

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

07 April 2009

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 at **[Annex 1]** 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. In this report, the Commission summarises findings and conclusions from the statutory audit reported to the October 2008 meeting of this Committee.
- 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:
- Overall service improvement is strong from an already high base, significantly exceeding the average ranges achieved by other district councils.
 - There is good progress on actions in line with priority areas, although outcome focussed targets are still in development in some areas.

- Performance management remains effective, enabling a sustained focus on improvement, with objectives delivered to time.
- The Council continues to make strong use of its resources, sustaining the highest level 4 rating.

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