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AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

8 September 2008 - 6.00 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors Barker, Burroughs, Butcher, P Hacon, Jeal, Jermany, Tate, M Thompson and Walker.

Councillor Ames attended as an observer.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Collins.

Mr S Duncan (Head of Financial Services), Mr R Hodds (Member Services Manager and Scrutiny Officer) and Ms S King (Internal Auditor - South Norfolk District Council).

1. MINUTES

The minutes of 23 June 2008 were confirmed.

2. INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH INTERNAL AUDITOR

The Committee undertook an informal discussion with the Internal Auditor on issues of interest/concern.

3. INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of this item to the next meeting.

4. INTERNAL AUDIT MID YEAR REPORT – QUARTER 1 AND 2 – 2007/08

The Committee decided to defer consideration of the Chief Internal Auditor (NAS) and the Internal Auditor's report to the next meeting.

5. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE DRAFT WORK PLAN

The Committee considered the Head of Financial Services' report which detailed the proposed draft work plan for the Audit and Risk Committee, and members were asked to determine whether any additional meetings of the Committee are required to meet the proposed work plan.

RESOLVED:

That the Head of Financial Services be asked to reschedule the Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan to accommodate a further meeting in January/February 2009, and that the re-drafted plan be sent to all members of the Committee.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF AUDIT COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee considered the Corporate Risk Officer's report which detailed the 38 recommendations of the Audit Commission which were to be implemented by 30 June 2008. Of those 38 recommendations, members were advised that 11 had not been implemented and the Head of Financial Services gave a detailed explanation on the reasons why each of those recommendations had yet to be implemented.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Risk Officer's report be received.

7. PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK AND PRINCIPLES

The Committee considered the Head of Financial Services' report on the Partnership Framework and Principles. Members were advised that the Council has been working with Zurich Municipal to address the inherent risk associated with working in partnership. As part of this process, a Partnership Framework and Principles had been drawn up which sets out how the Council will identify and seek to mitigate the risks associated with its major partnerships.

RESOLVED:

That the Partnership Framework and Principles be approved and that details of this report be circulated to all members of Council.

8. DRAFT PARTNERSHIP REGISTER

The Committee considered the Head of Financial Services' report on the Draft Partnership Register. Members were advised that the Register had been prepared by Senior Officers of the Council, facilitated by Zurich Municipal. The Draft Register currently contains 16 partnerships which are considered to have met the criteria for inclusion in the framework. Members were asked to consider the completeness of the Register and whether they believed any other partnerships warranted inclusion.

RESOLVED:

That the Draft Partnership Register, as detailed in the Head of Financial Services report be agreed, and that a column be added to detail if objectives have been achieved.

9. CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

The Committee considered the Head of Financial Services' report on the updated Corporate Risk Assessment. The Head of Financial Services reminded members that the Assessment had been considered by the Committee at its meeting on 10 March 2008. The updated Assessment now updated members of action taken over the past six months to reduce the risks identified.

The Committee was reminded that regular review of the Corporate Risk Assessment is considered to be good practice as it enables the Council to regularly re-evaluate risk and thereby ensure that its resources are focused towards always operating as far as possible within its risk appetite.

In discussing the Assessment, reference was made to the issue as to whether data quality software should be encrypted and the Head of Financial Services agreed to raise this issue with the IT Department and report back to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Risk Assessment be received, subject to the following:-

- (i) The receipt of further advice as to whether the data quality software should be encrypted.
- (ii) The Head of Financial Services to review the scoring of risk item number 22 (Business Continuity).
- (iii) The Committee to review the Risk Matrix.
- (iv) The deletion of the revised dates shown on the Risk Assessment.

10. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 6.50 pm.