

## **Report of the Head of Legal Services**

### **Audit and Standards Committee Terms of Reference**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To consider the reallocation of areas of responsibility from Policy and Resources to Audit and Standards Committee.
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#### **Recommendations**

##### ***It is recommended that:***

- I. the following areas of responsibility be reallocated to Audit and Standards Committee from Policy and Resources;***
  - ***Equality & Diversity***
  - ***Health & Safety***
  - ***Employment Monitoring***
- II. the amended Terms of Reference for Audit and Standards Committee, as set out in Appendix 2, be approved.***

#### **Introduction and Background**

2. Terms of Reference for Audit and Standards have not been reviewed since its establishment in February 2013. It is noticeable that Policy and Resources is rather heavier in agenda items than Audit and Standards, particularly now Policy and Resources have additional working party items to consider. It is evident that work load is not distributed evenly between the Committees. We have therefore looked at whether it is possible to transfer any of the roles from Policy and Resources over to Audit and Standards in order to better balance the workload.

#### **Reallocation of Areas of Responsibility**

3. The Head of Legal Services has identified three areas where improvements can be made to the division of workload between Audit and Standards Committee and Policy and Resources. It is recommended that the following items taken from point 10 of Policy and Resources Terms of Reference (see Appendix 1) which is 'Approve, monitor and review matters in relation to staff' be transferred across to Audit and Standards Committee.

- e) the development and implementation of equality and fairness policies receiving regular reports from the Equalities and Development Steering Group;
  - f) the development and implementation of health and safety policies receiving regular reports from the Health and Safety Liaison Panel; and
  - g) employment monitoring reports.
4. Health and safety is not only a key risk for the Authority but is also subject to external review and therefore sits well within the roles of Audit and Standards
  5. Similarly equality and fairness and employment data both have monitoring roles where a watchful eye is needed so again fits in nicely with the functionality of Audit and Standards.
  6. The revised draft Terms of Reference for Audit and Standards Committee are attached at Appendix 2. There would be a corresponding deletion from the Terms of Reference for Policy and Resources Committee.
  7. The previous Authority Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee have been consulted and have no objections to the proposed changes.

## Conclusion

8. The proposed reallocation of areas of responsibility and amended Terms of Reference are designed to ensure a balanced workload across the committees enabling effective and efficient decision making.
9. Any such changes to would be introduced following Fire Authority approval at the Annual General Meeting.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	none
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	none

<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	none
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	SMB, Authority Chairman, Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee.
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	n/a

### Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Policy and Resources Terms of Reference  
Appendix 2 – Audit and Standards Terms of Reference

### Contact Officer

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