

Time Commenced: 6.00pm
Time Finished: 7.40pm

**AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
26 JUNE 2013**

Present: Councillor Roberts (Chair)
Councillors Ashburner, Campbell, Harwood, Martin and Turner

01/13 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Davies and Troup

02/13 Late Items

There were no late items.

03/13 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interest.

04/13 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The Committee requested a response in relation to minute no 62/12.

In respect of minute no 65/12 the Committee requested a report on the issues raised in relation to security of the Council House.

05/13 Inspection of the Council's Covert Surveillance Policy and Procedures

The Committee considered a report which stated that on 12 April 2013 His Honour Norman Jones QC, Assistant Surveillance Commissioner with the Office of Surveillance Commissioners conducted a comprehensive inspection of the Council's use and governance arrangements for conducting covert surveillance.

The use of covert surveillance is strictly governed by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 as amended. The responsibility for the overall governance arrangements rests with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services who acts as the Senior Responsible Officer.

Covert surveillance was authorised activity which a Local Authority could undertake in places other than residential premises or private vehicles.

The Council's Policy and Procedures should be reported to the Audit and Accounts Committee on an annual basis to ensure it was fit for purpose and the Council's usage should be reported quarterly to the Committee.

Resolved

- 1. To note that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services in conjunction with the Head of Governance and Assurance would implement the Action Plan as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report to respond to the recommendations given by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners.**
- 2. To note that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Governance and Assurance would ensure that mandatory training of officers was facilitated in respect of the use of covert surveillance.**
- 3. To request the Director of Legal and Democratic Services to provide an annual report to the Audit and Accounts Committee to consider the fitness for purpose of the Council's policy and quarterly reports in respect of the Council's usage of covert surveillance.**
- 4. To request the Monitoring Officer to amend the Constitution in accordance with the Inspection recommendations as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.**

06/13 Annual Governance Statement

The Committee considered a report which set out the draft Annual Governance Statement. This had been produced following the completion of the annual review of the Council's governance arrangements.

Resolved

- 1. To note the draft Annual Governance Statement.**
- 2. To request a report to a future meeting on the costs associated with the Welfare Reform Act.**

07/13 Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the review carried out of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy.

Resolved to note and approve the updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy.

08/13 Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit 2012/13

The Committee considered a report which gave an overview of the effectiveness of Internal Audit.

Resolved to note the findings and the conclusion that the internal audit function was considered to be effective.

09/13 Fighting Fraud Locally – The Government Fraud Strategy - 2012

The Committee considered a report which set out a synopsis of the update document co-ordinated by the National Fraud Authority (NFA) on tackling fraud in local government.

Resolved to note the report.

10/13 Governance Update

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the developments being made within the Council's governance framework.

Resolved to note the actions and the progress being made to enhance the governance framework.

11/13 Head of Audit – Annual Audit Opinion 2012/13

The Committee considered a report which provided the Committee with the Head of Governance and Assurance's opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal control environment. The report set out the annual internal audit report for 2012/13.

Resolved

- 1. To note the Head of Governance and Assurance's opinion on the internal control environment.**
- 2. To note the annual report.**

12/13 Internal Audit Progress Report

The Committee considered a report which informed Members of the internal audit activity for the period 1 March to 31 May 2013.

Resolved

- 1. To note the activity and performance of internal audit for the period 1 March to 31 May 2013.**
- 2. To write to each directorate to express the Committees concerns about the recommendations which had not been implemented and to ask for a response, to explain the reasons for not implementing them. Directorates to be told that failure to respond would result in being called to attend the Committee, to explain why a response had not been forthcoming.**

13/13 Draft Statement of Accounts 2012/13

The Committee considered the draft Statement of Accounts for 2012/13.

Resolved to note the draft Statement of Accounts for 2012/13.

Chair of the next ensuing meeting
at which these minutes were signed