

Report to: Audit Committee
Date of meeting: 30th June 2009
Report of: Head of Strategic Finance
Title: Annual Audit and Inspection Letter

1.0 **SUMMARY**

1.1 The Audit Commission issues an annual letter to Members summarising its work during the past year. The report has been circulated to Members previously and also reported to Cabinet on 21st April. It is now presented to the Audit Committee for formal consideration.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the Committee notes the report and endorses the recommendations made by the Audit Commission and the actions being taken by officers in response.

Contact Officer:

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3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

3.1 The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter was issued on 27th March and is a summary of the work undertaken by the external auditor.

3.2 In Summary:

- The auditors have issued an unqualified opinion on the accounts (and Best Value Performance Plan) for the year ended 31st March 2008 and concluded that there are adequate arrangements in place for ensuring value for money
- Use of resources was found to be adequate
- The Council is improving rapidly and has achieved improved outcomes against both its own, and local peoples priorities
- It has improved its value for money, although still remains relatively high cost
- The inspection of Cultural Services found them to be fair with excellent prospects for improvement

3.3 Recommendations made by the Audit Commission

- Continue to improve its value for money
- Address the recommendations in the Culture Inspection report

3.4 The Council approved a Value for Money Strategy and Action Plan in June 2008 and covering the period up to 2014. Implementation of the actions required within that Plan will achieve the first recommendation.

The Community Services Draft Medium Term Service Plan 2009/14 has identified actions required to address those recommendations still outstanding from within the Inspection report.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 The Head of Strategic Finance comments that there are no costs arising directly from this report but implementation of the recommendations will help to improve the Council's financial administration and identify further scope for efficiency/ service cost savings.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Legal and Property Services comments that there are no legal issues arising from this report.

4.3 **Potential Risks**

Potential Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall score
Failure to improve value for money	2	3	6
Recommendations within the Culture Inspection report are not addressed	2	3	6
Those risks scoring 9 or above are considered significant and will need specific attention in project management. They will also be added to the service's Risk Register.			

4.4 **Staffing**

4.4.1 None Directly

4.5 **Accommodation**

4.5.1 None Directly

4.6 **Community Safety**

4.6.1 None Directly

4.7 **Sustainability**

4.7.1 None Directly

Appendices

Annual Audit and Inspection Report 2007/2008.

Background Papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report. If you wish to inspect or take copies of the background papers, please contact the officer named on the front page of the report.

Annual Audit and Inspection Report 2007/2008
Value for Money Strategy and Action Plan 2008/2014
Audit Commission Culture Inspection Report
Draft Community Services Medium Term Service Plan 2009/2014

File Reference

None