

**MINUTES of the meeting of Audit and Corporate Governance Committee held at : Brockington, 35 Hafod Road on Friday, 8th December, 2006 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Present:** Councillor A.C.R. Chappell (Chairman)

**Councillors:** Mrs. P.A. Andrews, T.M. James, J.G. Jarvis, R.I. Matthews and Mrs. S.J. Robertson

**In attendance:** Mr T Tobin and R.M. Wilson (Resources) (ex-officio).

**12. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

There were no named substitutes made.

**13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

**14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor H. Bramer.

**15. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd September, 2006 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the words 'ex-officio' being deleted after the word 'Audit' and referred to 'In attendance'.

**16. BENEFIT FRAUD INSPECTION REPORT FOR BENEFIT INTERVENTION**

The Head of Benefit and Exchequer Services presented a report which updated the Committee with regard to the Benefit Interventions Report from the Benefit Inspectorate and the follow up action taken.

The Committee was informed that all the recommendations in the Benefit Intervention Action Plan, referred to in the table attached to the report, had been implemented with the exception of two areas which required more work. These areas were

- (i) The analysis of work surrounding interventions.
- (ii) The review of work on intervention.

These two areas were currently under review.

In respect of Interventions and targets for Local Authorities, the Committee noted that the rules governing these would be changing in April 2007, with targets for the number of benefit reductions and terminations rather than the number of interventions completed.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**17. AUDIT COMMISSION REPORT - REVIEW OF E GOVERNMENT PROGRAMME**

The Principal Audit Manager presented a report which updated the Committee regarding actions taken in respect of recommendations made previously by the Audit Commission which were reported to the Audit Committee at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006, in respect of this Council's E Government programme.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**18. AUDIT SERVICES INTERIM ASSURANCE REPORT**

The Audit Services Manager presented a report which updated the Committee on progress made in relation to the Audit Plan, key internal control issues in relation to the Plan and on actions or the current position on key issues raised for 2005/06 that required attention.

The Committee noted that the date referred to in paragraph 1 on page 13 on the Agenda should read ' 22nd September 2006 ' and not ' 30th September 2006 ' .

The Audit Services Manager drew the Committee's attention to items removed from the original Audit Plan due to in the main the requirement of the new Department for Education and Skills (DfEs) Toolkit.

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that the timescale for the replacement of the CLIX system was being proceeded with in accordance with the Council's approved Procurement programme and that the summer 2008 date was to allow for testing and data verification

Members agreed with the Chief Executive that future references to Management in Reports to the Committee should refer specifically to the officer in question and not in generalistic terminology.

The Audit Services Manager reported he would be meeting with the Legal Practice Manager to request guidance in respect of CRB procedures for schools.

The Audit Services Manager highlighted one area of concern relating to the CLIX system in Adult Services. Members requested that they be updated on audit recommendations made.

Mr.T.Tobin, Audit Commission, reported that all matters referred to in the Audit Plan were on track and expressed approval at the current position.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**19. AUDIT COMMISSION LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS**

## **AUDIT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE FRIDAY, 8TH DECEMBER, 2006**

The Audit Services Manager presented a report on Local Area Agreements.

Ms C. Bucknell, Principal Partnership Officer, Herefordshire Partnership Support Team, attended the meeting.

Mr. T. Tobin, Audit Commission, reported that overall there were no concerns with the Herefordshire Local Area Agreement and that although he was satisfied with the purpose and structure of the Agreement, the Audit Commission would continue to monitor details of the Agreement. Mr Tobin also mentioned that having now carried out reviews at other authorities, he was of the view that Herefordshire was further ahead than most authorities.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

### **20. FOREWORD TO THE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

The Audit Services Manager presented a report which set out a draft Foreword to the Code of Corporate Governance.

**RESOLVED: That the Foreword for inclusion with the Code of Corporate Governance be submitted to Cabinet for approval subject to the agreement with Standards Committee.**

### **21. POOLED BUDGETS**

Mr. D. Powell, Head of Financial Services, gave a presentation in respect of Pooled Budgets. A copy of the presentation is attached to these Minutes.

**RESOLVED: That Mr. Powell be thanked for the presentation.**

The meeting ended at 11.14 a.m.

**CHAIRMAN**