

3. AUDIT OF COVALENT PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Audit Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Internal Audit Manager informing the Committee of the results of the recent audit work on the Covalent performance management system.

The Internal Audit Manager explained that the work had been carried out as a result of a previous direction from the Committee and had involved the random sampling of 15 performance-reporting indicators in October and November 2009. The results of the sampling were produced in the appendix to the report, and the Internal Audit Manager summarised the results as follows:-

- The indicators were considered to be up to date;
- 11 of 14 indicators were considered to be accurate or to have minor errors which would not affect understanding of performance (79%); and
- One indicator (LS052_9a.1a) although activated, was not considered appropriate, and has now been replaced by indicator LS056.

The Internal Audit Manager considered that improvements had been made since the Committee's last consideration of the system but that further improvement was required.

The Committee was asked to note the terms of the report.

Officers were asked if there could be issues relating to literacy or numeracy skills on the part of staff using the database, or if training on the use of the system should be examined. The Chief Executive advised that he would raise those issues with the Directors.

Members of the Committee expressed concern that there continued to be errors and inaccuracies in the database, and the Chief Executive advised that the accuracy of the data in the system was important especially since there was now public reporting on performance through the council's website. He suggested that the Committee should continue to scrutinise the system through regular reports, and that Internal Audit would undertake *ad hoc* checks and report the results to Directors.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report;
2. To agree that there had been improvements in the accuracy of the Covalent system but that there was still a requirement for further improvement and monitoring; and
3. That further reports should be brought to the Committee on a similar basis every six months.

