

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**HELD ON THURSDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2008**

Present: Councillor G. Pinkney (Chair)  
Councillors B Bates, E. Bell,  
G. Johnson, K. McGonnell  
and B. Quinn.

Apologies: Councillors Mrs G. Bleasdale and R. Davison

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 18 July 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **INTERNAL AUDIT LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – 2007/2008**

Consideration was given to the report of the Internal Audit Manager which advised Members of the local performance indicators for the Internal Audit Section for 2007/8, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

P Clark, Senior Auditor explained that during 2005 local performance indicators were set up to examine the quality of work within the Internal Audit Section. These were used by the Audit Manager to help monitor the output of the internal audit work from the Section.

The indicators established were customer satisfaction indicators to determine the overall level of satisfaction of audit work as expressed by the auditee, and quality indicators which were used to determine how effective and efficient the work of the Internal Audit Section was.

During 2007/8, 20 audits had been carried out and 18 were completed and reported by March 2008.

For the customer satisfaction indicators, questionnaires were sent out by the Audit Manager after each audit asking the auditee to mark and comment on satisfaction with the audit. The auditee was then asked to give an overall assessment of the work carried out.

Of the 18 questionnaires sent out, 17 had been returned and all were assessed as 'good' or 'very good'.

With regard to quality indicators, the quality assessments for the completed audits were based on various performance indicators, and these were detailed in the report for Members consideration.

All the targets in relation to both customer satisfaction and quality indicators had been met.

**RESOLVED** that the information contained within the report, be noted.

**3. FIRST QUARTERLY CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR 2008/2009**

Consideration was given to the report of the Principal Corporate Development Officer which gave details of the Council's performance against the new National Indicator Set (NI's) and the Corporate Local Performance Indicators (PI's) for the first quarter of 2008/9. A copy of the report had been circulated to each Member.

M Readman, Principal Corporate Development Officer stated that, as Members were aware, the new NI set had been introduced from 1 April 2008, replacing the previous National Performance Framework presented through the BVPI's. Many of the NI's were new indicators with no baseline data, therefore in these areas it was difficult to gauge the level of performance or carry out any trend analysis at this stage.

For 2008/9 there were a total of 198 NI's. From this the Council agreed a corporate reporting set for performance management and monitoring purposes during the transitional year, based on the criteria outlined in the report.

The Council's set also included 9 Corporate Local Indicators, comprising of former Corporate Health BVPI's and key indicators from the Council's Corporate Plan.

Appendices 1 and 2 showed the current data available for these indicators for the end of the first quarter. From this information, it was clear that there were a number of gaps in the data. This was due to the forthcoming Place Survey for which initial results were expected in January 2009, difficulties with the definitions of some of the new indicators, and new methods of reporting the data.

M Readman continued that as this was a new data set, it was difficult at this stage to determine improvement trends across the Board. However, this was possible where previous data was available. The report outlined the position at the end of June 2008.

Of the 9 Local Key Corporate Indicators, 4 were at the expected level for quarter 1 and the 2 community safety related indicators had no data available at this time due to the re-configuration of the partnership arrangements. The report gave details of performance in the remaining three indicators:-

Ex BVPI 156 – Public buildings accessible to the disabled;  
Ex BVPI 12 – Sickness levels;  
Ex BVPI 212 – Average re-let times for Council owned homes.

With regard to the new NI's, M Readman advised that there were 24 for which the Council had responsibility for collecting and reporting on, and the report gave a description of each, together with details of the results for the first quarter.

In terms of the areas identified for particular focus to improve performance during the transitional year, the report outlined the results for those indicators listed below, for the first quarter of 2008:-

NI 158 Percentage of non-decent homes  
NI 160 Satisfaction of tenants with landlord services  
NI 191 Kgs of household waste collected (residual)

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NI 192 Household waste recycled and composted  
NI 196 Fly tipping

To conclude, M Readman advised that much of the information gathered would provide baseline information which could only be properly analysed from next year.

Gaps had been highlighted in the data collection process and there were some difficulties with data quality as the new guidance was implemented. Work would continue to address these issues, in line with the work of the Policy and Partnerships workstream.

Where data sets had been established the picture was a mixed one of continuing improvement and areas of concern.

A Member referred to the gaps in the data collection process and asked if more preparatory work could have been undertaken prior to the implementation of the new Indicator Set in April 2008. He made specific reference to NI 160 - Council tenants' satisfaction with landlord services and the satisfaction survey. M Readman re-assured Members that as much preparatory work as possible had been carried out and that those areas where there were gaps in data available were out of the Council's control. Some of the NI's were annual, such as NI 14 – Avoidable contact, and there had been difficulties in the interpretation of the definitions of some of the new indicators. The final definitions had only been issued in March 2008 and further work was required on interpretation to ensure consistency of reporting across the County in the move towards the new single Council.

With regard to NI 160, she advised that this survey had to be completed by all Councils at the same time, in accordance with guidelines prescribed by the Audit Commission.

Reference was also made to NI 196 - Fly tipping, an indicator which had been identified for specific focus, and a Member asked if a plan was in place to attempt to reduce the incidents of fly tipping, and thereby improve performance. M Readman confirmed that this was being addressed through a planned increase in enforcement activity, adding that the Director of Community Services had taken the issue on board and was looking at a strategic approach to reducing the number of incidents.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the information contained within the report, be noted.