

# Minutes

**Meeting of** : Audit Committee  
**Meeting held in** : Alamein Suite, City Hall, Salisbury  
**Date** : Thursday 10 January 2008  
**Commencing at** : 6.00 pm

---

**Present:**

Mr P Downing (Independent Member) *Vice-Chairman - in the Chair*

Councillors D J Luther, J King and I Mitchell

**Officers:**

Steve Milton (Principal Democratic Services Manager) and Diana Melville (Chief Internal Auditor)

**Apologies:** Mrs J Clarkson JP (Independent Member) *Chairman*, Councillor C Devine.

**Also present:**

Peter Brown (Audit Commission)

**34. Public Questions:**

There were none.

**35. Councillor Questions/Statement Time:**

There were none.

**36. Minutes:**

**Resolved** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2007 (previously circulated) be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

**37. Declarations of Interest:**

There were none.

**38. Chairman's Announcements/Questions:**

**Matters arising from the minutes:** The Chairman wished to report that the Governance framework working group's first meeting was on 4 December 2007 with the next meeting on 21 January.



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Awarded in:  
Housing Services  
Waste and Recycling Services



### 39. Use of Resources Assessment:

Peter Brown of the Audit Commission presented the Use of Resources Auditor Judgements and answered members' questions. Mr Downing submitted some questions that he and Mrs Clarkson had about the assessment and Mr Brown and Diana Melville responded to the points raised as follows:

**Theme scores:** there had been no change by the National overview of the audit to these scores since the meeting on 10 December.

**Managing council housing:** as this was an assessment of performance over the last 12 months, the council was in the process of reassessing its performance against its own decent homes standards.

**Theme score 3:** Peter Brown drew attention to the high level of costs associated with central and democratic costs and unapportioned overheads and asked the officers to report further on this at the next meeting

**Office centralisation:** members questioned the measures being taken to mitigate the impact on the council's financial position of the office project. Diana Melville confirmed that the council had assessed and accepted the financial risks associated with the project. Regular monitoring reports are prepared for the Cabinet in order that it may be aware of full financial implications of the project so far as these can be known. In connection with this Mr Downing circulated a rough analysis of the projected spend compared with a similar project in London, which clearly identified the high cost of the scheme. Members noted the analysis.

Mr Brown confirmed that these issues had all been highlighted in the assessment for attention by the Council. Following points raised by members, Mr Brown agreed to amend the wording of paragraph 9 on page 16 to make the meaning clearer.

**Resolved:** that subject to the amendment set out above, the assessment be noted.

### 40. Fraud Risk Standard:

The committee considered the report of the Chief Internal Auditor. Some concern was raised about the increased risk of fraud that may occur during the changeover to the new authority.

**Resolved:**

- (1) that the results of the self-assessment and the immediate actions proposed be noted and the future arrangements for counter fraud work in the new authority be endorsed; and
- (2) that the concerns of the committee concerning the increased risk of fraud during the period of transition to the new Wiltshire Council be referred to the council's Risk Management Group.

### 41. Internal Audit Update:

The committee considered the report of the Chief Internal Auditor and discussed the level of the Audit Team's involvement in the transition to the new unitary.

**Resolved:** that the comments be noted.

### 42. Risk Registers:

The Committee considered the Corporate risk register. Members asked for the presentation of the information to be amended to show changes over time and to highlight areas of concern more clearly - possibly using symbols. Diana agreed to revise the format of the report to address the concerns. Members also raised the issue of risks associated with the transfer of personal data between agencies. Diana agreed to take this up with the Risk Management Group.

**Resolved:** that the risk register be noted (other risk registers were delayed until the next meeting).

### 43. Audit Committee – Draft Annual Report:

Mr Downing, on behalf of the Chairman, called for a Councillor to provide input into the preparation of the report for the Council.

**Resolved:** that Councillor Ian Mitchell be nominated to assist.

### 44. Future Dates of Meetings:

The Committee noted the future meeting dates on 9<sup>th</sup> April, 18<sup>th</sup> June and 24<sup>th</sup> September.

*The meeting concluded at 7.15 pm*  
*Members of public in attendance 0*