvement action plan be endorsed.

**FA32. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved** that under Schedule 12A of Section 100A(4) of The Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the following item of business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined below and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:

<b>Agenda Item/Report name</b>	<b>Paragraph of the Act / Schedule describing the exemption</b>
Agenda Item 14 – Risk Management - Strategic Risk Register	Paragraph 3 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

### **FA33. Risk Management – Strategic Risk Register**

Consideration was given to Report No. 14 (circulated with the Agenda) which presented a summary of the Council's Strategic Risk Register for information.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- How the risk levels are calculated and that they are reviewed monthly;
- It was anticipated that the Unitary risk would soon cease to be a risk and become a reality;
- The reasons why the refuse rounds review/Cleansing and Amenities was currently classed as a high risk; and
- Issues and concerns regarding the concessionary travel scheme.

#### **Resolved that**

- (1) The Strategic Risk Register be noted.
- (2) The Committee receive a verbal update at a future meeting over the concerns raised with the concessionary travel scheme.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.  
There were no members of the public present.