

MINUTES

meeting: **AUDIT/STANDARDS COMMITTEES JOINT MEETING**

date: **28 JULY 2011**

PRESENT:-

Councillors Mrs Bradley, Claymore, Gwinnett, Hardacre, Inston, Mrs Keirle and Mrs Thompson
Mr R Aithal, Mr J Harris, Mr G W Hurd, Mr A W Lee, Mr W Parker, and Mr R C Tyler-Morris (Independent Members)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:-

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Leach, Mrs Mills, Samuels and Turner

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:-

Delivery Directorate

P Main	-	Assistant Director (Corporate Services)
L Banbury	-	Democratic Support Officer
F Davis	-	Group Manager (Advocacy Services)

Wolverhampton
City Council



Election of Chair

- 11 Resolved:-
That Mr W Parker be elected as Chair of the Joint meetings between the Audit and Standards Committees for the ensuing municipal year.

Declarations of Interest

- 12 No interests were declared.

Annual Governance Statement 2010/2011

The Assistant Director (Corporate Services) presented a report which provided, for Members' information, the Annual Governance Statement for 2010/2011. The Council is required, under regulation 4(2) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulation 2006, to produce an Annual Governance Statement to be included in the annual statement of accounts, which must be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

The Assistant Director responded to Members' questions and comments as follows:-

- An indepth review of the Council's HR Service is being undertaken, with a view to implementing a development programme for the services, including a new policy framework and a new approach to the internal customer service. It is intended to take a structured approach to the governance of the programme with regular reports to the Performance Governance and Support Services Scrutiny Panel and to Audit Committee.
- The anticipated date for completion of the job evaluation exercise in regard to Single Status is currently Summer 2012. Progress is reported on a regular basis to the Performance Governance and Support Services Scrutiny Panel and to the Audit Committee. Arrangements could be made for the Project Sponsor to provide a briefing note for Members with regard to progress on the implementation of Single Status.
- Regular reports on the governance issues in the Annual Governance Statement will be a submitted to the Audit Committee during this municipal year.
- A report on the development of a robust Information Governance Strategy could be presented to a future joint meeting.
- The request for all Members to be made aware of high profile problems affecting the City and subsequent action taken was noted.
- In future Members will be afforded the opportunity to consider the draft Annual Governance Statement, prior to signing off by the Leader and Chief Executive. Consideration will also be given to the request for more information about the supporting evidence, on which the Statement is based, to be included in future reports.

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Resolved:-

(a) That the 2010/2011 Annual Governance Statement be noted.

(b) That the Audit and Standards Committees note that regular updates on the governance issues in the Annual Governance Statement are to be presented to the Audit Committee.

(c) That a joint meeting with Standards Committee be convened later in the year to consider an update in respect of the governance issues in the Annual Governance Statement.

(d) That a briefing note on progress in regard to the implementation of Single Status be produced by the Project Sponsor and circulated to all Members of the Audit and Standards Committees

(e) That a report to be presented to the next joint meeting in regard to the development of a robust Information Governance Strategy

(f) That, in future, joint meetings be scheduled to ensure the Audit and Standards Committees are given the opportunity to consider the draft Annual Governance Statement and provide feedback prior to signing off by Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.