

AUDIT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

MONDAY, 28 APRIL 2025

Present:-

Cllr. Mike Shirley (Chairman)
Cllr. Mark Jackson (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr. Richard Holdridge

Cllr. Dillan Shikotra

Cllr. Roger Stead

Officers present:-

Sarah Pennelli	- Executive Director - S.151 Officer
Katie Hollis	- Finance Group Manager
Sharon Evans	- Council Tax and Benefits Service Manager
Kerry Beavis	- Shared Service Audit Manager
Diane Kennington	- Internal Audit Assistant
Bethany Hinks	- Azets External Auditor
Chris Brown	- Azets External Auditor
Nicole Cramp	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer
Avisa Birchenough	- Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer

Apologies:-

Cllr. Lee Breckon

284. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures were received.

285. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February, as circulated, were approved and signed as a correct record.

286. GRANT CERTIFICATION 2021/22

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager

DECISION

That the Grant Certification Report be approved.

Reason:

The Audit and Corporate Governance Committee should be made aware of the contents of any reports from the external auditors.

287. ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT 2023/24

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager

DECISION

That the Annual Audit Report be acknowledged and approved.

Reason:

The Audit and Corporate Governance Committee should be made aware of the contents of any reports from the external auditors.

288. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLANNING REPORT 2024/25

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager

DECISIONS

1. That Azets Audit Planning Report for 2024/25 be approved.
2. That the Committee grants delegated authority to the Executive Director (Section 151) in consultation with the Chair of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee for any minor amendments to be made to the plan if required.

Reason:

The Audit Planning Report sets out the proposed audit approach and the scope of the work to be carried out by Azets, and their fees for undertaking that work.

289. ACCOUNTING POLICIES 2024/2025

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager

Cllr. Mike Shirley queried future financial forecasting given the implications of Local Government Reorganisation. Will the MTFS forecast for the period of 2029/30 no longer be relevant?

The Finance Group Manager responded advising that Officers are considering the implications of LGR to assist with financial forecasts.

DECISION

That the accounting policies set out in Appendix A be approved.

Reasons:

1. The Council should select appropriate accounting policies to be applied in the preparation and presentation of its annual Statement of Accounts.
2. It is considered good practice for the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee to review and comment upon the proposed accounting policies to be used in the preparation of the Council's annual accounts.

290. 2025-26 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN

Considered – Report of the Shared Service Audit Manager

DECISIONS

1. That the Audit Committee notes this report and comments as appropriate.
2. That the 2025/26 Internal Audit Annual Audit Plan be approved.

Reason:

To comply with the Global Internal Audit Standards and the CIPFA.
Application Note: Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector.

291. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 2024-25

Considered – Report of the Shared Service Audit Manager

DECISIONS

1. That the report be approved in advance of it being presented to Council.
2. That the report is presented at Council to be noted.

Reason:

To ensure compliance with the CIPFA Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022

292. INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER

Considered – Report of the Shared Service Audit Manager

DECISION

That the Internal Audit Charter report be approved.

Reason:

One of the core functions of the Committee, as defined within its terms of reference, is to approve the Internal Audit Charter which includes the internal audit mandate and the scope and types of internal audit services (an essential condition of the Global Internal Audit Standards).

293. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2024/25 Q4

Considered – Report of the Shared Service Audit Manager

DECISION

That the Internal Audit progress report be noted.

Reason:

To keep the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee informed of progress and recent Internal Audit findings and recommendations, in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards requirements.

294. INTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY

Considered – Report of the Shared Service Audit Manager

DECISION

That the Internal Audit Strategy 2025/26 – 2027/28 be approved.

Reasons:

1. It is a requirement of the Global Internal Audit Standards for the Chief Audit Executive to develop and implement a strategy for the internal audit function that supports the strategic priorities and success of the organisation and aligns with the expectations of the board, senior management, and other key stakeholders.
2. Within its terms of reference, the Audit Committee has a clear role in relation to oversight of the Council's Internal Audit service.

295. AUDIT & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members accepted the items on the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee Work Programme

DECISION

That the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee Work Programme be noted.

Reason:

It is appropriate that the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee set the Work Programme for the year.

296. RISK MANAGEMENT QUARTER 4 2024/25

Considered – Report of the Council Tax Income & Debt Manager

DECISION

That the latest information in respect of the Council's major corporate risks be accepted.

Reason:

The overview of the Council's risk management processes is a key responsibility of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee. It is important that members are aware of the corporate risks and their potential impact on Council business, and that they review the control measures in place to mitigate risks.

297. EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

Considered – A proposed resolution to exclude the public from the meeting.

DECISION

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that the item involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

Exemption Category: 3

Reason for Exemption: Appendix B of the Risk Management Q4 2024/25 report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

298. RISK MANAGEMENT QUARTER 4 2024/25 - APPENDIX B

Considered – Report of the Council Tax Income & Debt Manager, presented by the Finance Group Manager.

Members considered Appendix B of the Risk Management Quarter 4 2024/25 report in closed session. Members approved the Risk Management Report Quarter 4 2024/25 as set out at agenda item 14.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6.35 P.M.