

Audit Governance and Improvement Review Committee

7 June 2007

Present at the Meeting:

Councillor M W Winstanley (Chairman)	Councillor J Miller
Councillor Mrs K Aldred	Councillor P Prescott
Councillor B J Fagan	Councillor C Rigby
Councillor T W Halliwell (Cabinet Champion)	Councillor C Sweeney
Councillor Ms P L Holland	Mr T Addison (Independent Member)
Councillor M Klieve	Mr W Anderton (Independent Member)
	Mr P Connor (Independent Member)

1 Welcome to new Members: On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman extended a warm welcome to new Members of this Committee. He also welcomed G. Eastwood, the Council's Appointed Auditor, who attended to present the reports relating to the role and work of the Audit Commission.

The Director of Finance and Information Technology gave an overview of the role of the Audit Governance and Improvement Review Committee.

2 Apologies for absence: Councillor J Haley.

3 Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 22 March 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Exclusion of the public - Section 100a Local Government Act 1972:
Resolved: The public is excluded from the meeting when the Committee discusses the following items for the reasons set out below:-

Agenda item No.	Title of report	Minute No.	Description of exempt information by reference to the paragraph number in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972
E1	Internal Audit Report	15	2 (Information which might reveal the identity of a person)
E2	Human Resources Delegations	16	2 (Information which might reveal the identity of a person)
E3	Quarterly Review of Sickness 1 January - 31 March 2007	17	2 (Information which might reveal the identity of a person)
E4	Human Resource Information	18	2 (Information which might reveal the identity of a person)

5 Departmental Performance: The Committee received a report on the Department's performance in collecting council tax and national non-domestic rates, benefit payments and collection of income in 2006/07.

Members asked questions to which the Director of Finance and Information Technology responded.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

6 Annual Audit and Inspection Plan: The Committee considered a report on proposals by the Commission for audit and inspection activity and highlighted the risks outlined in the assessment.

Members asked questions to which the Council's Appointed Auditor and Director of Finance and Information Technology responded.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

7 Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies: The Committee considered a report that gave details of what was expected of the Council as the audited body and the Audit Commission as auditors.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

8 Code of Audit Practice: The Committee considered a report which gave details of the Code of Audit Practice 2005 and the role of the District Auditor in relation to audit responsibilities and decision making powers.

Members asked questions to which the Council's Appointed Auditor and Director of Finance and Information Technology responded.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

9 Finance and Information Technology Department service plan: This item was withdrawn.

10 Corporate Complaints – Annual review for 2006/07 and telephone response rates: The Committee received a report of the number, type and outcomes of corporate complaints received by the Council during the year. The report also indicates the success rate for test phone calls to each department.

Members asked questions to which the Assistant Chief Executive responded.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

(Councillor C Rigby declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item because his daughter is employed by Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust. Councillor M W Winstanley declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item because he is a Board Member of Wigan and Leigh Housing).

11 Chief Executive's Department Performance Report Year End 2006/07: The Committee considered a report which informed Members of the performance of

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the Chief Executive's department against its high level set of indicators and key tasks in the Corporate Plan at the year end of 2006/07.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

(Councillor P L Holland declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item because she is a student at Wigan and Leigh College).

12 Legal and Property Services Department - performance report for the full year 2006/07: The Committee considered a report that informed Members of the performance of the Legal and Property Services Department against the measures contained in its Service Plan for the year 2006/07.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

13 Unreasonably Persistent Complaints: The Committee considered a report, which had been considered by the Standards Committee and which would also be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Council, informing Members of the Local Government Ombudsman's recently issued guidance note on dealing with unreasonably persistent complainants. The report also invited Members to recommend amendments to the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy, Procedure and Practice in respect of the guidance.

The Standards Committee at Minute 8 had endorsed the recommendations as set out in the report.

Members asked questions to which the Director of Legal and Property Services responded.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

(Councillor P Prescott declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item because his wife is a member of the Standards Committee).

14 Statement of Internal Control: The Committee considered a report, which was to be submitted to Cabinet dealing with the Authority's Statement on Internal Control for the year ended 31 March 2007.

Members asked questions to which the Director of Finance and Information Technology responded.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

(Councillor B J Fagan declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item because his son and daughter-in-law are employed in the Finance and Information Technology Department and because he is also a member of the Standards Committee. Councillor M W Winstanley declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item because he is a Board Member of Wigan and Leigh Housing).

15 Internal Audit Report: The Committee considered a report of a review of the System of Internal Audit as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations. Members were provided with details of Internal Audit reviews performed in 2006/07, information in respect of the coverage and performance of the Internal Audit Service

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and assurance opinions on the effectiveness of the Internal Audit Service and the Council's internal control environment.

Members asked questions to which the Director of Finance and Information Technology responded.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

(Councillor M W Winstanley declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item because he is a Board Member of Wigan and Leigh Housing).

16 Human Resources Delegations: The Committee considered a report on decisions taken under delegated powers in regard to human resources issues.

Members asked questions to which the Assistant Chief Executive responded.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

17 Quarterly Review of Sickness Absence Management: The Committee considered a report showing the summary and submissions from departments for sickness absence management for the period 1 January - 31 March 2007.

Members asked questions to which the Assistant Chief Executive responded.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

(Councillor P Prescott declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item because his daughter is employed in the Environmental Services Department and left the meeting during discussion thereon).

18 Human Resource Information: The Committee considered the following Information for Members:-

- (1) Recruitment statistics
- (2) Central training statistics
- (3) Early retirement / voluntary redundancy
- (4) Honoraria under £5,000 p.a.
- (5) Honoraria over £5,000 p.a.
- (6) Suspensions

Members asked questions to which the Assistant Chief Executive responded.

Resolved: The Committee accepts the report now submitted.

(Councillor C Rigby declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item because his daughter is employed by Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust).