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## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

17 JUNE 2014

(19.15 - 20.10)

PRESENT: Councillors Peter McCabe (in the Chair), Michael Bull, John Dehaney, Mary-Jane Jeanes, Philip Jones, Katy Neep and Ian Munn  
Co-opted Members Sophie Bowen, Nigel Brotherton and Beverley Huie

ALSO PRESENT: Paul Evans (Assistant Director, Corporate Governance), Margaret Culleton (Head of Audit and Investigations) and Lynne Hartley (Democratic Services Officer)

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Williams.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

No declarations were made.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2014 (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2014 are agreed as a correct record.

### 4. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT, CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT (Agenda Item 4)

Margaret Culleton introduced the report, highlighting paragraph 11 which listed the Internal Control issues completed, paragraph 12 which listed issues for improvement identified by Directors and Heads of Service and paragraph 13 which listed the significant governance issues to be addressed in 2014/15.

In answer to questions from members officers advised that =

- Work will be undertaken across the four authorities who form the shared legal service to deal with governance issues, ensuring that there are common systems to identify and address issues, as there would be in a single authority
- The target of responding to FOI requests within 20 days was being met in 88.5% of cases, which was slightly lower than the rate achieved in the previous year but there had been a 20% increase in the number of requests. A system to address this issue was being put in place and a report on the

service, including estimated costs, would be provided for the next meeting of the Committee.

Officers also agreed to circulate the following information to members –

- Details of the management plan and risk analysis for implementing the different parts of the Care Act showing how they will be implemented by the deadline
- Indicative dates for addressing the issues raised in paragraph 12, these dates also to be included in the mid year update
- Clarification of the last point for Environmental and Regeneration in paragraph 12 “Considering appointment of H&S champions within the division”
- To provide some examples of the datasets referred to in paragraph 7.8

Councillor Ian Munn asked that his concerns about the potential impact of staffing reductions on service provision be recorded.

Beverley Huie was concerned about the reliance on voluntary sector input in a number of the areas listed in paragraph 12.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Governance Statement is agreed.

#### 5. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (Agenda Item 5)

Paul Evans introduced the report and agreed to incorporate information comparing the use of powers under the Act by Merton with that of neighbouring boroughs. He also agreed to feed back the suggestion that the Council’s CCTV vehicles be parked overnight in crime hotspots to act as a deterrent

The Committee asked Paul Evans to include information about requests for CCTV images in the FOI report to be considered at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the purposes for which investigations have been authorised under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

#### 6. WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 6)

The Committee agreed its work programme with the addition of the report on the Freedom of Information requests service for the October meeting.