
EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 APRIL 2011

AUC.25/11 THE ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2011 (SI2011/817)

The Financial Services Manager submitted report RD.7/11 detailing the implications of the recent changes to the Accounts and Audit Regulations which governed the way in which government produced, approved and audited their statutory accounts. For many years that had been in accordance with the 2003 Regulations and four amendments to Statutory Instruments.

The DCLG had in January 2011 commenced a consultation process to revise and consolidate the Regulations and the four amendments. Following feedback from 150 authorities and other interested parties, Statutory Instrument (SI 817) The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, was laid before Parliament, came into effect from 31 March 2011 and would apply to the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2011 and later years.

The Financial Services Manager indicated that many of the revisions to the Regulations did not impact upon the Council; however the main changes and their respective impacts on the Council were as detailed in Section 2 of her report.

The Financial Services Manager informed Members that, in order to accommodate the new Regulations, changes would be required to the Civic Calendar i.e. the special Council meeting scheduled for the end of June would no longer be needed, but a special Council may be required at the end of September instead. Discussions were underway with the Leader and Portfolio Holder (Governance and Resources), in addition to which liaison would take place with other interested parties.

Although not a requirement of the new Regulations, early consideration of the accounts by Members was still viewed as good practice and it was therefore proposed that the accounts continue to be scrutinised by the Audit Committee at their meeting in June once they had been certified by the Assistant Director (Resources).

The Financial Services Manager reported that, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, approval of the accounts was a responsibility of full Council and, in order to comply with the new Regulations, a special Council meeting would be required for the end of September. However, at previous meetings of the Audit Committee it had been recognised that many other authorities delegated that responsibility to either an Accounts or Audit Committee, or other politically balanced and properly constituted Committees of the authority. Given the regulation changes it may be an opportune time to revisit responsibilities with regard to the approval process and delegate responsibility

to the Audit Committee. That would create a small group of appropriately trained Members with the relevant expertise to approve the accounts.

In conclusion, the Financial Services Manager invited Members to consider that issue again and make recommendations to Council as appropriate.

The Committee then gave consideration to the issue of approval of the Council's Accounts, with Members expressing differing views in respect thereof.

Councillor Lishman moved and Councillor Bowman (S) seconded that the Audit Committee recommend to the City Council that responsibility for approval of the Accounts be delegated to the Committee.

Following voting, it was

RESOLVED – That the Audit Committee recommended to the City Council that responsibility for approval of the City Council's Accounts should be delegated to the Audit Committee.