

CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL
ACCOUNTS, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

23rd SEPTEMBER 2009

**REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - CUSTOMER SERVICES & RESOURCES & THE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

EXTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT

1 Introduction and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To allow Members to consider the Auditors' Annual Governance Report which includes comments on the audit of the 2008/09 Statement of Accounts; Value for Money (V.F.M.) judgement and a range of important broader issues covered in this first Use of Resources exercise under the new regional based corporate assessment process (C.A.A.)

2 Wards Affected

- 2.1 All wards are affected.

3 Effect on Policy

- 3.1 None.

4 Contact Officer(s)

- 4.1 Julie Evans (Ext1595)
Karen Curtin (Ext 1551)

5 Executive Summary

- 5.1 The draft Annual Governance report is attached in Appendix 1. The Auditor's opinion of the financial statements relate to the revised Statement of Accounts, adopted by this Committee on June 24 2009.
- 5.2 The Use of Resources Judgement set out in the attached report forms part of our overall organisational assessment under the new CAA framework. The areas "scored" are broader in scope and depth than the process under the previous Corporate Performance Assessment framework (C.P.A). Overall, all elements have been assessed against what is accepted to be a harder test. The Council has received "scores" of 3 – "performing well" in all aspects of this harder test. This reflects clear progress in all elements; Officers and Members can be rightly proud of the successful outcomes delivered during the period covered.
- 5.2 Additional elements this year include more focus on Organisational Development, our consultation framework and overall governance arrangements than has been the case previously and the scores reflect a stable and sustainably robust organisation in all aspects of Resource Management.
- 5.3 The assessment framework will develop further in the coming year with additional judgements relating to asset management and our use of natural resources.

6 Risk Assessment, Financial Effects and Contributions to Efficiency Savings

6.1 The following details approved by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance (ext. 1551)

6.2 Risk assessment – there are no risk issues arising from this report

6.3 Financial effects – there are no financial effects arising from this report.

6.4 Efficiency savings – there are no efficiency savings arising from this report.

7 Recommendation

7.1

The committee is asked to:

- consider the matters raised in the report before approving the financial statements and recommending to Council;
- take note of the VFM Conclusion and Use of Resources score;
- approve the letter of representation on behalf of the Council. (detailed in page 14 of the Annual Governance Report)