

GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 19 MAY 2025

Present: Councillor S J Carr, Chair

Councillors: K Woodhead (Vice-Chair)
M Brown
A Cooper
S Dannheimer
K A Harlow
G S Hills
S P Jeremiah
A Kingdon
J M Owen
E Winfield

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Bullock and W Mee.

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2025 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3 AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

The Committee noted the Audit Strategy Memorandum for the 2024/25 audit of accounts and were informed of the progress made by the Council's appointed external auditors, Forvis Mazars. It was stated that the objective was to fully deliver the Audit for the year in accordance with the plan contained within the document.

4 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Members were informed of action taken to develop and comply with statutory obligations regarding corporate governance and noted compliance with the Code on Delivering Good Governance to make any further amendments deemed necessary.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 required Authorities to conduct a review, at least once in each financial year, of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and this statement would be included within the statement of accounts.

Local Authorities were under a statutory obligation to follow the published approach using the CIPFA/SOLACE document, Delivering Good Governance in Local

Government Framework. There were seven core principles to follow. A summary of how the Council met each of the seven core principles, including evidence, and where improvement action or steps had been taken in 2024/25 was provided.

It was agreed to include the group leaders should be consulted in addition to the Chair of the Committee if any amendments to the document were necessary.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The Annual Governance Statement be approved in principle for inclusion in the Council's Statement of Accounts.**
- 2. Responsibility be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and the group leaders, to make any further amendments as necessary.**

5 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee was informed of the recent work completed by Internal Audit and noted the appendices within the report. Reassurance was sought with regards to stocktakes at the Depot Stores and the risks around fraud.

6 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the work programme.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be approved.