

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**Meeting of the Executive - Monday 14th February 2005**

Report from the Director of Finance

For Action

Wards affected:
ALL**Report Title: PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY ISSUES WITHIN 2003/2004 JOINT AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER**

Forward Plan ref: BFS/96

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an initial progress report of the implementation of the key recommendations in the 2003/2004 Joint Audit and Inspection Letter to Brent Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are recommended to note progress to date.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The 2003/2004 Audit Letter was presented to the Executive on 17th January 2004. This is the first year that a joint Letter has been produced including both the work of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in their role of external auditor and the Audit Commission's inspection regime.
- 3.2 The Letter contains a positive message to the Council reflected in the direction of travel statement. This is also reflected in the move from '*fair*' to '*good*' in the most recent Comprehensive Performance Assessment announced in December
- 3.3 However recommendations for further improvement were highlighted in the Letter. The Executive agreed that officers would provide an initial progress report and update this later in the financial year on the actions taken to meet these recommendations. Appendix A summarises the measures adopted and further action being taken.
- 3.4 This report will be considered by Performance and Finance Select Committee as part of its annual work programme.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A number of the key issues in the Audit Letter are linked directly to the financial health and standing of the Council.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Audit Letter is issued pursuant to paragraph 29 of the Audit Code of Practice, which came into effect on 29th March 2000, and was made under s4 of the Audit Commission Act 1998. The aim of the Audit Letter is to communicate to the audited body the scope nature and the extent of the audit work carried out, and summarise conclusions and significant issues arising from the work carried out.

6. DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no diversity implications arising from it.

7. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 A number of recommendations related directly to the requirement of staff to amend working practices.

8. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

London Borough of Brent 2003/2004 Management Letter to Members December 2004, Report to Executive on 17th January.

Any person wishing to inspect these documents should contact Committee and Member Services, Room 106, Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 9HD. Tel. 020 8937 1353.

DUNCAN McLEOD
Director of Finance