

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (INTERNAL)

6<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2008

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PRESENT	Councillor V Shuttleworth (Chair) Councillors Mrs Jopling, Mrs Lee, Lethbridge, Mrs Todd and Des Wilson.
APOLOGIES	Councillor Bowser
ADVISERS	L Serewicz, Policy and Performance Manager; S Reid, Assistant Director, Finance and IT; Ms S Dawson, Head of Economic Regeneration; Mrs S Robertson, Conservation and Environment Manager and Mrs J Lawton, Senior Committee Administrator.
ALSO PRESENT	F Martin, CPA Inspector.

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## 21. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2008 were taken as read and confirmed as a true record.

## 22. AUDIT PLAN 2008/09

Consideration was given to the planned work of the Internal Audit Service to be undertaken in the year 2008/09.

In referring to Annex B of the circulated report, the Assistant Director for Finance and IT advised that the category entitled "contingencies" was a new addition to the plan. Those 238 days had been set aside for work that might be needed for LGR such as data transfer, safeguarding assets, risk management and corporate governance. If not all of those days were required for LGR, then audits would be undertaken from the reserve list.

In response to the Chair, the Assistant Director advised that Dale and Valley Homes had expressed an interest in using the Authority's Internal Audit Service, however the agreement was to be finalised.

In response to Councillor Mrs Todd, the Assistant Director clarified that when the annual budget was set it was done so taking into consideration the number of staff in current employment within the Authority. There was therefore money to replace staff through the year should the need arise. However, should audit staff leave ahead of LGR and were not replaced, all the districts had agreed to support each other in terms of staffing. He also

clarified for Members that further reports would come to the Committee advising how the contingency days had been used if they were not taken up with LGR.

Seconded by Councillor Mrs Todd, Councillor Mrs Lee moved the report.

**RESOLVED** that the Annual Audit Plan 2008/09 be approved.

**23. THIRD QUARTER PERFORMANCE CLINIC UPDATE – ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION DEPARTMENT**

Members were updated on the performance of the Environment and Regeneration Department, particularly concerning BVPI 219b – the percentage of conservation areas in the local authority area with an up-to-date character appraisal.

The Conservation and Environment Manager advised Members of the work she had undertaken since joining Wear Valley in July 2007. There were 20 conservation areas within the District. She had selected 7 of those areas to produce character appraisals on, which exceeded the 4 necessary to achieve the BVPI target of 20%.

The Assistant Director of Economic Regeneration advised that BVPI 219b would be discontinued once the new National Indicators took effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, however within the Regeneration Department Service Plan, a target would be set for a further 9 conservation area character appraisals to be completed in the coming year.

**24. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION SCRUTINY REVIEW UPDATE**

The Policy and Partnerships Manager advised that the Scrutiny review of Internal Communication had been approved by full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2008. The recommendations of the Committee had been accepted and as such, would be systematically followed up.

**CHAIR**

The meeting concluded at 11:25am.