

26TH JUNE 2006

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Portfolio: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

PROPOSED TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 In order for the Audit Committee to be fully effective, it is essential that training be provided to allow Members to obtain some further detailed knowledge and increased awareness of issues that will be brought to the Committee for consideration.
- 1.2 The Role and Functions of the Committee have already been agreed by Council and it will therefore be necessary to provide appropriate training to take into account those specific issues.
- 1.3 There are a number of options available to facilitate appropriate training and these are described with the report.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the appropriate officers of the Council and the Audit Commission arrange for suitable training to be provided following consideration of any proposals by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The report, which the Council approved on 19th May 2006 (Minute C.6/06 refers) to establish this Committee, referred to guidance that had been issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).
- 3.2 The guidance issued by CIPFA did recommend that Members of an Audit Committee should be properly trained to fulfil their role and to ensure that the Committee will be fully effective.
- 3.3 There are a number of ways in which training can be provided to Members.

External Provision

There are a growing number of consultants who provide (usually) a day-long course at various locations throughout the country on a regular basis which has a pre-determined content. The costs normally associated with this type of training are typically £300 to £400 per day, per member. In addition there are the costs of getting to the venue, as well as accommodation costs, depending upon the location and length of the course.

Some consultants are also willing to provide training locally and will tailor the training to take into account any specific requirements of a local authority and

its members. There is a minimal cost of approx. £1,200 plus the cost of the consultant travelling to the appropriate venue as well as the potential of overnight accommodation costs also being incurred.

Internal Provision

The Council's officers, together with Audit Commission staff, could provide some training within Council owned premises, which could be tailored to the requirements of the Members of the Committee.

A mix of internal and external training could be provided.

- 3.4 It is suggested that officers from the Council and the Audit Commission prepare a Training Programme for consideration, by the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee, taking into account the Role and Functions of the Committee.
- 3.5 It is envisaged that over time the training could encompass the following key areas. There will be other areas where some form of training to cover specific issues will be arranged as and when necessary.
- The Role of the Audit Commission
 - The principles of Risk Management
 - The Role of Internal Audit
 - The Requirements of the Statement of Internal Control
 - The Content of the Annual Statement of Accounts
- 3.6 Members may also wish to identify other relevant training that they consider relevant.
- 3.7 A number of suitable documents and access to secure online information could also be obtained to ensure that Members can have an appropriate reference source of information to access at all times.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 It will be necessary to make arrangements for a suitable venue to be booked and appropriate documents and online access to specific websites to be made available.
- 4.2 The costs associated for Member training will be accommodated within the existing revenue budget for Member training.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chair and Vice-Chair will be consulted about the content and time scale of the training to be provided.

6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATION

6.1 *Links to Corporate Objectives/Values*

6.2 *Risk Management*

If Members are inadequately trained, the Committee may not be able to be effective.

6.3 Health and Safety

No additional implications have been identified.

6.4 Equality and Diversity

No material considerations have been identified.

6.5 Legal and Constitutional

There are no legal or constitutional issues arising from this report.

6.6 Overview and Scrutiny Implications

There are no Overview and Scrutiny implications.

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Ward(s): Not Ward Specific

Background Papers: **The Implications of the Establishment of An Audit Committee:**
- Report to Cabinet 13/4/06
- Report to Standards Committee 5/5/06
Establishment of an Audit Committee:
- Report to Council 19/5/06

Examination by Statutory Officers:

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Council's Head of the Paid Service or his representative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Council's S.151 Officer or his representative.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Management Team has approved the report.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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