

Report to:	FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
Date of Meeting	29 th January 2015

ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANTS MONITORING REPORT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee to consider the appointment of consultants exceeding £25,000 for the period 1st August 2014 to 31st October 2014.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note the report and make any recommendations as considered appropriate.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To enable Members to monitor the appointment of consultants exceeding £25,000 for the period 1st August 2014 to 31st October 2014 and make recommendations if appropriate.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

To not receive the report but this would prevent the Committee from effective monitoring of the appointment of consultants in excess of £25,000.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is

“Deliver quality services through a professional, well-rewarded and motivated workforce “

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Following a review by the Finance and Audit Committee of the Council’s arrangements for the appointment and use of consultants, the Executive at its meeting on 23rd June 2010 approved a number of recommendations which are intended to improve the control and monitoring of the use of external consultants and to help the Council to achieve a number of goals outlined in the Council’s Strategy including the achievement of value for money.

5.2 The Finance and Audit Committee has requested regular reports in order to monitor all consultancy commissions for compliance with these recommendations:

- all proposed appointments of consultants exceeding £25,000 be reported to the Cabinet Member by the Assistant Chief Executive detailing the nature and business case relating to the appointment in line with corporate priorities.
- in the case of ‘long term’ projects, progress reports to be submitted to the Finance and Audit Committee at six monthly intervals by the relevant Assistant Chief Executive for monitoring against corporate priorities and business cases and to enable post project evaluation.
- The Head of Procurement and Projects to co-ordinate the submission of reports based upon information provided by the relevant officers;

5.3 Report

The Committee is asked to note that all Service Directors have been contacted for information. Community and Environmental Services have submitted a return for the appointment of a consultant during the period of 1st August 2014 to 31st October 2014 and this return has been attached at Appendix 4(a). All other departments have reported a nil return though Cultural Services have been unable to provide a definitive response. Any appointments in this area will therefore, be reported at the next meeting.

The previous report to the Committee did not identify any ‘long-term appointments’ so there is nothing to report for monitoring in this respect.

A further report will be submitted to Finance and Audit Committee (only if any appointments have been made) on 5th March 2015 to include a list of any appointments (if applicable) made between 1st November 2014 and 31st January 2015.

5.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.5 List of Appendices:

Appendix 4(a): Appointment of Consultants over £25,000.

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 As outlined in the Report.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None