

Audit Committee

11 October 2013

Internal Audit Working Group

Purpose of Report: Progress report

The group has met twice since the last report to Audit Committee – on 8 July and 2 October 2013 and considered the following reviews:

Leisure System - Zipporah	There had been a general feeling of discontent at the implementation of a new system covering more than one department. It was noted that roles had not been clearly defined at the outset and different services had different expectations of the new system. Phase 1 has now been implemented but Phase 2 has been put on hold pending a review of specification. A more robust project management structure had also been put in place. An updated Action Plan had been received by the Group and its implementation will be monitored by Internal Audit.
Fair Funding/Post 16	It was acknowledged that the Fair Funding Formula was difficult to understand, not transparent and not in line with statutory guidelines. Further work was being undertaken with Ceredigion to ensure the Formula is brought into line. A second meeting was held where the method behind the formula was explained in great detail. The Lead Member and Chair would meet with the Director of Education and report back to a future meeting of the Working Group.
After School/Holiday Clubs	Investigations into an alleged fraud raised concerns that the appropriate processes were not in place for many after schools clubs and holiday clubs. A second meeting was held and it was agreed that the matter be discussed at Audit Committee with a recommendation that concerns be raised with senior management. In the meantime the Authority's liability in respect of such Clubs be discussed with Legal and reported to Audit Committee.
Statutory Testing	Queries had been raised regarding the frequency of testing and cost of outside contractors. A new contractor has been appointed at a reduced cost to the authority and the issue would be monitored 6 months after the new contractor commenced operations.
County Farms Estate	The level of debt has been considered by the Group on a number of occasions and continues to be dissatisfied with responses from the service area. The Environment,

	<p>Infrastructure and Crime and Disorder Committee had established a scrutiny review into issues of concern and it was agreed that a Member of the Internal Audit Working Group join that review to ensure both Committee's concerns were addressed. In the meantime, the Cabinet have approved an invitation to host a Welsh Government sponsored initiative The County Farms Collaborative Initiative, into County Farms Estates across Wales. This study is likely to take up to two years. It was therefore agreed that this was not the most appropriate time to begin an internal review. At a meeting of the Joint Chairs Steering Group, the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration asked for details of concerns to be forwarded to her and she suggested that she and the Consultant should meet with the Internal Audit Working Group at a future date to discuss issues of concern.</p>
<p>Student Finance</p>	<p>Concerns were raised in a number of areas. Although an Action Plan had been submitted the Group asked that the senior officer attend a future meeting to discuss the proposed actions in more depth.</p>

Items for consideration at future meetings include Student Finance, County Farms Estate, Housing Repairs and Maintenance, Car Parking Enforcement, Sickness Absence and Business Continuity.

Report contact: Lisa Richards, Legal, Scrutiny and Democratic Services

Contact details: 08708510513, lisa.richards@powys.gov.uk

Sources: Notes of meetings held 8 July and 2 October 2013

Group Membership: County Councillors J G Morris (Lead Member), A W Davies, Mrs E R Davies, E A Jones, Mrs F Jump, D Thomas and Mr J Brautigam