

## LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

### MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2008 MEETING ROOM M71, SEVENTH FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG

#### Members Present:

Councillor Joshua Peck	Chair - (Lead Member, Resources and Performance)
Councillor Helal Abbas	
Councillor Denise Jones	Vice Chair

#### Other Councillors Present:

None

#### Officers Present:

Chris Naylor	– Corporate Director, Resources
Stephan Halsey	– Corporate Director Communities, Localities & Culture
Alan Finch	– Service Head Corporate Finance
Fiona Heyland	– Waste Services Group Manager
Minesh Jani	– Service Head Risk Management
Steve Lucas	– Audit Manager, Audit Commission
Steve Vinall	– Sector Manager, Deloitte
John Hayes	– District Auditor, Audit Commission
Daniel Hudson	– Democratic Services, Chief Executive's

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**RESOLVED** that apologies for absence be received on behalf of Councillors Eaton, Abdus Salique and Abjol Miah.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D. Jones declared an interest in Agenda item 7.1, Quarterly Internal Audit Assurance Report. The declaration was made on the basis that the report made reference to Tower Hamlets Homes and she was a member of the Tower Hamlets Homes Board.

### 3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the unrestricted minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008 be approved.

### 4. DEPUTATIONS AND PETITIONS

None were received.

### 5. FEEDBACK PRESENTATIONS – NIL/LIMITED ASSURANCE

Councillor Peck and Members of the Committee expressed concern at the non-attendance of any officers from Development and Renewal. It was **RESOLVED** that these concerns be expressed formally to the Chief Executive and that senior officers from Development and Renewal be instructed to attend the next meeting to reply upon the Limited Assurance (Extensive) given in relation to S.106 Planning Obligations.

**ACTION BY:**            **Democratic Services (DH)**  
                                 **Interim Corporate Director Development & Renewal**

The Committee then received a presentation from Stephen Halsey (Corporate Director Communities, Localities & Culture) and Fiona Heyland (Waste Services Group Manager) which detailed the actions that had been taken and were being prepared to tackle the points raised by the Limited Assurance (Extensive) given in relation to Waste Disposal Contract Monitoring. Members were informed that a revised Waste Strategy was being prepared and would be reported to Cabinet in the autumn 2008. More effective performance management arrangements were being introduced to support the relationship with the waste contractor and the overall waste process from collection to disposal was being reviewed.

Members thanked officers for the presentation.

### 6. UNRESTRICTED AUDIT COMMISSION REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

#### 6.1 Audit Progress Report

Following a brief introduction during which the details of the Better Budget Management Toolkit was outlined it was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**ACTION BY:**            **Steve Lucas (Audit Manager, Audit Commission)**

## 6.2 Annual Governance Report

The grounds for urgency for the submission of this report were detailed and accepted.

John Hayes (District Auditor, Audit Commission) comprehensively introduced the report and outlined the salient issues. He positively commented upon the actions and procedures undertaken by Tower Hamlets officers.

In relation to the comment made regarding 33-37 The Oval, Chris Naylor (Corporate Director Resources) started that a formal decision was still awaited from the Development Committee and following this more detailed assurance could be reported.

There followed a discussion in relation to the findings of the report and subsequent to this it was **RESOLVED** that the report be received and accepted.

## 7. UNRESTRICTED TOWER HAMLETS REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

### 7.1 Quarterly Internal Audit Assurance Report

Minesh Jani (Service Head Risk Management) introduced the report and detailed the rationale for the Limited Assurance given to areas of Housing and Resources. He commented that in future Internal Audit finding relating to Housing would be reported to both this Committee and also the Board meetings of Tower Hamlets Homes.

This was welcomed by the Committee.

Councillor Peck recommended and it was **RESOLVED** that in future when Nil/Limited Assurances were reported then the service affected be required to attend the same meeting to outline the reasons why and actions in place to remedy this. In relation to Officers' Travel and Subsistence Allowances it was **RESOLVED** that Human Resources report back and explain the failure to expeditiously implement and action the majority of key recommendations.

Minesh Jani outlined the work being undertaken in relation to supporting Business Recovery and IT Continuity Planning. A verbal update would be provided at the next meeting.

Members expressed concern at the level of assurance given to the Control and Monitoring of CRB Checks. It was **RESOLVED** that an update be provided to the next meeting to ensure that actions had been taken to remedy this matter.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that the report and the actions indicated above be approved.

**ACTION BY:**           **Minesh Jani (Service Head Risk Management)**  
   **Joint Director of Human Resources**  
   **Democratic Services**

**8. ANY URGENT UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS**

None was raised.

The meeting ended at 7.23p.m.

Chair,  
Audit Committee