

**AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
WAS HELD ON 1 DECEMBER 2008**

Councillors Ms Ballard (P), Burgess (P), Cully (P), Hicks (P), Langdon (P) and Wright (P).

Independent Members: Mr R V Perry (P) and Mr G Lidgley (P).

23. APOLOGIES

No apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

25. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

26. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART II

27. INTERNAL AUDIT – PROPOSED FORMAL PARTNERSHIP WITH EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL FROM APRIL 2009 TILL MARCH 2012

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance which advised the Committee of the proposed formal partnership of Internal Audit and its sharing of resource with Eastleigh Borough Council as from 1 April 2009 till March 2012.

The Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance advised that his time was split over the two authorities. Audit staffing resources at Eastleigh Borough Council would return to full capacity in April 2009 and interviews for the vacant post in Gosport Borough Council's Internal Audit section had been arranged for 15 December 2008. It was now proposed to formalise the partnership arrangement from April 2009. A partnership agreement and memorandum of understanding were currently being drafted and would be presented to the meeting of the Committee on 22 January 2009.

Members raised concerns about the affect on the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance of managing two sites within two different organisations which were physically some distance apart. Officers advised that arrangements were being made that would reduce the amount of

travelling involved. An allowance was made for officer travelling time between sites.

Members were advised that a considerable amount of time had already been spent at Eastleigh Borough Council by the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance, under this year's informal agreement, but much of this had been a learning process and familiarisation with that organisation and should be considered as an investment. A level of management of the Eastleigh office could be carried out off site but there was still a requirement for his presence on site.

The partnership would be monitored by a Panel as well as by the Borough Treasurer of Gosport Borough Council and the Chief Financial Officer of Eastleigh Borough Council who would keep the sustainability of the arrangement under review.

The Borough Treasurer advised that problems were often encountered in small local authorities where, of necessity, the internal audit teams were also small. A partnership arrangement had been running in Winchester City and Havant Borough Councils for a number of years now. Gosport and Eastleigh now had a pool of trained staff who also specialised in some areas of audit work.

The external auditors of both authorities had expressed their satisfaction with the proposed arrangement.

Members felt that the post of Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance should go through the Council's job evaluation process before the signing of any agreement.

RESOLVED: That approval in principle be given to the proposed joint internal audit arrangements from April 2009 till March 2012, subject to the post of Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance being evaluated before the signing of any agreement.

28. REVISION OF COUNCILLORS' CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the end date for the consultation period on the revised Code of Conduct which is 24 December 2008.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 6.22 pm.

CHAIRMAN