AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Date: 29 June 2010
Venue: East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston
Time: 7.30 pm
Present: Councillors: - Dudley Hughes JP (Chairman)
        Peter Bedford Steven North
        David Brackenbury Colin Wright

64. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2010 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

65. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Tony Boto sent apologies.

66. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

67. OPINION AUDIT PLAN 2009/10

The Committee received the Audit Opinion Plan 2009/10, which set out the audit work proposed by the Council’s external auditors. The Chief Finance Officer agreed to raise with the External Auditors the Committee’s concerns over Fixed Asset testing and its relationship to the work on land and property values stemming from the economic downturn.

68. COUNTERING BENEFIT FRAUD – QUARTERLY REPORT

A report on the work of the Benefit Counter Fraud Section for the period to the end of 31 March 2010 was submitted for consideration.

Members noted that income of £114,482 had been generated during this financial year by recovering overpayments which had lessened the burden on the Council Tax payer. Members thanked the Counter Fraud team for their work.

The Committee received and noted the report.
69. **ANNUAL REPORT OF INTERNAL AUDIT**

A report was received and noted on the progress, effectiveness, and achievements of the Welland Internal Audit Consortium (the Consortium) during 2009/10, as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations and in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government.

It was noted that the Consortium’s Audit Manager had formed the opinion that the Council’s overall internal control arrangements provided a “Good Level of Assurance”. This was an improvement in the overall level of opinion from last year and was the highest level the Council could achieve. The level of Assurance was higher than achieved elsewhere in the Welland Partnership.

The Committee thanked the Audit Manager and the Consortium for their work.

70. **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Committee considered the Statement of Accounts 2009/10, which had been approved by the Finance Sub-Committee at its meeting on 29 June 2009 subject to the approval of the Audit and Risk Management Committee (minute 6 refers). Members reviewed the accounting policies and practices that had been used and asked a series of questions. The Committee thanked Financial Services and Internal Audit for their work on the Statement of Accounts.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Statement of Accounts for 2009/10 be approved.

71. **RISK MANAGEMENT REPORTS**

The Committee received the standard reports on new primary risks, residual primary risks, risk profile and outstanding actions.

Members suggested that more detail and explanation of potential risks and controls should be included on the Register. There was also concern that the Register did not appear to mitigate against the inherent risk of the loss of Government grants over the next few years.

The Committee noted the reports under the Risk Register and it was

**RESOLVED:**

That, in order to give this matter more detailed consideration, Risk Management Reports be the first item on the agenda for the next meeting.

72. **HEAD OF RESOURCES**

The Chairman noted that this would be Rob Austin’s last meeting and the Committee thanked him for his support particularly around risk management

Chairman