

Audit Committee – 24th April 2008

6. Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2007/08

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Purpose of the Report

This report introduces the annual audit and inspection letter for 2007/08.

Recommendations

The Audit Committee is asked to note the contents of the Audit Letter and consider the Executive's response to the areas for improvement as set out in the report.

Introduction

The review of the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter is included within the remit of the Audit Committee under its terms of reference as follows:

"To consider the effectiveness of SSDC's risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and corruption arrangements and seek assurance from management that action has been taken"

"To consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies and seek assurance from management that action has been taken"

"To review and approve the annual Statement of Accounts, external auditor's opinion and reports to members and monitor management action in response to issues raised"

Each year the Audit Commission is required to make arrangements for the production of an audit and inspection letter for each local authority. This letter covers a range of matters on which a brief commentary on the local authority's performance is required. These letters serve as milestones on an authority's journey of improvement and enable both successes and areas needing improvement to be recognised. The letter also confirms the judgements for the authority's use of resources and data quality.

A presentation of the report was made to the District Executive on the 3rd April. The letter has also been considered by the Scrutiny Committee on the 8th April. A copy of the letter is attached to this report at pages 5-19. The minute of the District Executive is attached at pages 20-22.

Improving Performance

The Council has an Improvement and Development Plan that sets out specific areas that have been identified as needing further improvement. This can be as a result of customer feedback, service inspections, and the audit and inspection letter itself. As with last year's letter, it is senior management's intention to use the information contained within the annual letter to update the plan ensuring improvements are planned for, resourced and achieved.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications in accepting this report and the associated recommendations.

Background Papers: *None.*
