

**Note of a Briefing Meeting of Audit Committee Members and
Overview & Scrutiny Chairs/Vice Chairs on 7 October 2013
In the Clwyd Room**

Present: Members: Matt Wright (Chair), Alison Halford,
Carol Ellis, Paul Williams, Haydn Bateman, Ron Hampson

Officers: Gareth Owens, Kerry Feather, Helen Stappleton,
Karen Armstrong, Peter Evans, David Webster,
Jennie Williams, Robert Robins and Margaret Parry-Jones

Apologies: Ian Roberts, Tim Newhouse and David Hytch

1. Notes of Previous Meeting

The note of the previous meeting held on the 22 February 2013 was agreed as an accurate summary.

Peter Evans gave an update on points coming out of the initial meeting and in particular that a process was now in place with Karen Armstrong's team for reports issued by inspectors and regulators to be tracked.

Councillor Halford raised the issue of whether the Audit Committee should be increased in size which had been raised at the first meeting. Gareth Owens referred to how well the one lay person was contributing and that a paper could be submitted to the next but one Audit Committee to see if they wish to have a second lay person appointed. Councillor Halford also referred to one political group not presently being represented on Audit Committee. It was agreed that there would be a report on these points to the next but one Audit Committee meeting.

2. Forward Work Plan of Items of Mutual Interest

Peter Evans referred to the communication that had recently been sent by Robert Robins to all members giving details of the meetings during December when budget proposals would be considered. The e-mail indicated there would be a further meeting in early January as a round up after the budget consultation had been completed.

3. Revised Performance Reporting Arrangements

Karen Armstrong referred to the paper that had been circulated about the new performance reporting arrangements. The new arrangements would concentrate on the achievement of improvement plan priorities with Members having updates quarterly. In addition every half year Heads of Service would report on their other business areas. The first new report would be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on the 15 October 2013. In response to Councillor Ellis, Karen confirmed that the

new arrangements would not affect the reporting of regulated services to Overview & Scrutiny. Paul Williams raised how there would be interaction between the Audit Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Committees. Peter Evans suggested that initially if Overview & Scrutiny had control issues that they felt needed referring to Audit the Committee could include this in its resolution. Similarly if the Audit Committee believed that there was work Overview & Scrutiny could do to improve existing control procedures it could include this in its resolution. There was also discussion about developing the IT system for officers so it could be summarised to provide useful information to Members. David and Karen would liaise over providing audit findings to Overview & Scrutiny in consultation with appropriate Committee Chairs.

4. Monitoring of Performance Appraisals

Helen Stappleton circulated and spoke to a briefing note on monitoring the completion of staff performance appraisals. The iTrent system enables Managers to report on the completion of appraisals and could be used to monitor across all Directorates that appraisals had been done. Helen explained that the half year performance report would require every Head of Service to report on appraisals. Part of a Manager's role is to manage performance and appraisal forms a key part of that. The briefing paper suggested there could also be an annual report to Audit Committee focusing on performance KPIs and appraisals in particular. Councillor Halford enquired of David Webster his view on the new arrangements and he indicated that it looked good and was a great improvement on current arrangements. In response to Councillor Wright it was confirmed that the November reports to Overview & Scrutiny will include this information on appraisals. Karen Armstrong explained that June is when reports are produced on the previous year's performance and this would now include the extent to which appraisals had been undertaken.

The meeting lasted from 1.30 pm to 2.20 pm