

Work undertaken by other Committees

Audit Committee

26 January 2010

Author: Head of Internal Audit

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

To invite the Audit Committee to consider how it might best be kept advised of “work undertaken by other Committees of the Council, so it can take account of any significant control issues”.

Recommendation

That Audit Committee

- considers how best to facilitate its continued awareness of work undertaken by other committees and allow it to identify any significant control issues for further review and investigation; and
- determines whether it wishes to pursue either of the options set out in this report.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 The Council's Audit Committee has a strategic role to ensure that the Council's assurance framework is operating effectively. To this end it should seek assurance that key areas that contribute to this framework are operating properly.
- 1.2 Other committees of the Council can contribute to the Council's assurance framework, therefore, it is essential that this Committee take account of any significant control issues identified by other committees.

2. Detail

- 2.1 The recognition by Audit Committees that other committees of the Council can contribute to its assurance framework, and the importance of them taking account of any significant control issues identified by other committees, is identified as good practice and features in the Use of Resources Assessment theme: Internal Control (KLOE 2.4).
- 2.2 Members of the Audit Committee already receive copies of the minutes of Scrutiny and Overview committees and Standards Committee as part of the papers for Full Council, however, it is suggested that the Committee needs to be more proactive in reviewing the work of other committees to identify any potential significant control issues arising from these

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Nick Hobbs on 01793 463940 or Email nhobbs@swindon.gov.uk

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committees.

- 2.3 To achieve this, and comply with recognised best practice, the Committee is invited to consider one of the following two options:
- that Council be requested to consider whether the Chair of the Audit Committee be appointed as a member of the Council's Scrutiny Committee in order that the Chair can report back to Audit Committee on any significant control issues for further review and investigation; and/or
 - that the reports to Council on the meetings of its Scrutiny and Standards Committees, and its Overview and Scrutiny Committees, be submitted to this Committee for consideration in order that members themselves might review the work of other committees and identify any significant control issues arising from these committees.
- 2.4 In addition to considering how the Committee might effectively monitor the work of other committees, and identify and take account of any significant control issues, members are also invited to advise the meeting of any current issues that they feel warrant a greater level of review.
- 2.5 Members are advised that, given the recent level of debate on the issue, the Chair has suggested that the Committee might wish to consider whether the Council's decision to enter into a partnership arrangement with Digital City (UK) Limited to implement a Wi-Fi network in the Borough is a matter they might wish to review.

Alternative Options

No specific alternatives are suggested other than as mentioned in the report.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal / Human Rights Implications

- There are no direct legal or human rights implications.

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

- Effective systems of internal control within the Council will help to ensure that the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan and Swindon 2010 are achieved.

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Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports).

Background Papers and Appendices

- None