

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2007 AT 2.00 P.M.
CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors:

Faulkner, B. (Chairman)

| | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Alcott, G. | Davis, Mrs. M. A. |
| Davies, D. N. | Martin, G. R. |

By Invitation: Michael A McDonagh, KPMG
Mukhtar Khangura, KPMG
Dianne Thomas, Audit Commission

9. Minutes

The Head of Efficiency & Risk Management reported that the post of Trainee Auditor had now been filled.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 August 2007 be approved as a correct record.

10. Audit and Governance Working Group

Consideration was given to the Report of the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Working Group of the meeting held on 7 August 2007 (Enclosure 4.1-4.4 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Report be noted.

11. Audit Commission

Dianne Thomas, Relationship Manager, Audit Commission, gave an overview of the Annual Audit and Inspection letter for the year 2005/06.

The key judgement areas were how far the Council had progressed in that year in terms of outcome and also its financial management.

She informed the Committee that Cannock Chase Council had achieved a steady improvement in its delivery of services. Importantly it had showed improvement in areas identified as priorities.

Waste recycling had improved from 10.9% in 2004/05 to 21.3% in 2005/06 and in the current year (2006/07) figures showed 37.5% being recycled. Cannock Chase had improved from being amongst the worst performing in England to now being in the top quartile.

The Council was delivering improved services to those considered most vulnerable and was working closely with the community. The number of people with a disability participating in leisure services had increased. The Council had also worked well with its partners, particularly the PCT.

Work was ongoing to develop the Council's strategic approach to housing and a draft 'fit for purpose' housing strategy had been produced in March 2007. A strategic housing inspection was being carried out and the findings would be reported in a future Annual Audit and Inspection Letter.

It had been noted that the Council appeared to be stretched at Corporate level but with the appointment of new Directors it was anticipated that the Council's ability to deliver strategic change would be enhanced.

With regard to equality and diversity the Council had produced an Equality and Diversity Policy and a Disability Equality Scheme and had reviewed its Race Equality Scheme. The Council was still, however, at Level 1 of the Equalities Standards.

The Director of Governance informed the Committee that the Council was committed to moving forward and was working towards an acceptable service to all.

Dianne Thomas reported that the Council, together with other local authorities, continued to improve and performed adequately in the assessment of its achievement of value for money.

The Committee requested that they be provided with a copy of the Inspection Report for Strategic Housing.

RESOLVED:

(A) That the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter be received.

(B) That the Committee be provided with a copy of the Inspection Report for Strategic Housing.

12. Statement of Accounts 2006-07

Consideration was given to the Report of the Director of Governance (Enclosure 6.1 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Financial Management explained that the Committee had received the draft Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2006-07 in June 2007 and recommended to Council that they be approved for auditing by external auditors. The audited statement of accounts would be considered by Council at its meeting on 26 September 2007 and this report was a prelude to the auditors' comments on the accounts which appeared later on the Agenda. Committee were requested to note that there had been no changes made to the financial position as detailed in the Statement of Accounts, with adjustments primarily relating to presentation issues.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Audited Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2007 be noted.

13. External Audit of the Statement of Accounts 2006-07 and Management Representation Letter

Consideration was given to the Report of the Director of Governance (Enclosure 7.1-7.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Committee having noted elsewhere on the agenda the following additional items:-

- ISA 260 – External Auditors Report
- Statement of Accounts 2006-07

RESOLVED:

(A) That the contents of the Report be noted.

(B) That the Management Representation Letter of the Responsible Financial Officer be approved.

14. External Audit: Audit Memorandum – Report to those charged with Governance (ISA 260)

Consideration was given to the Report of the External Auditors.

RESOLVED:

(A) That the contents of the Report of the External Auditors be noted.

(B) That the uncorrected audit differences identified by the audit of the financial statements be noted and that the “Reason for non–adjustment” as detailed by the Head of Financial Management be endorsed.

CHAIRMAN