



Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED**  
All

**FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:**

**Cabinet**

**14 January 2002**

**Finance, Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee**

**24 January 2002**

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**District Audit Management Letter 1999/2000- Progress Report**

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**Report of the Chief Executive**

**1. Purpose of Report**

To report to members the actions taken or being taken to implement the key recommendations arising from the District Audit Management Letter for 1999/2000.

**2. Summary**

At its meeting on 12 February 2001 the Cabinet resolved

1. that the actions taken by the Chief Executive as a result of the Management Letter, as detailed in the report, be noted and endorsed;
2. that the Chief Executive submit a further report on the two issues raised in the Management Letter with regard to partnership working and voluntary organisations; and
3. that the action plan arising from the management letter be referred to Scrutiny Committee to monitor implementation.

At its meeting on 28 February the Finance, Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee requested that a report should be brought to the Cabinet and to the committee on progress achieved in implementing the action plan viz to

1. Develop stronger regulations and guidelines relating to the issues of accountable body status, and associated development of greater decentralisation and possible moves towards devolution of Council expenditure.
2. Relaunch the existing project management and partnership guidelines with increased emphasis on training, and on identifying, where necessary, external professional project management support.
3. Reviewing the Council's prosecution policies and guidelines in the light of new legislation.

Progress achieved is as follows:-

**1. Accountable Body issues-**

- a. Directors' Board considered a report on the key issues on 21 August 2001. These were,

- i. the need to formally recognise the special responsibilities associated with acceptance of the role of accountable body, especially in relation to the financial implications.
- ii. The need to ensure all partners involved are aware of the accounting, monitoring and audit procedures which will be required in order to allow the council to properly fulfill its accountable body responsibilities,

- iii. The need to put into place arrangements to ensure all partners are fully legally accountable for their own expenditure, so that any grant clawed back would be refunded to the council by the party making any ineligible expenditure.
- b. Further work was requested. The intention is to have re-presented the report to the Directors' Board in time for a report to be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 28 January 2002. When this has been done, it is considered that this matter will have been completed.

## 2. Project Management-

- a. At its meeting on 10 September 2001, the Cabinet approved the implementation of revised arrangements for the management of projects within the City Council. The proposals included the introduction of a new compulsory training programme for Project Directors and Project Managers.
- b. It was also agreed that Directors' Board should monitor the new arrangements and that the standards be reviewed and updated at least every two years. Trainers were appointed earlier this year and training delivered, following which, the standards were reviewed.
- c. A retendering exercise has therefore been carried out and new trainers are expected to be appointed within the next month. The revised training programme will begin early in 2002.
- d. In addition, the Town Clerk has been allocated responsibility for coordinating the new project management arrangements, and arrangements for annual assurance statements from Directors to certify that their arrangements conform with the agreed standards, have been put in place. One of these standards is to ensure that adequate legal and financial advice for major projects is always available, and that any unresolved departures from the standards should be raised with the Town Clerk.
- e. It is considered that this matter has been completed.

## 3. Partnership Working-

- a. An action plan to relaunch the partnership working guidelines has been agreed by the Strategic Resources Group.
- b. The relaunched guidelines are available on the Council's intranet. This matter has now been completed.

## 4. Prosecutions-

- a. A revised prosecutions policy and investigations code and has been prepared. The policy seeks to incorporate all activities of the Council, which can lead to prosecutions or other sanctions being applied both to staff, and members of the public.
- b. The new investigations code incorporates the provisions of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 as regards the use of surveillance and covert human intelligence sources, and the Human Rights Act 1998.
- c. This new documentation will be presented to the Cabinet following consultation with directors, for approval at a meeting in January or February 2002. When agreed, the existence of a prosecutions policy and investigations code will provide a sound framework within which the Council can pursue its legitimate aims using the full range of legal powers available to it.

**3. Recommendations**

That the progress made is noted and the key recommendations contained within the 1999/00 District Audit Management Letter, be considered to have been completed.

**4. Financial legal and other Implications**

<b>OTHER IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>	<b>Paragraph References within Report</b>
Financial	No	-
Legal	No	-
Equal Opportunities	No	-
Policy	No	-
Sustainable and Environmental	No	-
Crime and Disorder	No	-
Human Rights Act	No	-
Elderly /people on low income	No	-

**Report Author/Officer to contact:**

Laurie Goldberg, Head of Audit Ext. 7402

Rodney Green  
Chief Executive