

ACCOUNTS AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE

26 JULY 2011

Present :- Councillor Will Quince (Chairman)
Councillors Mark Cory, Annie Feltham, Scott Greenhill,
Pauline Hazell, Justin Knight, Michael Lilley,
Jon Manning and Gerard Oxford

Substitute Member :- Councillor Dennis Willetts for Councillor Sue Lissimore

Also in Attendance :- Councillor Paul Smith

6. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2011 was confirmed as a correct record.

7. The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

Mrs Sarah Cheek, Electoral Services Manager, introduced the report on Polling Places and Polling Districts, informing the Committee of the forthcoming statutory review of all polling districts and polling places arrangements.

The report was a notification to Members of the statutory requirement to complete a follow-up review before the end of the period of four years from the original review, in effect, by the 31 December 2011.

Mrs Cheek explained the definitions of Polling Districts and Polling Places and the timetable for the complete review, including the consultation period. The results of the consultation would be fed back to the Accounts and Regulatory Committee in September 2011 followed by Full Council approval in October 2011.

Mrs. Cheek confirmed that a Government directive and guidance on the number of electors at any one Polling Station not exceeding 2,500 and the ratio of Polling Station staff to the number of people on an electoral register, will form part of the review.

In response to Councillor Manning, Mrs. Cheek said that in so far as new building development was concerned, e.g. New development at the Hythe, a five year development plan in Colchester would be looked at with the view to adjust and balance.

Mrs. Cheek confirmed to Councillor Willetts that in so far as a set of criteria for deciding where a Polling Station is situated, the review document will set out the criteria, though accessibility and facilities for people with disabilities was high on the list with the need to find suitable buildings.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the requirement to carry out a review of polling districts and polling places arrangements.

8. Draft Annual Statement of Accounts

Mr. Steve Heath, Finance Manager, presented the Draft Statement of Accounts for 2010/2011.

Mr. Heath explained that the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel were notified of the changes to the accounts as a result of the introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) at the meeting of 29 March 2011, and the potential changes to processes resulting from revisions to the Accounts and Audit Regulations at the meeting of 28 June 2011.

The draft accounts had been certified by the responsible financial officer on 30 June in accordance with the statutory deadline and an internal briefing session is planned to take place prior to the Committee meeting where Members are asked to approve the certified accounts. Mr. Heath confirmed that the briefing has been scheduled for Thursday 22 September 2011 at 6 p.m. in Rowan House, allowing time for any issues to be addressed prior to Members certifying the accounts on 27 September 2011.

Mr. Heath confirmed to Councillor Manning that a hard copy of the Accounts is made available to members of the public in the Angel Court Customer Services Centre.

Mr. Heath confirmed to Councillor Willetts that all enquiries by the public to access the accounts are recorded and this and the working papers are retained, and are open to auditor inspection.

RESOLVED that the Committee considered the report and supporting information relating to the pre-audit Statement of Accounts for 2010/11 prior to an internal briefing session for the Committee and the deadline for approval of the audited accounts on 30 September 2011.