

At a meeting of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
STANDARDS & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE held at Hampshire Fire and
Rescue Service Headquarters, Eastleigh on 21 September, 2012

PRESENT:

Councillors: R. McIntosh (Chair), C. Carter, D. Harrison T. Knight, P. Smith,
R. Smith and M. Tucker.

12 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L. Fairhurst and C. McEwing

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful of their duty to disclose at the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they had in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest was not already entered in the Authority's register of interests, and their ability to disclose any other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

No interests were declared under this item.

14 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 June 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

15 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the meeting.

16 DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations received for this meeting.

17 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT 2011/12

The Committee received the Audit Commission's Annual Audit Letter and Governance Report for 2011/12 (Item 6 in the Minute Book), noting the adjustments to the financial statements detailed on page 14 of the Annual Governance Report.

The report was introduced and it was confirmed that there were no significant risks, no weaknesses in internal control and no other issues highlighted. The following areas were highlighted: value for money, including good control mechanisms and joint arrangements, well developed risk management and action being taken on areas of lower performance.

The Committee thanked officers for the high level of performance demonstrated in the report. The Audit letter was signed by the Treasurer and it was confirmed that this would be issued in the near future.

7 DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2011/12

The Committee considered the report of the Treasurer (Item 7 in the Minute Book), which contained the draft statement of accounts for 2011/12.

The accounts were introduced and minor amendments regarding presentation were highlighted and agreed. With the support of the Committee the Chairman signed the Chairman's Statement.

RESOLVED:

That the Statement of Accounts for 2011/12 be approved.

That the Treasurer be given delegated authority to approve any minor amendments to the Statement of Accounts.

8 EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT

The Committee considered the report of the Treasurer (Item 8 in the Minute Book), which summarised the measures in place to monitor internal audit effectiveness.

It was explained to the Committee that a self assessment and review of internal audit had been undertaken by the County Council's Monitoring Officer, who had concluded that the Fire Authority was compliant. It was confirmed that of the two actions identified, one was complete and the other was underway. .

RESOLVED:

The Standards and Governance Committee:

a. Approved the review conducted in assessing the effectiveness of internal audit, and

b. Endorsed the action plan generated from the review of the effectiveness of internal audit.

9 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2012/13

The Committee considered the report of the Treasurer (Item 9 in the Minute Book), which contained an overview of internal audit work completed in accordance with the approved audit plan and an overview of the status of 'live' reports.

The report was discussed and it was confirmed that there was only one outstanding action, that the audit plan delivery was on track and that ongoing work was progressing well with no deviation from the plan. It was

agreed that any future deviation be highlighted to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

The Standards and Governance Committee noted the progress of internal audit work for the period ending 31 August 2012.

10 **PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNAL AUDIT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 10 in the Minute Book), regarding the implementation of internal audit management actions.

Two reports, relating to the financial challenge and payroll, that had been added to the programme were highlighted. The Committee was updated on the taxation workstream, in particular the complex area of vehicle taxation and the potential impact on some staff members.

RESOLVED:

The Standards and Governance Committee approved the audit action reports, and progress made towards the implementation of recommendations.

11. **APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR – VERBAL UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Chief Officer regarding the appointment of an external auditor.

It was confirmed to Members that Ernst and Young had been appointed external auditor to the Fire Authority. It was expected that staff would transfer and there would be continuity of the service provided.