

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held at County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 1 March 2006.

PRESENT: Mr C G Findlay (Chairman), Mr R L H Long, TD (Vice-Chairman), Mr D L Brazier, Mrs T Dean, Mr C J Law, Mr J F London, Mrs M Newell, Mr W V Newman, Mr R J Parry, Mr D Smyth, Mr M V Snelling and Mr R Tolputt.

OFFICERS: The Strategic Director (Resources), Mr D Lewis; the County Finance Officer, Ms L McMullan; the Head of ICT, Mr D Cockburn; the Chief Internal Auditor, Dr C Webster (with Mrs J Armstrong); the Head of Financial Services, Mr N Vickers (with Mrs D Mattingley); the interim Communities Director of Policy and Resources, Judy Edwards; the Performance Manager, Mrs J Hill; and the Democratic Services Officer, Mr A Tait.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs J Eilbeck and Mr M Stevenson of Pricewaterhouse Coopers.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Membership
(Item 1)

The Committee noted the appointment of Mrs T Dean in place of Mr M J Vye.

2. Minutes
(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2005 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

3. Code of Corporate Governance
(Item 4 – Report by Strategic Director (Resources))

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the County Council be recommended to amend Appendix 10 of the Constitution as set out in the Appendix to these Minutes, taking into account amendments suggested by the Committee; and
- (b) future minor revisions to Appendix 10 be made by the Director of Law and Governance, reflecting any views put forward by the Committee.

4. KCC Annual Plan
(Item 5 – Report by Strategic Director (Resources))

RESOLVED that the Director of Business Solutions and Policy be authorised in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Labour and Liberal Democrat Group Spokesmen to discharge the Committee's responsibility to check the compliance of the KCC Annual Plan with statutory reporting requirements prior to its publication by 30 June 2006.

5. Risk Management – Revised Directorate Risk Registers

(Item 6 – Report by Strategic Director (Resources))

RESOLVED that the revised directorate risk registers be noted.

6. Performance Review

(Item 7 – Report by Strategic Director (Resources))

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the formal Performance Review programme be discontinued;
- (b) the approach taken to performance review by the Policy Overview Committees be reviewed by the Committee after 12 months; and
- (c) consequent amendments to the Constitution be recommended to the County Council, to reflect this change.

7. External Auditor’s Preliminary Joint Audit and Inspection Plan and Fee

(Item 8 – Report by Strategic Director (Resources))

(1) A revised report, including amendments to the Preliminary Plan had previously been circulated to the Committee;

(2) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the re-appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers as the Authority’s external auditors until 31 March 2007 be noted; and
- (b) the Chief Executive or his nominated representative be authorised to approve the External Auditor’s Preliminary Joint Audit and Inspection Plan and fee in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Labour and Liberal Democrat Group Spokesmen.

8. Internal Audit Plan 2006/07

(Item 9 – Report by Chief Internal Auditor)

RESOLVED that approval be given to:-

- (a) the proposed 2006-07 Plan for Internal Audit set out in Appendix A of the report;
- (b) the proposed improvements to Internal Audit working practices set out in paragraph 7 of the report; and
- (c) the reporting arrangements for the outcomes of audits set out in paragraph 8 of the report.

9. Internal Audit Reporting
(Item 10 – Report by Chief Internal Auditor)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10. Mr David Lewis

This being the last meeting of Mr David Lewis, Strategic Director (Resources) the Committee thanked him and paid tribute to his services to Kent County Council. Mr Lewis suitably replied.

EXEMPT ITEMS

(Open Access to Minutes)

(Members resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 7 and 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act)

11. Internal Audit Reporting – Irregularities
(Item 12 – Report by Chief Internal Auditor)

(1) The Chief Internal Auditor provided brief details of all irregularities cases completed during the period November 2005 to January 2006.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.