

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

Wednesday, 18th March, 2009

PRESENT: Councillor J Bale in the Chair
Councillors D Blackburn, G Driver, J Elliott,
P Grahame, M Iqbal, G Latty, N Taggart,
C Campbell and G Kirkland

Co-optee
Mr M Wilkinson

94 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

95 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

96 Late Items

There were no late items added to the agenda.

97 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

98 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence from the meeting.

99 Minutes of the Previous Meeting - 11th February 2009

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee meeting held on 11th February 2009 be approved as a correct record, with one amendment to the list of apologies.

100 Minutes of the Standards Committee

The Chair of the Standards Committee informed Members that he had recently taken part in some filming for the Standards Board for England's website, that the Standards Committee had considered its final investigation report under the previous procedure rules, and that a proposal to encourage external members of the Committee to attend City Councillors' ward surgeries had been approved.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 17th February 2009 be noted.

(Councillor Taggart arrived during the consideration of this item.)

101 Children's Services Joint Area Review Action Plan Update

The Deputy Director of Children's Services presented a report of the Director of Children's Services updating Members on the Joint Area Review Action Plan for Children's Services.

Members particularly discussed:

- Whether the target of ensuring that all initial child protection conferences happen on time was appropriate;
- How to ensure that children could easily access the young people's version of the JAR findings; and
- The need for officers to correlate related outcomes reported from different inspection agencies so that progress reports to the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee can be seen reviewed in a more balanced and objective way.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the progress made in addressing the recommendations from the JAR inspection and the opinions of the Director of Children's Services in relation to progress on the JAR Action Plan be noted; and
- (b) That a report correlating the outcomes of all recent inspections relating to Children's Services be presented to the Committee at its meeting on 12th May.

(Councillor Campbell left the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

102 Developing Locality Children's Trust Arrangements in Wedges

The Deputy Director of Children's Services presented a report of the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the evolution of locality children's trust arrangements, and building upon an earlier report which was presented to the Committee on 19th March 2008.

Members discussed the need to ensure that local communities are consulted prior to the revised trust arrangements being finalised. It was agreed that further discussions should be held outside of the meeting in order to determine how best to involve Members in ensuring that the new arrangements are sufficiently robust.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted; and
- (b) That further discussions be held in order to determine how best to involve Members in ensuring that the new locality arrangements are sufficiently robust.

103 Multi-Agency Arrangements to be implemented by the Director of Adult Social Services

The Director of Adult Social Services presented a report advising Members of the multi-agency arrangements that have been put in place in Leeds to better reflect national standards in relation to the safeguarding and protection of adults.

Members were informed that:

- It was the intention that an independent Chair of the Safeguarding Board would be recruited in the Autumn and appointed from next year;
- Four full (rather than associate) members of the Board would constitute a quorum; and
- The Performance, Audit and Quality Assurance Group would explore safeguarding and risk issues in detail.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

104 Adult Social Services - Risk Management Arrangements

The Director of Adult Social Services presented a report advising Members of the risk management arrangements operating within Adult Social Services, and highlighting how strategic risks are translated into operational controls.

Members particularly discussed the need to clarify the different assurances that the Committee should be seeking (particularly from Directors) and the need to maintain clearly demarcated lines of responsibility between the Committee's work and that of Scrutiny Boards.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(Councillor Taggart left the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

105 Progress Report - CAA Use of Resources - Self Assessment

The Chief Officer (Financial Management) presented a report of the Director of Resources providing details of the auditor's judgement as to the Council's Use of Resources for 2008, and updating Members on the Council's preparation for the 2009 assessment following the self assessment exercise that was undertaken in Summer 2008.

Members were informed that a further report would be presented to the Committee providing details of how the Use of Resources Assessment will operate within the context of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment. Members were also assured that an update report regarding Partnership Governance would be presented to the Committee at its meeting on 12th May.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted; and

- (b) That a further report be brought to the Committee by the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement) regarding how the Use of Resources Assessment will operate in the context of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment.

106 KPMG Audit and Delivering Successful Change – A review of Project Management Arrangements

Representatives from KPMG presented this report, which summarised the key findings from KPMG's recent audit of the Council's project management arrangements.

Members commented on the need to strengthen public engagement and consultation, and to ensure that small projects can also use the methodology.

RESOLVED – That the progress made with respect to project management across the Council be noted.

107 Progress Statement - External Audit

Representatives from KPMG presented this report which provided Members with the progress statement for the external audit programme 2008/09.

The Committee was informed that the Youth Services report would be submitted to the Committee's meeting on 30th April, and that the Scrutiny report would be submitted on 12th May.

Members raised concerns as the Waste Management report had been superseded by another piece of work without the Committee's consent. It was agreed that a report should be presented to the Committee's next meeting to explain why this had occurred.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Progress Statement for the External Audit Programme 2008/09 be noted; and
- (b) That a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee by the Director of Resources to explain why the Waste Management report had been removed from the 2008/09 Programme without the Committee's consent.

(Councillor Iqbal left the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

108 Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and Standards Committee Terms of Reference

The Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) submitted a report informing Members of the revised Terms of Reference for the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and Standards Committee.

RESOLVED – That the revised Terms of Reference for the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and Standards Committee, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

109 Work Programme

The Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) submitted a report notifying Members of the draft work programme for 2008/09.

RESOLVED – That the draft work programme for the remainder of the municipal year be noted.