

**AUDIT COMMITTEE
13 JANUARY 2009**

Present: Councillors Chowney , Pragnell, Silverson (in the Chair), Springthorpe and Stevens

Apologies for absence were received Jayne Butters, Borough Solicitor.

The Committee thanked Councillor Chowney as the outgoing Chair and welcomed Councillor Silverson as the new Chair.

13. MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors made no declarations of interest at this meeting.

15. 2008 USE OF RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

Robert Grant, from PKF, was in attendance and gave a PowerPoint presentation on the 2008 Use of Resources Assessment.

The presentation informed the Committee that it was the first year that PKF had undertaken an audit of Hastings Borough Council and that the national report and publication would be in February 2009. Hastings performed well overall and above Audit Commission requirements. Level 3 was secured in four out of five areas and this performance had improved compared to 2007. The committee were also advised that the Council had no areas where performance deteriorated, and that the council had sustained the improvements made previously. Committee members welcomed the progress made by officers and members.

It was recognised that the Audit Committee was working well in accordance with CIPFA guidance and that there was also a sound system of internal financial controls in place.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that: -

- (1) the Committee welcomed the report;
- (2) all staff involved be thanked; and
- (3) the Deputy Chief Executive consider the recommendations of the external auditors and bring a report to the next Committee along with an action plan.

16. REVIEW OF LOST INCOME

The Chief Executive presented the above report to brief the Audit Committee on progress in implementing the recommendations made by PKF in their Review of Lost Income Report, presented to Audit Committee on the 30th June 2008.

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A Contracts Register had been introduced and a systematic review of the effectiveness of arrangements for actively managing contracts was being carried out, completion of which is expected by the end of March 2009.

A new, more comprehensive Risk Register was being introduced in phases and was expected to be completed by the end of May 2009.

Members of Committee received a concise update on progress with the recovery of the lost income and requested to be kept informed with future developments.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that: -

- (1) the progress made in implementing the recommendations be noted and welcomed; and**
- (2) that a further progress report be made to the Committee at its 29th June meeting.**

17. CHIEF AUDITOR'S SUMMARY AUDIT AND RISK REPORT

Tom Davies, the Chief Auditor, informed the Audit Committee of Internal Audit findings. The Summary Audit and Risk Report circulated to the Committee contained the results of the Non-Domestic Rates Audit.

RESOLVED (unanimously) – that the report be noted and that congratulations be offered to all concerned.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.05 pm)