

**CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

18 November 2009

6:30pm – 7:00pm

**Present:** Cllrs Blackhurst (Alt), Boyce (Chair), Dryden, Rosenstiel and Ward**Also Present:** Keith Matthews and Stewart MacAskill of the Audit Commission**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL****09/Civ/41 Minutes**

The minutes of 23 September 2009 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**09/Civ/42 Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs Herbert and Pitt, (Cllr Blackhurst attended as the Liberal Democrat alternate member).

**09/Civ/43 Declarations of Interest**

None

**09/Civ/44 Public Questions**

None

**09/Civ/44 Audit Commission Use of Resources Report**

The Performance Manager introduced the item. She recapped on the Annual Governance Report that had been presented at the previous Civic Affairs meeting. The report before the committee today represents the other half of the Audit information. The Performance Manager introduced Keith Matthews and Stewart MacAskill from the Audit Commission who responded to member questions.

In response to member questions, it was clarified that the action plan being progressed at present is the internal document on pages 9 to 11 of the report. Members questioned the KLOE scoring and the status of a rating of 2. Stewart MacAskill confirmed that a rating of 2 confirms an adequate and efficient performance. A rating of three places the authority in the top quartile of Districts Councils nationally with very few, possibly only one, achieving a 4.

Some members were unhappy with the proposal to introduce Personal Development Plans (PDPs) for members arguing that they are answerable for their competence and effectiveness only to those who elected them. Discussions followed on what PDPs could deliver to an authority where members are performing well and there have been very few complaints. The Standards Board for England recommends that members should be offered these as a way to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge required to carry out their duties. Members also felt that a distinction needs to be made between skills based and political training. The Chief Executive agreed that member training is a shared responsibility between the authority and the political parties. The Democratic Services Manager is developing a new training matrix.

Members discussed the role of the Standards Committee and how it could be used to promote ethical governance. It was agreed that the Standards Committee performs adequately at present. However, if desired its remit could be expanded to make Cambridge City an exemplar authority. The Chief Executive explained that she has had discussions with the Standards Chair and agreed that regular one to one meetings were not necessary at present. However she was confident that the Standards Chair would request additional meetings should issues emerge in the future.

**Resolved** (by 4 votes to 0)

The Civic Affairs Committee received the Use of Resources Report and Action Plan as presented by the Audit Commission.

### **09/Civ/45 FOLK FESTIVAL – CORPORATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Director of Finance introduced the report. Good progress has been made against the action plan. The uptake of the additional training being offered has been higher than expected. As the investigation is still on-going it is not possible to give further information. However, additions may be added to the action plan when the investigation is completed. It was agreed that there would be a further report to Civic Affairs when the Folk Festival Inquiry is complete.

**Resolved** (by 4 votes to 0)

Members noted progress against the corporate action plan, attached as Appendix A to the report.

**Chair**