Agenda Item

Report to:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**29 June 2004**
By:	**Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources**
Title of report:	**External Audit and Inspection Plans 2004-05**
Purpose of report:	**To seek Cabinet's approval of the External Audit and Inspection Plan for 2004-05**

RECOMMENDATION -

Cabinet is recommended to consider the External Audit and Inspection Plan for 2004-05 and consider whether the audit is of sufficient depth.

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 The proposed audit fee represents a reduction from previous years, in line with the Audit Commission's fee scales for 'good' authorities and is within existing budgets.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 Attached is the Audit and Inspection Plan for 2004/05 which has been drafted in close consultation with officers. The aim has been to produce an integrated plan, which supports the Council's aspirations for improvement and addresses key areas of risk. It has close links with the Internal Audit Strategy and Plan, the programme of Best Value Reviews planned for the next three years and the proposed work of the Scrutiny Committees.

2.2 Further discussions will take place with the relevant officers to agree the objectives and scope for those reviews being carried out in support of the Council's improvement agenda.

2.3 As well as dealing in detail with 2004/05, the Plan looks in outline at work in support of the Council's improvement agenda for 2005/06. This outline provides a useful pointer for the future. There will, of course, be opportunities to review and revise the proposals as the Council's priorities develop.

2.4 The Plan for 2004/05 will be subject to moderation by the Audit Commission once it has been agreed by Cabinet. It will then be published as part of a database of combined audit and inspection work for local authorities on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website.

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