

Report to the Audit & Governance Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: AGC-013-2010/11
Date of meeting: 20 September 2010

Portfolio: Finance and Economic Development.

Subject: Audit Commission National Local Government Studies

Responsible Officer: Steve Tautz (01992 564180)

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) That the Committee note the recent publication by the Audit Commission of national reports relevant to the Council's areas of service provision, and any actions or implications for the Council arising from the reports.

Executive Summary:

This report provides details of national local government studies recently published by the Audit Commission that 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 web link for the download of the full document.

Other Options for Action:

None. This report is presented at the request of the Audit & Governance Committee

Report:

1. At the request of members, the Audit and Governance Committee regularly receives details of National Local Government Studies published by the Audit Commission, which are relevant to the Council's areas of service provision. The Commission's Executive Summary or the full report of each study is to be provided to members for information, together with a web link for the download of the full document.

2. 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 Studies 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.

3. The following National Local Government Studies related to the Council's areas of service provision, have recently been published.

A Review of Collaborative Procurement Across the Public Sector (published in association with the National Audit Office) (May 2010)

4. No summary of this report is available. The full report has been attached as Appendix 1. In addition to the main report, the following associated documents are also available if required:

- Collaborative procurement: Price analysis
- Collaborative procurement: Heads of Procurement Survey Key Results
- Collaborative procurement: OJEU Contract Notice Analysis
- Collaborative procurement: Supplier survey Key Results
- Collaborative procurement: Public and Private sector case studies
- Collaborative procurement: List of professional buying organisations

5. These can be accessed by using the following hyperlink:

http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0910/collaborative_procurement.aspx?alreadysearchfor=yes

6. The main recommendation of the report focuses on collaborative procurement amongst local authorities and public sector organisations. The Council is already pursuing this approach through its involvement with and membership of the Essex Procurement Hub.

Against the odds: Re-engaging young people in education, employment or training (July 2010)

7. A summary of this report, as well as a full report, is available. However, it is the view of the Corporate Governance Group that the content of this report, which looks at the issue of young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), is the responsibility of the County Council and has not therefore been attached. If members should wish to view the content of the report it can be accessed using the following hyperlink:

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/localgov/againsttheodds/Pages/default.aspx>

Local government pensions in England: An information paper (July 2010)

8. As indicated in the title, this is an information paper and has no specific recommendations for action on the part of the Council. It is therefore not attached but should members wish to view the content of the report, it can be accessed using the following hyperlink:

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/localgov/localgovpensions/Pages/Default.aspx>

9. 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, and any possible actions or implications arising from the Audit Commission's national reports will be reported to the Committee. Relevant reports of the Audit Commission are also considered by the Corporate Executive Forum and Management Board as necessary.

Background Papers:

Audit Commission reports:

- A Review of Collaborative Procurement Across the Public Sector (May 2010)
- Against the odds: Re-engaging young people in education, employment or training (July 2010)
- Local government pensions in England: An information paper (July 2010)

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

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

Equality and Diversity:

The content of this report has no specific equality implications. However, the equality implications arising from any proposals for action in respect of areas for local authority improvement recommended by the Audit Commission would need to be considered if these were to be pursued by the Council.

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.