

**BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL**  
**Joint Meeting of the Audit and Standards Committees**  
**1<sup>st</sup> April 2011**

**Report of:** Strategic Director (Corporate Services)

**Report Title:** Internal Audit of Members Allowances, Declarations of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality

**Ward:** Citywide

**Officer presenting report:** Richard Powell, Chief Internal Auditor

**Contract Telephone Number:** 0117 92 22448

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Committees note the results of the Internal Audit work in this area.

**SUMMARY**

This report provides a summary of the results of a recent Internal Audit review in this area of activity.

**The significant issues in the report are:**

- the audit opinion which is provided at paragraph 2.3

**Policy**

This report is submitted in accordance with the Audit and Standards Committee's Terms of Reference.

**Consultation:**

**Internal:** Democratic Services Officers

**External:** None necessary

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 A routine Internal Audit review of Members Allowances, Declarations of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality was planned for completion in 2010/11. This work is now complete and the purpose of this report is to provide the Audit and Standards Committees with the main results of that review as was requested by the Committees previously.

## **2. Summary of Work and Findings**

2.1 Audit work included a review of procedures and sample checking in the following areas to ensure:

- Members have completed the required annual declaration of interest and details are published on the Council's Internet pages
- Members have declared gifts and hospitality in line with requirements
- Members allowances and expenses are paid in accordance with that agreed by the Remuneration Panel
- information is published in respect of declarations and allowances and this is complete and accurate.

2.2 The audit work covered both Councillors and co-opted members in the current year 2010/11.

2.3 Based on the work completed, the audit concluded an opinion that procedures are 'Satisfactory'. Whilst some minor areas for improvement were identified, these related to administration of the scheme rather than Member error.

### **3. Other Options Considered**

3.1 None necessary

### **4. Risk Assessment**

4.1 Given the recent publicity regarding politicians expenses at a national level, this area is likely to be vulnerable to close public scrutiny. It is therefore important that the control framework around it is maintained well and agreed recommendations implemented.

### **5. Equalities Impact Assessment**

5.1 None necessary for this report

### **6. Legal and Resource Implications**

6.1 Legal - none sought

6.2 Resource implications - none arising from this report

### **Appendices**

None

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Background Papers      None