

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Audit and Governance Committee**
held on Tuesday, 29th June, 2010 at Committee Suite 1 & 2, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillors M Simon, E Alcock, D Beckford, S Conquest, B H Dykes,
J Hammond, M Hardy, A Kolker, J Narraway and J Weatherill

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor F Keegan Portfolio Holder for Resources
Councillor A Knowles Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing

IN ATTENDANCE

Lisa Quinn	Borough Treasurer and Head of Assets
Vivienne Quayle	Head of Policy and Performance
Christine Mann	Finance Manager
Joanne Wilcox	Corporate Finance Lead
Paul Goodwin	Places Financial Lead
Ross McCormick	Team Manager Corporate
Dominic Oakeshott	People Financial Lead
Steve Wilcock	Performance and Capacity Lead
Ivan Parkhill	Audit Commission
Carol Jones	Democratic Services Officer

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Councillor M J Simon be elected Chairman of the Committee to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Councillor A Kolker be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

4 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

In accordance with Procedure Rules Nos. 11 and 35 a total period of 10 minutes was allocated for members of the public to address the Committee on any matter relevant to its work, or to ask questions.

There were no questions from members of the public and the Committee proceeded to its next business.

5 ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010

All principal local authorities, subject to the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended) must make provision for internal audit in accordance with the Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the United Kingdom. To comply with the Code, the Head of Internal Audit and compliance must provide a written report to those charged with governance, time to support the Annual Governance Statement.

The Committee considered the Internal Audit Annual Report 2009-2010 the primary purpose of which was to provide an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's control environment.

Members were reminded that the role of the Committee was to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment.

Officers drew attention to key issues in the report, including –

- Upgrading of the Oracle system
- Streamlining of income-collection. Operational difficulties were currently being experienced. A new policy was being developed and would be submitted to the Committee in due course.

Members made comments/observations and these were responded to by Officers, as appropriate.

RESOLVED

That the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2009/2010 be noted.

6 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Council was required to prepare and publish an Annual Government Statement (AGS), a requirement which had been introduced by the revised CIPFA/SOLACE Good Governance Framework (Delivering Good Governance in Local Government) and was necessary to meet the statutory requirement set out in Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations (2003 as amended).

The purpose of the AGS was to provide a continuous review of the organisation's governance arrangements to give assurance on the effectiveness of the processes and/or to address identified weaknesses. The report detailed the results of the review.

Minor editorial amendments were made to the report, as follows –

Appendix A	Page 11	Heading "Cabinet/Other Committees"
First line	Delete Insert	"Cabinet" "Leader"
	Page 14	Heading "Significant governance issues"
Following Insert		"....considered adequate;" ".....however,"

The Annual Governance Statement would be uploaded onto the website as part of the accounts

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, the Annual Governance Statement be approved for signature by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

7 DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS - 2009-2010

The Committee considered a revised report on the Draft Statement of Accounts 2009-2010 which required approval by 30 June 2010 in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2006. The Local Government Act 2003 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 required the Statement of Accounts to be produced in line with recommended accounting practices.

A Member briefing session had been held immediately prior to the meeting.

It was noted that this was the first set of accounts for Cheshire East Borough Council and there were, therefore, no prior year comparatives available in the Income and Expenditure account. The report set out the key areas which had affected the accounts in the first year of operation.

During discussion, it was agreed that a session be held in mid-September to offer training for Members on the International Financial Reporting Standards and to update Members on the key messages arising out of the audit of the accounts.

RESOLVED

- (a) That, to comply with the requirements of Section 21(2) of the Local Government Act 2003 and Sections 41 and 42 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Cheshire East Borough Council Draft Statement of Accounts for 2009-2010 be approved; and
- (b) That staff in the Borough Treasurer's department be thanked for their contribution to the preparation and timely completion of the accounts.

8 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS - 2010-2011

The Committee was recommended to approve a calendar of meetings for the remainder of the Municipal Year. All meetings would be held at Westfields, Sandbach.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee approve the following calendar of meetings for 2010-2011 –

30 September	Thursday	10.00 am
17 November	Wednesday	10.00 am
25 January 2011	Tuesday	2.00 pm
29 March	Tuesday	2.00 pm

Note: The Statement of Accounts would be submitted to the Committee on 30 September 2010, following completion of the audit. As noted in Minute No. 7 above, an additional meeting would be arranged for mid-September to brief Members on the key issues arising out of the audit.

The meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and concluded at 4.00 pm

Councillor M J Simon
(Chairman)