

AT A MEETING of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE held at Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters,
Eastleigh on 29 June, 2010.

PRESENT:

Councillors: R. McIntosh (Chairman); A.S. Carew; L. Fairhurst; D. Fuller; D. Harrison;
D.A. Kirk; Mrs. M. Tucker.

In attendance by invitation of the Chairman, were Mr. R. Farrall and Mr. M. Quick – the two
new recently appointed Independent Members serving on the Standards Committee.

Also in attendance were Kate Handy, District Auditor and Graham West, Audit Manager.

26. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Fuller and R. Smith.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that, where they believed they had a personal or personal
prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should
normally, at the time of debate, declare their interest and having regard to the
circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Fire Authority's Code
of Conduct consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed,
save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 12 of the Code.

There were no declarations of interest made by Members under this item.

28. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 March, 2010 were confirmed
as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Matter arising:

Review of Governance Structure

On Minute 21, the Clerk reported that the Authority on 9 June, 2009 had approved the
revised Governance Committee's proposed terms of reference for the Authority's
Committees.

29. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations to the meeting.

**30. AUDIT COMMISSION LETTER AND CESSATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE
AREA ASSESSMENT (CAA)**

The Committee received and noted the Audit Commission letter of 26 May, 2010
(Item 5 in the Minute Book) about the cessation of the CAA in the light of the
Government's recent announcement. The District Auditor updated Members on the
likely implications for fire and rescue authorities and the Chief Officer agreed to report

further on this at a future meeting.

31. PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS ARISING FROM INTERNAL AND AUDIT OPINIONS

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 6 in the Minute Book) on audit action items and on progress made towards the implementation of recommendations for improvement.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee approves the audit action reports, and progress made towards implementation of recommendations for improvement.

32. ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT OPINION 2009/10

The Committee considered the report of the Treasurer (Item 7 in the Minute Book) on the annual internal audit opinion for 2009/10. The Treasurer highlighted various issues contained in the report and the officers were commended on the positive outcomes which had been achieved.

RESOLVED:

That the audit work completed during the year be noted, and that the Internal Audit assurance statement for 2009/10 as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be accepted.

33. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 8 in the Minute Book) seeking approval to the Annual Governance Statement 2009/10 for inclusion in the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2009/10. Particular reference was made to engaging better with parish councils and neighbourhood forums in developing future HFRS plans. The Chief Officer agreed to liaise further with Councillor A.S. Carew over an invitation for a fire service representative to address his local Parish Council meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Governance Statement 2009/10, as set out as Appendix 1 to this report, be approved for inclusion in the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2009/10.

34. DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2009/10

The Committee considered the report of the Treasurer (Item 9 in the Minute Book) seeking approval to the Statement of Accounts for 2009/10.

The Treasurer reported that since finalising the Statement of Accounts, two further issues had subsequently been identified both of which related to the two new accounting requirements. Firstly that the data received from Southampton City Council in respect of their collection fund may be incorrect and therefore the accounts may require changing. The second related to the LGPS employer pension rate applied in the senior officers pay disclosure note. There would appear to be different

interpretations of the regulations as to what the rate should be. Again, a small amendment may be required.

Members then asked questions about the level of balances, vehicles, leasing and loan repayments.

RESOLVED:

That the Statement of Accounts for 2009/10 be approved.

35. **CONSULTATION ON STATEMENTS OF ROLE OF HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT IN PUBLIC SERVICE ORGANISATIONS**

The Committee considered the report of the Treasurer (Item 10 in the Minute Book) seeking Members' views for inclusion in a proposed response to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy on the role of the Head of Internal Audit in public service organisations. In supporting the proposed draft response, it was also agreed that the Chief Officer would seek to enhance publicity about the Services whistle blowing policy eg by providing appropriate contact names etc.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee approve the proposed response as set out in the report to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy on the role of the Head of Internal Audit in public service organisations.

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