

MEETING AC.06:1112  
DATE 24.11.11

## South Somerset District Council

**Draft Minutes** of a meeting of the **Audit Committee** held in Committee Room 3/4, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil on **Thursday, 24th November 2011**.

(10.00 a.m. – 10.50 a.m.)

### **Present:**

**Members:** Derek Yeomans (in the Chair)

John Calvert  
John Dyke  
Marcus Fysh

Tony Lock  
John Richardson  
Colin Winder

### **Officers:**

Donna Parham  
Ian Clarke  
Andrew Ellins  
Andrew Blackburn

Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)  
Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)  
Audit Manager – South West Audit Partnership  
Committee Administrator

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### **50. Minutes (Agenda item 1)**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 27th October 2011, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

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### **51. Apologies for Absence (Agenda item 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Ian Martin, Roy Mills and Tim Carroll (Portfolio Holder for Finance and Spatial Planning).

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### **52. Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 3)**

There were no declarations of interest.

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### **53. Public Question Time (Agenda item 4)**

No questions or comments were raised by members of the public.

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### **54. 2011/12 Internal Audit Quarterly Update Report (Agenda item 5)**

The Audit Manager, South West Audit Partnership (SWAP), summarised the agenda report, which provided members with an update on internal audit activity for quarter 2.

In conclusion, the Audit Manager reported that overall the control environment as a whole within the Council was considered to be sound.

The Committee noted, however, that one of the audit reviews undertaken related to the Wincanton Sports Centre, which had received only a partial assurance. It was noted that the Centre was not a service that was managed by the District Council itself but had been audited by SWAP because of the funding arrangements whereby a grant was awarded to the Centre by the District Council. Members noted that the conclusion of the auditor had been included in the agenda report and indicated that a number of actions were necessary to improve the overall control environment at the Centre.

In response to a question, the Audit Manager informed members of those people who received a copy of the report. Cllr. Colin Winder commented that although not serving on the management board of the Wincanton Sports Centre, he had been appointed by the Area East Committee as an observer and indicated that he had not received a copy of the internal audit report. The Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) commented that as well as the report being sent to her, the Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services), Strategic Director (Operations and Customer Focus), Assistant Director (Health and Wellbeing) and the Manager of the Centre, a copy should also be forwarded to both the District Council's representative and observer on the Centre's management board. She further commented that she would expect the board to discuss the action plan, which had arisen from the audit. Reference was also made to the Assistant Director (Health and Wellbeing) needing to be assured that the audit action plan was being implemented before releasing further grant monies.

The Committee in noting the outcome of the audit relating to the Wincanton Sports Centre, asked that the Assistant Director (Health and Wellbeing) submit a report to the January 2012 meeting to update the Committee on the issues that had been raised by the audit of the Centre.

The Committee, otherwise, indicated that it was content to note the quarter 2 report of the South West Audit Partnership.

- RESOLVED:** (1) that the quarter 2 report 2011/12 of the South West Audit Partnership be noted and accepted;
- (2) that the outcome of the audit relating to Wincanton Sports Centre be noted and the Assistant Director (Health and Wellbeing) be asked to submit a report to the Committee's January 2012 meeting to update the Committee on the issues that had been raised by the audit of the Centre.

*(Andrew Ellins, Audit Manager – 01823 356417)*  
*(andrew.ellins@southwestaudit.gov.uk)*

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## **55. Register of Staff Interests – Audit Action Plan – Progress Report (Agenda Item 6)**

The Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) summarised the agenda report, which updated members on the progress against the action plan following the internal audit of the adequacy of controls and procedures in place for the Register of Interests for Staff across the Council, which had received only a partial assurance.

The Committee noted the progress made against the three actions, details of which were set out in the agenda report. It was noted that one of the actions had been completed and that the other two were on target to be completed by the 31st December 2011.

The content of the proposed letters to staff relating to declarations of interest and the associated forms for completion by staff together with the process by which the information would be recorded and reviewed were noted.

The Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) referred to the end of year check of records, which would be carried out by him as Monitoring Officer. He further recommended that he submit an annual report to the Audit Committee giving a review of the records of staff interests.

The Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) answered members' questions regarding the types of personal interests that it would be appropriate for staff to declare. He also mentioned that if a member of staff was not clear on whether they had an interest that should be declared they should seek advice.

Members were content to note the progress with the audit action plan and that the new procedure would be implemented before the 31st December 2012. The Committee was content to release the Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) from further reporting on the audit action plan. It was agreed, however, that an annual report should be submitted to the Audit Committee giving a review of the records of staff interests.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) that members note the progress made against the actions set out in the appendix to the agenda report and that the new procedure for the register of staff interests will be implemented before 31st December 2011;
  - (2) that the Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) be released from further reporting in respect of the audit action plan;
  - (3) that the Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) submit an annual report to the Audit Committee giving a review of the records of staff interests.

*(Ian Clarke, Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services – 01935 462184)  
(ian.clarke@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

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## **56. 2011/12 Annual Governance Statement Action Plan (Agenda item 7)**

The Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) summarised the agenda report and members reviewed the progress made on the 2011/12 Annual Governance Statement Action Plan.

During the ensuing discussion, a member referred to the action relating to ensuring awareness and compliance with Information Technology Policies and the Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) noted the suggestion that members should be included in any IT training especially when the Council embraced new technology.

- RESOLVED:** that the progress made with the 2011/12 Annual Governance Statement Action Plan be noted and accepted.

*(Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services – 01935 462225)  
(donna.parham@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

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**57. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda item 8)**

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to take place on Thursday, 15th December. After consultation with the Chairman, however, it was anticipated that the meeting would be cancelled as there was no urgent business to require the meeting to be held. Members indicated their agreement to cancelling the December meeting if there were no urgent business. It was noted that the final decision would be made later in the month and members would be informed accordingly.

If the December meeting was cancelled, the next scheduled meeting would be held on Thursday, 26th January 2012 at 10.00 a.m. in the Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

**NOTED**

*(Andrew Blackburn, Committee Administrator – 01460 260441)  
(andrew.blackburn@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

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At the conclusion of the meeting, the Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) updated members informally on the latest position regarding the Council's current investments. Members agreed with the suggestion of the Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) that, given the current economic climate, the Committee receive an update at each meeting.

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Chairman