

Report to the Audit and Governance Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

***Report Reference: AGC-014-2009/10.
Date of Meeting: 30 November 2009.***

Portfolio: Finance and Economic Development.

Subject: Audit Commission National Local Government Studies.

Responsible Officer: Steve Tautz (01992 564180).

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations:

That the recent publication by the Audit Commission of national reports relevant to the Council's areas of service provision be noted.

Executive Summary:

This report provides details of national local government studies recently published by the Audit Commission, which are relevant to the Council's areas of service provision. Arrangements for the reporting of local government studies issued by the Commission were agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 24 September 2009.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

At the meeting of the Committee held on 22 June 2009, members requested that details of all Audit Commission national reports and publications received by the Council be reported to the Committee for information. To meet the request of members, the publication of national local government studies by the Audit Commission that relate to the Council's areas of service provision, is reported to the Committee on an ongoing basis. The Commission's Executive Summary (where produced) of each study is to be provided to members for information, together with a weblink for the download of the full document.

Other Options for Action:

None, this report is presented at the request of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Report:

1. The Audit Commission's national studies programme aims to improve local public services through an independent authoritative analysis of national evidence and local practice. The Commission has a duty to undertake studies designed to make recommendations for improving the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of certain bodies, and to improve the financial and other management of local public bodies. The Commission's national reports address strategic issues affecting specific sectors as well as the public sector as a whole, identifying practice that works, highlighting emerging findings and examining national trends to influence local practice and national policy. Each of national local government studies published by the Audit Commission since 2000 can be downloaded directly from the Commission's website at:

www.audit-

2. The following national local government studies relating directly to the Council's areas of service provision have been published by the Audit Commission since the last meeting of the Committee:

(a) *'Protecting The Public Purse: Local Government Fighting Fraud'* (September 2009) - A summary of this report has been published by the Audit Commission and is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. A copy of the full report can be downloaded from the Commission's website using the weblink at paragraph 1 of this report.

(b) *'Building Better Lives: Getting the Best from Strategic Housing'* (September 2009) - A summary of this report has been published by the Audit Commission and is attached as Appendix 2 to this report. A copy of the full report can be downloaded from the Commission's website using the weblink at paragraph 1 of this report.

(c) *'Lofty Ambitions: The Role of Councils in Reducing Domestic CO2 Emissions'* (October 2009) - A summary of this report has been published by the Audit Commission and is attached as Appendix 3 to this report. A copy of the full report can be downloaded from the Commission's website using the weblink at paragraph 1 of this report.

3. The Committee is requested to note the recent publication by the Audit Commission of national reports relevant to the Council's areas of service provision.

Resource Implications:

None.

Legal and Governance Implications:

There are no legal implications or Human Rights Act issues arising from the recommendations in this report.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations in this report for the Council's commitment to the Nottingham Declaration for climate change, the corporate Safer, Cleaner and Greener initiative, or any Crime and Disorder issues within the district.

Consultation Undertaken:

This report has been agreed by the Corporate Governance Group. Relevant reports of the Audit Commission are considered by the Corporate Executive Forum and Management Board as necessary.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

There are no risk management implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

Equality and Diversity

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? N/A

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process? N/A

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group? N/A