

## **Report of the Audit Committee to the Fire and Rescue Authority on 14 September 2009.**

**Re: Audit Committee Meeting on 26 June 2009.**

### **Members in attendance:**

Mrs L Duffy (Vice-Chair), Mrs G Hopkins, Mr P Watts, Mrs. M. Drinkwater (substituting for Mr. D. Prodger, MBE) and Mrs. F. Oborski (Substituting for Mr. C. Smith)

In the absence of Mr Prodger MBE, the Committee agreed that the Vice-Chair, Mrs L Duffy chaired the Meeting.

### **1. Annual Governance Statement:**

The Audit Committee's Terms of Reference include approval of the Annual Governance Statement and it is a legal requirement for the Authority to publish the Statement by 30 June.

The purpose of the Statement is to describe how the Authority:-

- Identifies its obligations and objectives.
- Identifies tasks to achieving those objectives.
- Establishes controls to manage risks.
- Ensures the controls are working effectively.

The statement is a summary of the governance arrangements of the Authority and is part of the assurances that surround the overall arrangements for corporate governance.

**The Committee resolved to approve the Annual Governance Statement.**

(The Statement as approved was signed by the Chairman of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive and published on 30 June 2009.)

### **2. Statement of Accounts 2008/09**

The Treasurer tabled the Statement of Accounts 2008/09 for consideration and approval by the Committee. He told the Members that the signed Statement of the Accounts must be approved by resolution of the Committee by 30 June, and published by 30 September. The Treasurer highlighted the main points of the Accounts to the Committee, which included the reduced valuation of the Authority's assets, reflecting the current economic climate, and the Authority's prudent investment strategy.

**RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts 2008/09 be approved.**

### **3. The External Auditors' Annual Governance Report 2008/09**

Mr Grant Patterson, District Auditor, tabled a draft of the External Auditors' Annual Governance Report to the Authority for consideration by the Committee. The accounts required revisions to the valuations of the Authority's assets and a reduction of £3.5m in the Balance Sheet; it was recommended that appropriate arrangements are made for asset valuations in the future.

**The Committee noted the External Auditors' Annual Governance Report 2008/09 and agreed with the recommendations of the Report.**

### **4. Quarterly Risk Management Update**

**The Committee noted the Report, and appointed Cllr. Peter Watts as Risk Champion.**

### **5. External Audit Update**

The District Auditor informed the Committee of the outline External Audit Plan for 2009/10 and the fee proposed for the audit work.

**The Committee resolved that the Report be noted.**

### **6. Internal Audit Plans 2008/09 and 2009/10**

Mr. Gordon Smith, Chief Internal Auditor, informed the Committee that there had been significant progress in 2008/09, but some of the work programme had been deferred to 2009/10 and a revised Plan would be brought back to the next meeting.

**The Committee resolved that the Report be noted.**