

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PANEL held in the Civic Suite 0.1 B, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 30 June 2010.

PRESENT: Councillor T D Sanderson – Chairman.
Councillors P L E Bucknell, K J Churchill,
S J Criswell, T V Rogers and
C M Sanderson.

APOLOGY: An Apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor M G Baker.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Panel held on 24th March and 19th May 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

6. FINAL ACCOUNTS 2009/10

With the aid of a presentation by the Head of Financial Services, the Panel considered the draft Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010 (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). Having had their attention drawn to a series of amendments which were tabled at the meeting (a copy of which is also appended in the Minute Book), Members were acquainted with a number of issues arising, which included variations relating to the recovery of VAT, extra government grants, debt repayments and employee savings, together with issues concerning the treatment of capital, the collection fund and the pension fund.

In response to questions concerning the presentation of information such as that relating to "impairment", it was agreed that where appropriate further clarification on the reasons for impairment should be included.

Having questioned why the Council's previous insurer was able to claw back claims payments made to the Council since September 1993, it was confirmed that the Council had entered into a Scheme of Arrangement which enabled this to happen.

In recognising the significant level of audit and inspection fees, which were set by the Audit Commission and outside the Council's control, it was noted that this would be kept under close scrutiny in the light of changes to the external inspection regime.

Having commended Officers, in particular the Head of Financial Services and his team on the compilation of the accounts, the Panel

RESOLVED

that, subject to the amendments circulated at the meeting and minor textural amendments, the draft Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010 be approved.

At this point, Councillor P L E Bucknell left the meeting (7.00pm).

7. EXTERNAL AUDIT - PROGRESS REPORT

With the aid of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel received a progress report from the Council's external auditor's explaining the current situation with regard to the Use of Resources Assessment and the audit of the Financial Statements for 2009/10.

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted.

8. INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE: TERMS OF REFERENCE AND INTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY

The Panel received and noted a report by the Audit and Risk Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking approval of changes made to the Terms of Reference and Internal Audit Strategy.

RESOLVED

that the changes to the Internal Audit Terms of Reference and Strategy now submitted be approved.

9. INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE: INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

The Panel received a report by the Audit and Risk Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was appended a proposed Internal Audit and Assurance Plan for the 12 months period commencing 1st August 2010. Having been acquainted with background to the resourcing of the Plan, the Panel

RESOLVED

that the Audit and Assurance Plan be approved.

10. MONEY LAUNDERING AVOIDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Consideration was given to a joint report by the Head of Law, Property and Governance and the Audit and Risk Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking approval of changes made to the Money Laundering Avoidance Policy which had been prompted by legislation. In noting the suggestion to incorporate the Policy within the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, the Panel

RESOLVED

- (a) that the changes made to the Money Laundering Avoidance Policy now submitted be approved; and
- (b) that the Policy be integrated within the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.

11. ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION FRAMEWORK

By means of a report by the Audit and Risk Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel was acquainted with the outcome of a review of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Framework.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the responses to the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Framework be noted; and
- (b) that the revised Anti-Fraud and Corruption Framework Action Plan be endorsed.

12. COMPLAINTS

(a) Annual Complaints

The Panel received and noted a report by the Director of Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) containing an analysis of the Council's internal complaints and a summary of complaints concerning the District Council which had been determined by the Local Government Ombudsman in 2009/10.

RESOLVED

that the report be received and noted.

(b) Local Government Ombudsman: Local Settlement of Complaint

The Panel received and noted a report by the Director of Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on a complaint against the Council by a member of the public and the terms of compensatory payment negotiated by way of a local settlement.

RESOLVED

that the report be received and noted.