

West Wiltshire District Council

Minutes

Minutes of the: **Audit Committee**

Held on: **Monday 16 March 2009**

Held at: **Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge**

Present:

Councillors: Fuller, H Osborn and J Osborn (Chairman)

Also in attendance: Peter Brown (Audit Commission), and Simon Perks (KPMG)

Officers: Finance Service Manager (AB), Corporate Director (Chief Finance Officer) (IJ), and Member Support Officer (HP)

24. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Alford, Ezra and Humphries.

25. Declarations of Interest

None were received.

26. Announcements from the Chairman

The Chairman thanked officers for their work in support of the Audit Committee during his chairmanship. These sentiments were echoed by Cllr H Osborn, who chaired the Committee during the previous year.

27. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 25 September 2008 were approved and signed as a correct record.

28. Annual Audit – Use of Resources

Peter Brown (Audit Commission) introduced a report evaluating how well the Council managed and used its resources in 2007/08. He then answered questions from Members.

Cllr J Osborn asked why the Council only received ratings of '2' for the management of its asset base and for the arrangements it had in place to promote and ensure probity and propriety in the conduct of its business, in contrast with the '3' ratings achieved in all other areas. Mr Brown replied that overall the scores show many improvements, but that progress in these two particular areas was probably hindered by Local Government Reform (LGR).

Resolved that:

- **The Audit Committee noted the report.**

29. Annual Governance Statement

The Corporate Director (Chief Finance Officer) (IJ) introduced a report presenting the 2008/2009 Annual Governance Statement for approval.

Resolved that:

- **The Audit Committee approved the Annual Governance Statement.**

30. Internal Audit Reports

Simon Perks (KPMG) presented ten Internal Audit reports to the Committee for review. He then answered questions from Members.

Cllr J Osborn asked why cheques continue to constitute a proportion of the Council's income. Mr Perks replied that customers could still be better informed of the other payment options available.

Cllr Fuller suggested that cheques are a clear, visual way of receiving and recording payment, and that not all people will easily abandon paying by cheque.

The Finance Service Manager (AB) added that computerised income management systems now make receiving funds via debit and credit cards simple and efficient, and that only LGR has forestalled the introduction of such a system. Progression in this direction, however, is likely to continue in the new Wiltshire Council.

Cllr J Osborn requested an update on funding for The Five Towns Initiative. The Corporate Director (Chief Finance Officer) (IJ) reported that Trowbridge, Warminster and Westbury should receive their allocated funds before vesting day, while those for Bradford on Avon and Melksham have been earmarked for payment at a later date.

Resolved that:

- **The Audit Committee reviewed that Internal Audit reports.**

31. Annual Internal Audit Report 2008/2009

Simon Perks (KPMG) introduced a report outlining the internal audit work carried out by KPMG in accordance with the agreed audit plan 2008/2009. He also thanked officers and Members for the positive working relationships enjoyed since KPMG's recruitment and wished them luck in the future. Cllr J Osborn reciprocated these sentiments on behalf of the Audit Committee.

Cllr H Osborn asked where recommendations made by the Audit Committee will now go. The Corporate Director (Chief Finance Officer) (IJ) replied that all reports and recommendations will be forwarded on to the Audit Department at Wiltshire County Council.

Resolved that:

- **The Audit Committee noted the Annual Internal Audit report and opinion for 2008/2009.**

32. Debt recovery and arrears

The Finance Service Manager (AB) provided a verbal update.

Resolved that:

- **The Audit Committee noted the update.**

33. Audit Committee Annual Report

The Corporate Director (Chief Finance Officer) (IJ) introduced a report providing details of the work undertaken by the Audit Committee during the year April 2008 to March 2009.

Resolved that:

- **The Audit Committee noted the report.**

(7.00pm – 7.45pm)

These minutes were prepared by Henry Powell, Member Support Officer,
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