

# GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 13 MARCH 2023

Present: Councillor I L Tyler, Chair

Councillors: P Lally (Vice-Chair)  
M Brown  
S Dannheimer  
J M Owen  
P J Owen  
J C Patrick  
P Roberts-Thomson  
R S Robinson  
P D Simpson  
T A Cullen (Substitute)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Hannah, H Land and J P T Parker.

38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

39 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

40 AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2021/22 AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

Members were given an update from the Council's external auditors following their work on the accounts. Mazars had stated that they anticipated issuing an unqualified opinion, without modification on the financial statements. The external auditors anticipated having no significant weaknesses in arrangements to report in relation to the arrangements that the Council had in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Members queried the internal control recommendations and was assured that no fraud had taken place with journal entries, asset valuations in the accounts and declarations not provided by Council Members. The Committee acknowledged for all the recommendations highlighted, improvements had been identified and would be actioned.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1. The updated Statement of Accounts 2021/22 and letter of representation as circulated be approved.**

- 2. Delegation be given to the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, to approve any further changes required to the Statement of accounts 2021/22.**

41 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/23 - ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Committee was provided with an update to the Council's accounting policies in relation to the production of the 2022/23 financial statements. The policies would be applied to the treatment of all transactions that made up the Statement of Accounts. The 2022/23 Code introduced amendments that did not impact on any of the Council's Policies, these included IAS16 Property, Plant and Equipment and Annual Improvements to IFRS Standards.

**RESOLVED that the Accounting Polices for 2022/23 be approved.**

42 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/23 - UNDERLYING PENSION ASSUMPTIONS

Members noted the assumptions to be used in the calculation of pension figures for 2022/23.

43 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2023 - 24

Members welcomed the Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24. The audit report at completion of each assignment provided recommendations, if required for improvement and provided crucial and independent assurance to management and members over the key aspects of the Council's governance, risk management and internal control arrangements.

An explanation was provided to the Committee that the 40 days committed to corporate counter fraud activities was similar to previous years and that the Council would be participating in the National Fraud Initiative that was conducted every two years.

**RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24 be approved.**

44 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee noted the appendices of the report. Concern had been raised with some of the outstanding actions and revised target dates. Members suggested that the Heads of Service, relevant to the audit should be invited to Committee if the target date had exceeded six months or more to explain the reason of the delay.

45 REVIEW OF STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Members reviewed the amendments to the Strategic Risk Register and the action plans identified to mitigate risks. Some queries were raised with residual risks from the

failure of strategic leisure centre initiatives, failure to obtain adequate resources to achieve service objectives and the inability to recruit and retain staff. An explanation was provided that controls and mitigating measures were in place and the residual risks had improved. Clarification would be provided with the data provided within appendix 3 of the report.

**RESOLVED that the amendments to the Strategic Risk Register and the actions to mitigate risks as set out be approved.**

46 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme.

**RESOLVED that the Work Programme be approved.**