

AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL - 20 JULY 2021

Council - 20 July 2021

Report of: Cllr McGarvey, Chair of the Audit Committee

Status: For Consideration

Introduction and Background

- 1 This is our report to the Council on the work of the Audit Committee since Council last met in April 2021.
- 2 The Audit Committee is responsible for discharging the functions conferred by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The key responsibilities include approving the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts, approving the Annual Governance Statement, approving the Annual Internal Audit Plan and monitoring and reviewing the work of Internal Audit, and reviewing the arrangements for the management of business risks.
- 3 In line with its Terms of Reference, the Audit Committee meets four times per year and has met once since the last report to Council. However, that meeting took place on 15 July which was after the report deadline for the Council meeting on 20 July.
- 4 As Chair of the Committee, I have continued to hold monthly briefings with Officers.
- 5 Details of the range of issues to be considered by the Committee on 15 July are set out below:

Internal Audit

Date of Meeting	Agenda Items
July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="584 1585 1337 1648">• Internal Audit Annual Report and Annual Opinion 2020/21

Governance, Risk & Anti-Fraud

Date of Meeting	Agenda Items
July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit Committee Terms of Reference• Counter Fraud and Compliance Report 2020/21• Review of the Effectiveness of the Audit Committee 2020/21• Consideration of recruitment of Independent Audit Committee Member(s)

Accounts and External Audit

Date of Meeting	Agenda Items
July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• External Audit - Housing Benefit Subsidy 2019/20• Annual Governance Statement 2020/21• Statement of Accounts 2020/21 - Establishment of Member Working Group

- 6 The Audit Committee maintains a constructive dialogue and effective working relationship with the Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton who attended on 15 July.
- 7 Training of Audit Committee Members is important to ensure that they can add value to the discussions at the Committee. A Member Development Plan has been agreed by the Committee including a training session on Counter-Fraud and Whistle Blowing which took place on 15 July.
- 8 It is my opinion that the work of the Committee has positive impact on the overall control environment within the Council and has developed good working relationships with officers and External Audit, and has offered constructive comments on a range of issues. The Committee continues to develop and improve its understanding of the many technical issues presented to it.
- 9 I thank all members of the Audit Committee for their personal contribution to the work of the Committee over the past year. I also thank Officers, in particular Adrian Rowbotham and Francesca Chivers, for the help and support they have given the Committee.

Cllr Philip McGarvey, Chairman, Audit Committee