

A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

WAS HELD ON 1 NOVEMBER 2007

Councillors Carr (P), Kimber, Langdon, Smith (P) , Wright (P) and Mrs Wright (P)

Independent Members: Mr R V Perry (P), vacancy.

It was reported that Councillor Hook had been nominated to replace Councillor Langdon for this meeting.

19. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Kimber and Langdon.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

21. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Standards and Governance Committee held on 13 September 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

22. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

23. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

24. INTERNAL AUDIT POSITION STATEMENT AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance which provided the latest information arising from the internal audit work up to the end of September 2007.

Members were advised that the 2007/08 Audit Plan was currently on target to achieve full coverage by 31 March 2008.

Members referred to the delay in auditing the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and were advised that this had not yet taken place as the plan was a complex document and there had been issues with the housing

maintenance partnering contract. However, following a number of meetings, the point had been reached where the plan could now be written and a report would be forwarded to the next meeting of the Housing Board. The audit would be taking place during the current quarter, as indicated on the revised Audit Plan.

Members' attention was drawn to longer term opportunities for collaborative working currently being explored with Eastleigh Borough Council. There would be a direct impact on the current audit plan of 45 days for this work, producing savings for the Authority.

The three year strategic plan would be reviewed later in the year. This would be rolled forward to take into account the coming three years and measure the impact of the longer term proposal of the joint internal audit arrangement with Eastleigh Borough Council. A paper would be presented to the Committee at the March 2008 meeting for decision along with the annual audit plan for 2008/09.

Concerns were raised regarding the impact and sustainability of the number of person days to be devoted to audit work at Eastleigh Borough Council. Members were advised that the audit team had continued to develop its skills and expertise and this would assist in managing the arrangement with Eastleigh Borough Council, although this may not be sustainable in the long term with current staffing levels. It was felt that partnership working could be expanded to include other local authorities. The resultant pooling of resources would generate savings which would be used to bolster contingencies which, if necessary, could be used to engage temporary or agency staff. The Council would be looking to achieve long term management efficiencies and cheaper, better service procurement.

Members were advised of the Alliance of Hampshire Auditors where the potential existed for future sharing of resources and expertise at rates beneficial to the authorities involved. A meeting of the Alliance would be taking place in December.

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the output and outcomes of the internal audit section against its overall annual plan at the half year stage.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 6.27pm.

CHAIRMAN