

Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee - Major Review 2015/16 - Rates Retention and the Rating of Heathrow Airport

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REASON FOR ITEM

To be provided with further evidence from witnesses for the Committee's major review into Rates Retention and the Rating of Heathrow Airport.

OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE

- 1. The Committee is asked to consider the information provided to assist Members in their review.**
- 2. Members are asked to make further comment if necessary on the draft scoping report.**

INFORMATION

1. At the last meeting of the Committee held on 13 October 2015, Members were provided with information from Helen Zammit-Wilson and Mariam Razak from the Valuation Office Agency. Details of the evidence they gave is included in the minutes of the last meeting which is earlier on this agenda.
2. Also at the last meeting, **Raj Alagh, the Borough Solicitor** was in attendance and he provided Members with a briefing on the options available to the Council in relation to obtaining greater transparency regarding Business Rates at Heathrow Airport.
3. For this meeting, the Borough Solicitor will report back to the Committee on discussions which have taken place on the options available to the Council.
4. Also for Members information, the witnesses from the Valuation Office Agency at the Committee's last meeting undertook to consider undertaking an audit of the main Heathrow Airport assessment, to ensure that it was correct. Subsequent to the meeting they have informed the Council that they have now had opportunity to do this, and have confirmed that they have decided that an audit of the assessment is not necessary. The reason which was given for this, is that the officers were confident that the actions taken by VOA staff on their regular inspections of the property when undertaking a review of the assessment, were sufficient to ensure that all areas are correctly accounted for and assessed. Reference was made to maintaining close contact with the ratepayer who provided updates on the changes that occur.
5. Attached to this report as Appendix A is a draft scoping report which provides the Committee with the aims and objectives of the review. Member's comments are requested on this.

Appendices

