

**A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
WAS HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2009**

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

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

29. APOLOGIES

An apology for inability to attend the meeting was received from Councillor Langdon.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

31. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

32. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART II

33. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES AND ANALYSIS

Consideration was given to a report of the Corporate Services Manager which considered an analysis of complaints for the first 6 months of the current financial year.

Members expressed concern that, once Assessment Sub-Committees had referred complaints to, for example, the Standards Board for England, nothing further was reported to those Members sitting on the Sub-Committees. Officers advised that a Local Assessment Monitoring report would be presented to the Standards and Governance Committee on 19 March 2009. Members agreed that the outcome of complaints referred by the Assessment Sub-Committees should be reported to the Members of the Standards and Governance Committee.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) Members of the Standards and Governance Committee be advised of the outcome of complaints referred by Assessment Sub-Committees; and

b) the report of the Corporate Services Manager be noted.

34. STRATEGIC INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2009-2012

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Internal Audit & Risk Assurance which provided the Committee with the planned coverage of Internal Audit resources for the next three years 2009-2012.

Members were advised that the vacant post within the Internal Audit section had now been filled.

Members queried the requirement for an additional 20 days over the next three years from an outsourced IT Audit specialist. Officers advised that this type of specialism did not exist within the Council and it would be very expensive to recruit a member of staff with the necessary skills and knowledge. This had been identified by the external auditors as a weakness in the Council's resources.

RESOLVED: That the 2009-2012 Strategic Internal Audit Plan, as attached in Appendix One of the report of Head of Internal Audit & Risk Assurance, be approved.

35. PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT WITH EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance gave an oral report on the above.

Members were advised that the draft Partnership Agreement was currently being checked by Legal Services and a draft copy of the Memorandum of Understanding would be circulated to them shortly.

The job description of the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance was in the process of being refined for the new role and discussions were taking place with the Borough Treasurer and the Head of Personnel.

A full risk assessment on the partnership would be included in a report of the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance to the Committee on 19 March 2009.

Members were advised that the first year of the arrangement had been successful and had been enthusiastically accepted by all involved.

It was reported that staffing resources were now back to full establishment. External providers had successfully carried out additional planned work on:

- Fixed assets
- Treasury management
- National Non-Domestic Rates
- Council Tax

Members were informed that the 2008/09 Audit Plan was on track and it was anticipated that it would be delivered on time in its entirety.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Assurance be noted.

36. STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Consideration was given to the Workplan of the Standards and Governance Committee.

Members were advised that a report on the 2009/12 partnership arrangement with Eastleigh Borough Council would be presented to the Committee on 19 March 2009. It was agreed that this be reflected in the Workplan.

It was agreed that the first Member training session on the assessment of complaints be held on 5 March 2009 at 6.00 pm. The Workplan would be amended to reflect this.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the Standards and Governance Committee Workplan be noted and that the above mentioned amendments be reflected in the plan.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 6.20pm.

CHAIRMAN