

**MINUTES OF: THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**Date of Meeting: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008**

**PRESENT: Councillor Gledhill (Chair)  
Councillors A Barnes, Dickinson, J Pilling, Thorne (substituting for  
Pawson)**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Phil Seddon, Head of Financial Services  
Brian Essex, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources  
Andrew Fox, Principal Auditor, Lancashire Audit Service  
Clive Portman, District Auditor  
Tony Hough, Audit Manager, Audit Commission  
Caroline Brennan, Clerical Assistant  
Emy Aceret, Committee Officer**

**ALSO PRESENT: H Massie, Independent Co-opted Member**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Haworth and Zaheer Abbas, Senior Auditor, Lancashire Audit Services.

**2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**Resolved:**

That subject to the following amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2008 be agreed and signed by the Chair as correct record:

“That the Principal Partnership Officer and Head of Customer Services and ICT be invited to the next meeting of the Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee to present information on the Council's approach to community engagement and methods to improve user satisfaction.”

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**4. CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Heather Massie was introduced to the Committee. She had recently been appointed as an Independent Co-opted Member to serve on the Committee.

**5. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items for discussion.

**6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No questions were raised under this item.

**7. SINGLE PERSON COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT – Letter from the Audit Commission**

Clive Portman, District Auditor explained that the Audit Commission’s letter clarified the Council’s position relating to data sharing and matching. He reported that the Commission’s new data matching powers should eliminate any outstanding concerns that audited bodies may have in terms of disclosing the electoral register.

There was a discussion relating to the following:

- o Audit Commission’s new statutory power under the Serious Crime Act 2007
- o National Fraud Initiative
- o Single Occupancy in Rossendale claiming Council Tax discount
- o Successful data matching pilot in Preston and Liverpool
- o Potential benefits to the Council

**Resolved:**

That the letter be noted.

**8. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT**

Andrew Fox, Principal Auditor explained the review work that had been carried out by Internal Audit for the five months ending 31<sup>st</sup> August and the planned work for the remainder of the year against the Audit Plan.

A number of questions were raised by members to which the Auditors and the Head of Finance responded:

- o Current Economic Climate
- o The Council’s Banking Institutions
- o Investing and Risk Management

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**(The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 7.00pm)**

Signed .....  
(Chair)

Date .....