

Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Lesley McKay, Chairman of the Audit Committee	Council	20 April 2023

Audit Committee: Periodic Report

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** The periodic consideration of the current position on issues being dealt with by the Audit Committee.

2. Audit Committee Meetings

- 2.1** Since the last periodic report, which was discussed at the Council meeting on 14 April 2022, the Audit Committee has met a further four times. The meeting on the 26 July 2022 was cancelled. A link to the website for further details on the reports and minutes is included here:

<https://wyre.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteId=149>

- 2.2** In summary, the following issues and reports have been considered by the Committee:

At the 14 June 2022 meeting:

- Audit Committee Effectiveness
- Annual Internal Audit Report 2022
- Draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22
- Statement of Accounts (pre-audit training)
- Audit Progress 2020-21 and 2021-22
- External Audit Annual Scale Fee 2021/22 and 2022/23

At the 27 September 2022 meeting:

- Compliance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)
- Annual Review of the Council's Risk Management Policy
- Statement of Accounts (pre-audit) 2021/22
- Exclusion of the public and press
- Draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 – update
- Periodic private discussion with External Audit

At the 15 November 2022 meeting:

- Internal Audit and Risk Management – Progress Report
- Annual Review of Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules
- Annual Review of the Council's Counter Fraud Policies
- Annual Review of the Council's Information Governance Policies and Procedures
- Annual Review of the Audit Committee's Performance
- Appointment of the Council's External Auditors from 2023/24
- Statement of Accounts (pre-audit) 2021/22

At the 28 February 2023 meeting:

- Annual Review of Audit Committee's Terms of Reference
- Internal Audit Strategy and Audit Plan Priorities 2023/24
- Annual Review of the Internal Audit Charter
- Status of 2020/21 and 2021/22 Statement of Accounts
- Auditor Appointment from 1 April 2023
- Site Inspections – Audit follow up
- Periodic Private Discussion with the Chief Internal Auditor

The next meeting is scheduled for the 20 June 2023.

3. Key Activities

- 3.1** The three main documents considered by the Audit Committee annually are the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), the Statement of Accounts (SOA) and the Report to those charged with Governance (ISA 260). With the exception of the AGS which was considered and agreed in line with statutory deadlines for both 2020/21 and 2021/22, at the time of writing this report, the Committee have still to approve the final SOA and ISA 260 for both 2020/21 and 2021/22. Delays are primarily owing to a lack of capacity and experienced auditors on the part of the External Auditors. However this has been further exacerbated by changes introduced centrally to how local authorities account for their infrastructure assets.
- 3.2** At the meeting held on 28 February 2023, the external auditors reported that the audit of the 2020/21 and 2021/22 SOA had both still to be finalised. Every effort was being made by them to complete the 2020/21 audit by the end of March 2023 and the 2021/22 audit by Summer 2023.
- 3.3** With regard to the draft AGS for 2020/21 and 2021/22, there were no significant governance issues which needed to be identified in the SOA. However, the AGS for 2021/22 did make reference to internal controls not being followed in relation to a contract procurement and that steps were being taken to resolve the matter. It is expected that the draft AGS for 2022/23 will include further details in relation to this.

4. Attendance

4.1 The table below shows the overall percentage of attendance at the four audit committee meetings referred to in paragraph 2.2.

NAME	TOTAL EXPECTED ATTENDANCE	APOLOGIES INCLUDING ABSENCES	PRESENT	%
A Turner	4	1	3	75
C Baxter	1	0	1	100
C Fairbanks	4	3	1	25
E Webster	4	3	1	25
E Ellison	3	3	0	0
J Ibison	4	0	4	100
J Leech	4	2	2	50
K Minto	4	3	1	25
L McKay	4	0	4	100
L Walmsley	3	2	1	33
M Stirzaker	4	4	0	0
P Longton	4	2	2	50
P Moon	4	1	3	75
R George	4	4	0	0
R Rendell	1	0	1	100
T Ingham	4	0	4	100

5. Comments and Questions

5.1 In accordance with Procedure Rule 13.4, any Member of Council will be able to ask a question or make a comment on the contents of this report or any issue, which falls within the Audit Committee's area of responsibility. In accordance with Procedure Rule 13.6 any such comments or questions will be answered accordingly.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	None arising directly from the report.
Legal	None arising directly from the report.

Other risks / implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x

equality and diversity	x
sustainability	x
health and safety	x

climate change	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
Joanne Billington	01253 887372	Joanne.billington@wyre.gov.uk	22 March 2023

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

None