

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**30 March 2009**

1. **EXTERNAL AUDITORS – EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Report of the Audit Services Manager

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the committee agree an evaluation criteria for the external audit service.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT.**

To ask the Audit Committee to review a suggested evaluation criteria for the external audit service, from which the committee may wish to adopt and introduce a number of indicators.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Audit Committee's self-assessment exercise undertaken in December 2008 included the issue "does the committee consider the performance of external audit" to which the answer was "not formally". Therefore, there was an action for improvement to review the arrangements with the possible introduction of performance indicators for external audit.
- 3.2 This report includes an evaluation criteria relevant to an external audit service, from which the committee may wish to adopt and introduce a number of indicators.

In many ways this criteria is based upon opinion and will require input from the external auditors, senior officers within the Authority, and finally in a number of cases the Audit Committee itself. It is proposed that Audit Services will coordinate this exercise, and once the criteria has been established by the committee, they will request the external auditor's to self assess themselves.

The results of the self assessment will then, where appropriate, be verified by senior officers within the Authority, and the Audit Committee.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out. The matters contained in this report will not lead to and/or do not relate to a policy change.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is a legal and statutory requirement for the Council to have an external audit service.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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