

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

1. Membership

Membership of the Audit and Governance Committee will consist of eleven Members of the Council proportional to the political composition of the Council.

2. Role

The role of the Audit and Governance Committee is to provide independent assurance to the Council and the Executive of the adequacy of the overall corporate governance and internal control environments including the associated approach to risk management, independent scrutiny of the authority's exposure to risk and weaknesses in the control environment, as well as to oversee the financial reporting process.

3. Functions

- 3.1 To consider the effectiveness of the authority's overall governance and control environment, risk management and anti-fraud and corruption arrangements.
- 3.2 Seek assurance that action is being taken on risk related issues identified by Internal and External Audit and Inspectors.
- 3.3 Approve the authority's annual Statement of Accounts.
- 3.4 Ensure that the authority's assurance statements, including the Statement on Internal Control, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions to improve it.
- 3.5 Approve (but not direct) the Internal Audit Strategy, Plan, and monitor the performance.
- 3.6 Receive reports of the Group Manager (Finance) on the performance of Internal Audit together with their key findings, seeking assurance that action has been taken where necessary.
- 3.7 Consider reports of External Audit and Inspection Agencies.
- 3.8 Ensure that there are effective relationships between External and Internal Audit, Inspection Agencies and other relevant bodies and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted.
- 3.9 Review the financial statements, External Auditor's opinion and reports to Members and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by External Audit.
- 3.10 To advise and direct issues as appropriate to the Council, the Executive, Overview and Scrutiny and the Standards Committee.
- 3.11 To review arrangements for Strategic Risk Management and monitor the key corporate risks.
- 3.12 To consider the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption arrangements.
- 3.13 To review the Council's Code of Corporate Governance and ensure it is kept up-to-date and reflects best practice.

- 3.14 To consider at its first meeting of each Municipal Year payments made to each member in the preceding financial year.
- 3.15 To consider at its first meeting of each Municipal Year attendance of each member of the Council at meetings of the Council, the Executive, committees and sub-committees during the preceding Municipal Year.
- 3.16 To agree the equality objectives of the Council.
- 3.17 To review and update future equality policies.
- 3.18 To monitor progress of the delivery of the actions within the corporate equality scheme on a regular basis.
- 3.19 To consider the Senior Pay Policy Statement and make recommendations to Full Council.

4. General

Members and Officers Giving Account

- 4.1 It shall be for each Group Manager to determine which Officers attend to provide advice to the Audit and Risk Committee subject to the Committee being able to supplement this as thought necessary through 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 below.
- 4.2 In considering matters within their remit, the Audit and Governance Committee may require any Member or any senior Officer to attend before it to explain matters within their remit and it is the duty of those persons to attend if so required.
- 4.3 Where any Member or Officer is required to attend a meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee under this provision, at least 10 working days notice of the meeting at which he/she is required to attend shall be given. The notice will state the nature of the item on which he/she is required to attend to give account and whether any papers are required to be produced for the Committee. Where the account to be given to the Committee will require the production of a report, then the Member or Officer concerned will be given sufficient notice to allow for preparation of that documentation.
- 4.4 Where in exceptional circumstances, the Member or Officer is unable to attend on the required date, then the Chairman of the Committee shall in consultation with the Member or Officer arrange an alternative date for attendance.
- 4.5 Refusal of an Officer to attend on request will be dealt with through the Disciplinary Process and by Members through the Code of Conduct.
- 4.6 The Audit and Governance Committee must report annually to Full Council on their work over the past year and make recommendations for future work programmes and proposals for amended working methods if appropriate.

