

Audit Committee

26th July 2021



Report of: Chair of the Audit Committee

Title: Audit Committee Annual Report to Full Council – Draft Report

Ward: N/A

Officer Presenting Report: Chief Internal Auditor

Recommendation

The Committee Members consider and approve the Audit Committee's Draft Annual Report to Council for 2020/21.

Summary

The report provides a summary of the work of the Committee during 2020/21 and its conclusions following oversight of the assurance, governance and risk management frameworks within which the Council operates.

The significant issues in the report are:

The key issues covered in the report relate to the following:

- the Audit Committee's Terms of reference and the requirement to provide Full Council with an Annual report.
- Key messages for Full Council from the work of the Committee in 2020/21.
- Notes to pass on to the Audit Committee taking forward the role in 2021/22.



Policy

The Audit Committee's Terms of Reference are determined by Full Council. The City Council has a duty to ensure adequate and effective risk management, internal control and governance arrangements and the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of its activities. The Audit Committee has a key role in assessing the extent to which this responsibility is being met and advising the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

Consultation

1. **Internal**
Audit Committee Members
2. **External**
N/A

Context

3. The Committee's Terms of Reference include a requirement to provide full Council with an Annual Report summarising its conclusions from the work it has undertaken during the year. Acknowledging the current Audit Committee Councillor membership are all new to the Committee, on this occasion, officers have drafted the report on behalf of the Committee. The report is provided at Appendix A.

Proposal

4. Committee members review the Annual Report to Full Council and approve it for submission to Full Council, subject to any amendments required identified at the Committee meeting. The Committee will need to rely on its independent members to ensure all key messages from the committee's work during 2020/21 are included.

Other Options Considered

5. None

Risk Assessment

6. The assurances provided to the Council by the Audit Committee are an important element of the Council's governance arrangements.

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 7a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following "protected characteristics": age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:

- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.

7(b) No Equality Impact anticipated from this report.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal – N/A
Financial – N/A
Land – N/A
Personnel – N/A

Appendices:

Appendix A – Audit Committee Report to Full Council 2020/21(draft)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

Audit Committee papers throughout 2020/21.

CIPFA Guidance on Audit Committee Effectiveness 2018