

## **ARTICLE 17 – AUDIT COMMITTEE**

### **Membership**

1. Membership of the audit committee shall comprise 8 members appointed by council.
2. The chair of the committee shall be elected by council and the vice-chair shall be appointed by the committee.

### **Terms of reference**

3. The audit committee shall -
  - (a) undertake the council's financial responsibilities in the manner set out:
    - (i) in the council's audit committee procedure rules as produced from time to time by the chief finance officer; and
    - (ii) in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011;
  - (b) consider and approve the annual statement of accounts;
  - (c) ensure that the financial management of the council is adequate and effective;
  - (d) ensure that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk;
  - (e) review annually the council's system of internal control and agree an Annual Governance Statement for inclusion in the statement of accounts;
  - (f) ensure that the council has an adequate and effective internal audit function;
  - (g) have power to make recommendations to cabinet or council on any matter within its remit.

## **AUDIT COMMITTEE PROCEDURE RULES**

The audit committee will carry out its terms of reference in accordance with the following:

### ***Corporate governance***

1. Review the effectiveness of internal control across the council and the adequacy of actions taken to address any weaknesses or control failures.
2. Consider the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's arrangements for the identification and management of the organisation's business risks; including the risk management policy, strategy and risk register.
3. Receive and consider regular reports on the risk environment and associated management actions.
4. Review and ensure the adequacy of the council's anti-fraud and corruption policy and strategy and the effectiveness of their application.
5. Review and ensure that adequate arrangements are established and operating to deal with situations of suspected or actual fraud and corruption.
6. Review, consider and agree the AGS including the adequacy of the corporate governance framework and improvement action plan contained within it.
7. Receive periodic updates on improvement actions taken.

### ***Internal and external audit***

8. Approve the internal audit charter.
9. Approve and monitor delivery of the internal audit strategy.
10. Consider, endorse and monitor delivery of the internal audit annual work programme, including any significant in-year changes to the programme or resource requirements.
11. Ensure adequate resourcing of the internal audit function, approving any significant additional consulting services requested from internal audit not already included in the internal audit annual work programme.
12. Receive and consider the annual internal audit report and opinion on behalf of the council.
13. Oversee the annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit, to include the performance of the internal audit function, compliance with standards and delivery of improvement actions.
14. Contribute to the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place every five years.
15. Commission work from internal and external audit and consider the resulting reports.
16. Comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and ensure it gives value for money.
17. 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.
18. Seek assurance that action has been taken to implement the recommendations arising from the findings of significant audit and inspection work.

### ***Statement of accounts***

19. Discuss the annual audit plan for the audit of the financial statements with external audit.
20. Consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.
21. Review and approve the annual statement of accounts, including subsequent amendments on behalf of the council.

### ***Referred powers***

22. Consider and make recommendations on all matters described above.  
Recommendations relating to all paragraphs except 9 – 10 and 12 – 21 shall be made to the cabinet and chief finance officer. Recommendations relating to paragraphs 9 – 10 and 12 – 21 shall be made to the chief finance officer.

### ***Accountability arrangements***

23. Report to those charged with governance on the committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the effectiveness of their governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, financial reporting arrangements and internal and external audit functions.
24. Report to full council on the committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference and effectiveness of the committee in meeting its purpose.