

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

**Minutes of:** AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE

**Date of Meeting:** 5 June 2003

**Present:** Councillor F Chaudhry (in the Chair);  
Councillors G Sharkey, J Smith, B Theckston, B Vincent,  
and J F Walton.

**Apologies for absence:** Councillors J P Costello, C Fitzgerald and T Pickstone.

**Public Attendance:** There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

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### SP.144 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Members to the first meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee for the Municipal Year 2003/2004 and welcomed Councillors J Smith and B Theckston, and to their first ever meeting of the Sub-Committee.

### SP.145 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest recorded with regard to any of the items on the agenda.

### SP.146 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No members of the public asked questions under this item.

### SP.147 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

#### **Delegated decision:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2003, be approved as a correct record.

### SP.148 MATTERS ARISING

Further to Minute SP.1231, concern was expressed at suggestions that the Sunnybank Centre had been closed down, funding withdrawn and youth activity was being co-ordinated through the Shuttle Centre in Whitefield.

#### **It was agreed:**

That further investigations be carried out into this matter.

### SP.149 INTRODUCTION TO NEW MEMBERS

Jim Butterworth, the Chief Internal Auditor gave a presentation for Members which covered the following issues:-

- The term of reference of Audit Sub-Committee and the Standards Committee

- A typical agenda for the Audit Sub-Committee
- The role of Internal Audit and the legal framework surrounding it
- Services provided by Internal Audit
- Internal Audit Planning
- Role of External Adult

**Delegated decisions:**

That the presentation be noted.

**SP.150     **AUDIT COMMISSION PROGRESS REPORT 2002/2003 AND AUDIT AND INSPECTION 2003/2004****

Clive Portman (Relationship Manager and District Auditor) and Tim Bridle (Principal Auditor), from the Audit Commission, attended the meeting in order to present to Members the Audit Progress Report for 2002/2003 and the programme of Audit and Inspection 2003/2004.

With regard to the 2002/2003 Audit Progress Report, it was reported that the three main areas of Audit which mirrored the Code of Practice were as follows:-

- Accounts Audit
- Corporate Governance
- Performance Management

For each aspect of the Audit, a target date was shown together with the position at February 2003.

The Audit and Inspection Plan for 2003/2004 set out the Audit and Inspection work that was proposed to be undertaken during the year 2003/2004. The report included work which would have to be undertaken in relation to the Council's Improvement Agenda.

In response to a question raised by a Member, an explanation was given as to the basis upon which fees were charged for External Audit Services.

Reference was also made to the fact that the deadline for the production of Annual Accounts would be brought forward and it was intended that this would be staggered on a year by year basis until the target date of 30 June, was reached.

**Delegated decision:**

That the Audit Progress Report for 2002/2003 and the Audit and Inspection Plan for 2003/2004 be noted.

**SP.151 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT**

A report of the Chief Internal Auditor was submitted which summarised the work undertaken by the Internal Audit Section in the financial year 2002/2003 compared to the Audit Plan for the year. It contained a "audit opinion" which assessed the Authority's control framework, and found it to be "sound".

The report gave information on the staffing situation during the year 2002/2003 and the planned inputs based around the establishment. The work output showed the estimated days in terms of departments against the actual days.

**It was agreed:**

That the report be endorsed.

**SP.152 DRAFT REVISED ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION STRATEGY**

A report of the Chief Internal Auditor was submitted which set out a draft revised Anti-fraud and Corruption Strategy for consideration by Members. This was intended to ensure that the Council was up to date in its policies and thinking and conducts its affairs in accordance with the law and the proper standards. The strategy would help to ensure that public money was safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

With regard to standards of conduct, clarification was sought regarding the position of Co-opted Members and in particular Co-opted Members on Area Boards and their responsibilities regarding the declaration of interests.

**Delegated decision:**

That the Strategy be adopted subject to final comments from Officers and Members and to consultation with staff representatives.

**SP.153 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Delegated decision:**

That in accordance with Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business since they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information in respect of action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention and investigation or prosecution of a crime.

**SP.154 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT**

A report of The Chief Internal Auditor was submitted which updated Members on the work correctly being carried out by Internal Audit and provided Members with an opportunity to monitor the work of the Section and comment upon issues raised.

Comment was made on the length of time between a report being drafted and a response being received in certain instances.

**Delegated decision:**

That the report be noted.

**SP.155 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS – MEMBERS FEEDBACK**

A report of The Chief Internal Auditor was submitted under the arrangements for reporting on Audit activities to Members. The report provided answers to specific enquiries raised by Members on previous occasions or in respect of particular areas of concern.

**Delegated decision:**

That the report be noted.

**F CHAUDHRY**  
**Chair**

**(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 8.40 pm)**