

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 16 September 2009.

PRESENT: Mr R L H Long, TD (Chairman), Mr M V Snelling (Vice-Chairman), Mr A R Chell, Mr K A Ferrin, MBE, Mr C Hibberd, Mr P W A Lake, Mr J F London, Mr R J Parry, Mr T Prater, Mr R Tolputt and Mr C T Wells

ALSO PRESENT: Miss S J Carey and Mr J D Simmonds

OFFICERS: Ms L McMullan (Director of Finance), Mr G Wild (Director of Law and Governance), Ms J Dawson (Head of Audit and Risk), Mrs J Armstrong (Senior Audit Manager), Mr R Fitzgerald (Performance Monitoring Manager), Ms J Hill (Performance Manager), Mrs D Mattingly (Corporate Risk & Insurance Manager) and Mr A Tait (Democratic Services Officer)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Wells and Mr G Brown from the Audit Commission.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

32. Presentation on the Role and Terms of Reference for the Governance and Audit Committee

(Item 3)

(1) The Head of Audit and Risk gave a detailed presentation on the role of the Committee. This was supplemented by the Director of Law and Governance, who set out the governance aspects of the Committee's work.

(2) Members of the Committee considered that it should take a more pro-active view of its role. The Committee therefore welcomed the Chairman's commitment to discuss amendments to the agenda-setting process with the Committee's lead officers.

(3) As this was Mrs Janet Dawson's last meeting as Head of Audit and Risk, the Committee thanked her for all her work on its behalf and wished her well in the future.

33. Minutes - 30 June 2009

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that, subject to the deletion of Mr Parry from the list of those present and to the inclusion of Mr D Wells and Mr G Brown from the Audit Commission, the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2009 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

34. Trading Activities Sub-Group Notes - 1 September 2009

(Item 5)

(1) Mr M V Snelling made a declaration of personal interest for this item and the following item (Minute 35) as he was a Director of a number of KCC Commercial Services Trading Companies. He left the meeting for the duration of both items.

(2) This item was considered in conjunction with the following item on the agenda (Minute 35).

(3) RESOLVED that the notes of the Trading Activities Sub-Group meeting held on 1 September 2009 be noted.

35. External Audit Review of KCC's Commercial Operations

(Item 6)

(1) This item was considered in conjunction with the previous item on the agenda (Minute 34).

(2) A motion by Mr T Prater to amend the actions in Recommendation 3 on page 13 of the agenda papers was withdrawn following an assurance from the Director of Finance that reviews could be carried out by other bodies apart from Internal Audit if it was considered appropriate.

(3) Mr C T Wells moved and it was duly seconded that the overarching aim of the Trading Activities Sub-Group be amended to read: "To ensure that the trading activities of the Council are run properly and transparently."

Carried 6 votes to 2.

(4) Mr T Prater moved, seconded by Mr C T Wells that the membership of the Trading Activities Sub-Group should include a representative from the business community.

Lost 2 votes to 7

(5) RESOLVED that:-

(a) the contents of the Audit Commission's independent review of KCC's commercial operations be noted;

(b) the actions set out in Appendix B of the report to meet the Audit Commission's 8 recommendations be agreed; AND

(c) the overarching aim of the Trading Activities Sub-Group be amended to read: "to ensure that the trading activities of the Council are run properly and transparently."

36. 2008/09 Final Accounts and Annual Governance Report

(Item 7)

(1) Members of the Committee requested that there should be a report to a future meeting on the full impact on and risks to the County Council resulting from the Private Finance Initiative, particularly in respect of the Building Schools for the Future programme.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

37. Insurance Activity and new Performance Indicators
(Item 8)

(1) The Committee noted that Mr J D Simmonds, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance was the co-author of the report rather than Mr Long.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

38. Internal Audit Benchmarking Results
(Item 9)

RESOLVED that the report be noted and that the actions taken in paragraph of the report be endorsed.

39. Internal Audit Progress Report
(Item 10)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

40. Data Quality
(Item 11)

RESOLVED that approval be given to the revised Data Quality Policy.

41. Ombudsman Complaints
(Item 12)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.