

Article 9 – Audit and Governance Committee

9.01 Audit and Governance Committee

The Council will appoint an Audit and Governance Committee with a membership comprising one or more representative of each political group.

9.02 Composition

Audit and Governance Committee will meet on a quarterly basis and report directly to full Council. It will comprise 11 members, excluding Executive members and the chairmanship will be subject to local protocol.

9.03 Role and Function

The Audit and Governance Committee will have the following terms of reference:

1. To approve, but not direct, the Internal Audit Strategy and annual audit plan ensuring that appropriate risk assessments have been carried out when formulating the internal audit plan and to monitor performance against the plan
2. To review any revisions to the plan as advised by the Audit Manager and agreed by the Director Finance.
3. To review half yearly internal audit reports and the main issues arising and seek assurance from management that action has been taken, where necessary
4. To consider a report from Internal Audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale
5. To consider the Audit Manager's annual report and opinion, and a summary of internal audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance it can give over the Council's corporate governance arrangements
6. To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance
7. To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor
8. To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money
9. To commission work from internal and external audit

Regulatory Framework

10. To review any issue referred to it by the Chief Executive, senior management or any council body
11. To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance in the Council and agree necessary actions to ensure compliance with best practice
12. To review the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and to recommend its adoption
13. To consider the Council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls
14. To advise the City Council on the adoption of Codes of Conduct with the aim of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by members and officers and the subsequent monitoring and updating of the Codes.
15. To develop and adopt a Code of Practice on relations between members and officers.
16. To develop and monitor a Local Planning Code.
17. To ensure the provision of advice and training to members and officers on the above Codes of Conduct/Practice.
18. To hear and determine allegations of misconduct.
19. To be responsible for the Council's procedure for investigating and responding to complaints.
20. To give advice to Members on the declaration of interests.
21. To monitor the "Whistle blowing Policy" which meets the requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, to encourage employees to report suspected malpractice, fraud or crime by other staff, the public or organisations having dealings with the Council.
22. To monitor and review the Council's Anti-fraud, Anti-bribery and Anti-corruption Strategy
23. To monitor the Council's constitution and, having regard to any report of the Monitoring Officer, to make appropriate recommendations where necessary.

Accounts

24. To approve and adopt the Council's Statement of Accounts, income, expenditure and balance sheet or record of receipts and payments.

25. To consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.
26. To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts