

2007-08 Review by Luton Borough Council's Chief Finance Officer on issues covered by statutory responsibilities.

The statutory responsibilities are set out in Article 12 of the Council's Articles of the Constitution. They are as follows.

1. Ensuring lawfulness and financial prudence of decision-making.
2. Administration of financial affairs.
3. Contributing to corporate management.
4. Providing advice.
5. Giving financial information.

The articles of the constitution also make clear the duty of the Council to provide sufficient resources to the Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer to allow those duties to be performed (Article 12.6).

In ensuring the lawfulness and financial prudence of decision-making, the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer work closely together. In 2007-08 there were no proposals, decisions or courses of action that seemed likely to involve unlawful expenditure, or was unlawful, or was likely to cause a loss or deficiency. Nor am I aware of any cases in which the Council was considering entering an item of account unlawfully.

In the administration of financial affairs, the Council continued its policy of monthly budget monitoring by all cost centre managers, with regular reporting of the overall predictions to corporate directors management team and Executive, in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, as amended. The external auditors assessment of the Council's Use of Resources, which includes financial arrangements, was good, and the corporate assessment confirmed that financial management was effective.

I have reviewed the annual report of the Head of Audit, and individual audit reports produced during the year. I consider that I can rely on the Head of Audit's conclusion that 'An 'adequate' level of assurance can be provided in connection with the Council's internal control environment. The Head of Audit was consulted as to whether areas highlighted in his report should have been included in the Annual Governance Statement.

My contribution to corporate management has been in the provision of professional financial advice throughout the year. I have also provided advice on the scope of powers and authority to take decisions, supporting members and officers as necessary. I have provided financial information via the Council's Communications Service to the media, to members of the public on request, and to the community as required.

The Council has provided me with sufficient resources, in terms of staff and equipment, in order to carry out my duties during 2007-08.

David Kempson

Head of Corporate Finance and chief finance officer, Luton Borough Council

1.6.07