

Terms of Reference

8. Audit Committee

8.1 Membership

9 Members of the Council (to include not more than one Executive Councillor, who should not be the Leader) and one non-voting co-opted member.

At least 1 member should have financial expertise.

The Chairman shall not be an Executive Councillor.

Substitutes: Permitted in accordance with Standing Order 31
Proportionality: Applies

8.2 Quorum

As per Standing Order 38.1

8.3 Terms of Reference

8.3.1 The purpose of the Audit Committee is to:

- provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment;
- provide independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment; and
- oversee the financial reporting process.

8.3.2 The Audit Committee will maintain a work programme that is reviewed at least annually, agreed by Council and provide the outline audit agenda for each meeting in the annual cycle. It should demonstrate that the Audit Committee is receiving sufficient and appropriate information to discharge its responsibilities and ultimately recommend adoption of the Annual Governance Statement.

8.3.3 The work programme will cover:

- the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements, including the approval of the Council's annual Governance Statement;
- the adequacy of the Council's financial framework, including approval of the annual Statement of Account;
- the scrutiny of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and Policies;
- the performance and effectiveness of external and internal audit, including consideration of the respective annual reports;
- consideration of any inspection reports produced and whether reliance will be placed on work of any other committee in specialist areas; and
- the functions and effectiveness of the Audit Committee, including the production of its annual report.

8.3.4 The Committee will meet five times per year, with dates included in the Council Calendar. Further meetings can be arranged on an ad hoc basis as the Audit Committee deems appropriate.

8.3.5 The Head of Finance & Resources (S151 Officer), the Head of Internal Audit and the Council's External Auditors will be invited to attend every Audit Committee meeting. As well as reviewing documentation, the Audit Committee exercise the right to invite any other officers, Chairmen of other Committees or Cabinet Members to attend before it, as and when required. This would be to provide assurance in relation to the adequacy of the governance arrangements pertaining to their area of activity / responsibility.

It is the duty of those persons to attend if so required.

Where any member or officer is required to attend the Audit Committee under this provision, maximum notice will be given.

Where in exceptional circumstances, the Member or officer is unable to attend on the required date; an alternative date will be agreed with the Chairman.

8.4 Status of Meetings

Open to the public

8.5 Reports To

Council