

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

1 April 2008

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the receipt of the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Audit Commission is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively, to achieve high-quality local services for the public. They work to ensure that public services are good value for money and that public money is properly spent.

1.1.2 Attached is the statutory Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. The Letter is the prime means through which the results of audit and inspection activity are communicated to elected members, the public and other stakeholders.

1.2 Annual Audit and Inspection Letter

1.2.1 This Letter provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council, drawing on audit, inspection and performance assessment work and is prepared by our Relationship Manager

1.2.2 The letter is very positive about the Council's performance and finances. Reading from the report, the main messages for the Council included in this Letter are:

- *The Council has sustained the high level of performance noted in its Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA), and reported in our subsequent Audit Letters. Services are delivered to a consistently high standard, and the principals of good performance management are firmly embedded and clearly understood by staff at all levels of the Council.*
- *The Council has continued to improve across a number of key areas and in 2006/07 achieved an overall Use of Resources score of 4 (well above minimum standards - performing strongly). This is the highest score available. To arrive at our overall score we review five areas in detail. The*

Council scored level 4 for Financial Reporting, Financial Management and Financial Standing and maintained level 3 for both Internal Control and Value for Money.

- *The Council had 42 per cent of its key indicators of performance among the best performing 25 per cent of English district councils. This is above average performance within the group of district councils assessed as "excellent" under the CPA framework, which includes the Council.*
- *The Council continues to manage its resources well and deliver value for money.*

1.2.3 This Letter will be published on the Audit commission's website at www.audit-commission.gov.uk and also on the Council's website.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 The Audit and Inspection Letter fulfils the requirement to communicate the results of audit and inspection activity to elected members, the public and other stakeholders.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 None.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 The work of the District Auditor and staff for the Audit Commission gives an independent and informed opinion of the Council's performance and financial management and is an important component of the Council's accountability to its residents and council taxpayers. The judgements contained in the Letter demonstrate that the Council continues to perform in a manner that befits its status as an 'Excellent' Council.

Background papers:

contact: David Hughes

Nil

David Hughes
Chief Executive