



AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Councillor Emmett (LD)
Councillor Blythe (LD)
Councillor Hassell (LD)
Councillor Brain (L)
Councillor Gollop (C)
Ken Guy – Independent Member
Brenda McLennan – Independent Member

Reply to: Richard Jones
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Email: richard.jones@bristol.gov.uk
Date: 7th January 2010

(LD = Liberal Democrat L = Labour C = Conservative)

Dear Member,

AUDIT COMMITTEE

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Audit Committee to be held on Friday 15th January 2010 at 9.30am in a Committee Room at the Council House, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR.

The agenda for the meeting is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Jones
Democratic Services

PUBLIC INFORMATION SHEET

The attention of the public is drawn to the sheet at the back of the agenda giving information on the emergency evacuation procedures, attending meetings and inspecting reports and background papers.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, SUBSTITUTIONS AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. PUBLIC FORUM

Time Limit for this item - 30 minutes

Any local resident or councillor, may present a petition or submit a statement on the work of the committee, provided that they have given notice in writing or by electronic mail not later than 12.00 noon on the working day before the meeting. In the case of a statement, a copy of the statement should be included.

The notice should be addressed to the Democratic Services Team, Room 220, Council House, Bristol, BS1 5TR, and marked for the attention of Richard Jones.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- to receive any declarations of interest from members.

4. MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 13TH NOVEMBER 2009

- to be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. WHIPPING

- to give notice of any matters included on this agenda on which political groups intend to exercise a party whip.

6. CHAIRS BUSINESS

- to receive brief announcements or information updates from the Chair as necessary.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

- to receive an updated work Programme.

8. PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE

(A) HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD CHECKLIST

(B) PROSPEROUS AND AMBITIOUS BOARD CHECKLIST AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

9. OUTLINE BRIEFING ON KEY CAPITAL PROJECTS AND MONITORING

- to receive a report on setting out suggested improvements to the monitoring processes

(Report of the Strategic Director, City Development)

10. GRANT THORNTON – FINAL USE OF RESOURCES REPORT 2009

- to receive a report on Grant Thornton's assessment of the Council's use of Resources performance for 2009.

(Report of the Strategic Director, Resources)

11. GRANT THORNTON – AUDIT INSPECTION LETTER

- to receive a report for comment on the Council's Annual Audit Letter for 2008-09

(Report of the Strategic Director, Resources)

**12. GRANT THORNTON – AUDIT AND INSPECTION PLAN –
PROGRESS REPORT**

- to receive a progress report from Grant Thornton.

**13. INTERNAL AUDIT – GRANT THORNTON RECOMMENDATIONS
UPDATE**

- to receive a report for comment on managements progress with implementation of Grant Thornton’s high priority recommendations.

(Report of Strategic Director, Resources)

Bristol City Council is committed to openness and will not withhold information unless there are good reasons for doing so. Items 15 & 16 are not available to the press and public because it contains information in respect of which a claim for legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings and is not for the publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12(a) to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

14. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Recommended - that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

15. INTERNAL AUDIT – STRATEGIC FRAUD
(Exempt Paragraph 7)

16. INTERNAL AUDIT – PERIODIC REPORT
(Exempt Paragraph 7)

INFORMATION REPORTS

17. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

- to note a report on the Corporate Risk Register.

(Report of the Strategic Director, Resources)

18. CITY DEVELOPMENT RISK REGISTER

- to note a report on the City Development Risk Register.

(Report of the Strategic Director, City Development)

19. THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS PARTNERSHIP RISK REGISTER

- to note a report on the Thriving Neighbourhoods Risk Register.

(Report of the Strategic Director, Neighbourhoods)

20. HOUSING BENEFIT DEBT MONITORING

- to note a report setting out how housing benefit debt is measured.

(Report of the Strategic Director, Neighbourhoods)

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- The next meeting is scheduled to be held at 9.30 am on Friday, 16th April 2010.
 - Members should also note that a Joint meeting with the Standards Committee is scheduled to be held at 9.30 am on Friday, 9th April 2010.
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AUDIT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Overview

The purpose of the Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance to the council in relation to:-

1. The effectiveness of the council's governance arrangements, risk management framework and internal control environment including overseeing:
 - risk management strategies
 - anti-fraud arrangements
 - whistle-blowing strategies
 - internal and external audit activity;
2. The effectiveness of the council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent it affects exposure to risk and poor internal control;
3. The annual governance statement;
4. The review and approval of the annual statement of accounts, confirming the appropriate accounting policies have been followed, including the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

Functions

Full Council has delegated the following functions to the Audit Committee:

Duty to approve the authority's statement of accounts, income and expenditure and balance sheet, or record of payments and receipts (as the case may be) (The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 S.I. 2003/533).

Public Information Sheet - Public Meetings

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

- (i) **In the event of a fire you will hear a continuous alarm.**
- (ii) **Do not panic - members, officers and the public should leave the building promptly and in a quiet and orderly fashion using the nearest available escape routes and assemble behind the Central Library beyond the Norman Archway. Lifts must not be used under any circumstances.**

Please note: alarms are tested every Monday at 9.30am (for approx. 30 seconds). These arrangements apply to meetings held in the Council House, College Green. Where the meeting is held elsewhere, local arrangements will apply.

Public Access Information

Please contact the Democratic Services Officer named on the agenda if you require further information regarding the following:

Attendance at Meetings - Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Meetings are open to the public and a limited amount of seating is available in each meeting room. You may however be asked to leave the meeting if any “exempt” (private) business is considered. This will normally be shown on the agenda.

Inspection of Papers - Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

If you wish to inspect the minutes or reports (other than those which are exempt) relating to any item on this agenda please contact either the Democratic Services Officer (phone number at the top of the agenda sheet) or the Modern Records Office (tel: 0117 9222376). The background papers listed in a report may also be inspected. Please notify the Democratic Services Officer if you wish to see these. He/she will arrange with the report author for papers to be made available to you at a mutually convenient time.

**We can also arrange for copies of individual reports or minutes to be supplied to you or for an annual subscription to the papers for any meeting. A charge will be made for this service. Alternatively, all meeting information may be inspected on the council's internet website at:
www.bristol.gov.uk**

Other formats and languages and assistance for those with hearing impairment

Committees papers can be provided in other formats (e.g. large print, audio tape, braille etc) or in community languages, upon request. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer if you would like such papers giving as much notice as possible. It should be noted that re-formatting or translation of papers before the date of a particular meeting cannot be guaranteed.

Committee rooms in the Council House are fitted with infra-red induction loops to assist people with hearing impairment. These can be used with either a neck loop (for hearing aid users) or with a handset. The Democratic Services Officer will be able to provide you with these. Hearing aid users need to switch the hearing aid to the "T" position.

Public Forum

If you are a resident in Bristol you can make a statement or present a petition to any meeting, provided that:-

- (i) you give written notice to us, including the subject matter of your statement or petition no later than 12.00 noon on the working day before the meeting starts * and**
- (ii) the statement or petition concerns a matter which is the responsibility of the commission/committee concerned.**

(* NB - if the meeting is on a Monday then your submission will need to be with us by 12.00 noon latest on the preceding Friday)

You may also ask a question of the chair at a scrutiny meeting. This must be submitted to us in writing not less than 6 clear working days before the date of the meeting. A written response will be available 1 hour before the meeting which will be circulated to all who are present.

Statements, petitions and questions which relate to specific items on the agenda will be taken into account by the meeting when it considers the item concerned.

Statements, petitions or questions that do not relate to an item on the agenda for the meeting at which they are presented are discouraged, but may still be submitted. The scrutiny meeting will decide how these should be dealt with (eg by correspondence or by a future report etc).

The Chair of the meeting has discretion to allow statements petitions and questions from members of the public who are not residents of Bristol if they have a business address in the city or can demonstrate some other genuine interest in an agenda item. He/she also has discretion to take statements, petitions and questions in an appropriate order (ie not

necessarily in order of receipt). The meeting may enter a dialogue with members of the public during the public forum if appropriate. The public forum session may last for up to 30 minutes, although the Chair, with the consent of the meeting, can extend this timescale.

Please note that by participating in public forum business ,it will be assumed that your consent is given to the recording in the minutes of the meeting of your name and the details of your submission . A copy of your full written submission will also be included with the agenda papers for the meeting which are placed in the official minute book (the public record) and will also be included on the Council's web site with the other documents for the meeting concerned.

Process during and after the meeting :

Public forum items are normally the first substantive item of business on the agenda and are usually taken in the order in which they have been received. The Chair will call each submission in turn. When invited to speak, if making a statement you should ensure that your presentation is short and concise and focuses on the key issues that you would like members to consider. This will have the greatest impact - please try to avoid reading out a lengthy text from a piece of paper.

Remember that your time allocation may have to be strictly limited if there are a lot of submissions before the meeting.

You do not have to speak or even attend the meeting at which your public forum submission is being taken. However, you should be aware if you do not present it, then it will not be read out unless the Chair specifically asks for this to happen. It will nevertheless be noted by members.

As most people who participate in public forum remain present for the debate on the agenda item in which they are interested, and because minutes of the meeting are normally published on the Council's website in 5 clear working days, it

is not our normal practice to write to individuals afterwards. However, if you would like to receive an official response as to what happened to your submission at the meeting, please advise the Democratic Services Officer named on the agenda, and ensure that they have your full address or e-mail details. We will then contact you within 7 working days. Alternatively you may phone them (see contact number on front of agenda) to confirm the outcome.

Register of Interests

To ensure an accountable, open and transparent local democracy, a Register of Interests for Councillors, Co-optees and Advisers is available for public inspection. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer named on the agenda if you wish to view the Register.