

GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 18 MAY 2026

Present: Councillor S J Carr, Chair

Councillors: M Brown
A Cooper
J Couch
S Dannheimer
K A Harlow
S P Jeremiah
A Kingdon
J M Owen
E Winfield

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Bullock, C Carr and S Webb.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2026 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4 AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

The Committee noted the Audit Strategy Memorandum for the 2025/26 and was informed of the progress made by the Council's appointed external auditors, Forvis Mazars. The audit plan provided details which related to the auditors' engagement and responsibilities, the engagement team, the scope of the audit, approach and timeline, significant risks and other key judgement areas, materiality and misstatements, value for money arrangements, audit fees and confirmation of the auditors' independence. Representatives from Forvis Mazars addressed the meeting.

5 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Members considered the Annual Governance Statement for its inclusion in the Council's published Statement of Accounts for 2025/26 and noted the compliance with the Code on Delivering Good Governance in Local Government.

A number of points were raised including the application of the Council's AI Policy, the monitoring of fly-tipping through CCTV, and the Council's involvement in the Local

Government Reorganisation process. Further discussion ensued regarding work undertaken in response to the Housing Regulator's Inspection report and the role to be undertaken by the Governance, Audit and Standards Committee in scrutinising progress against actions.

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.**

6 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee noted the recent work completed by internal audit. Reassurance was sought with regards to the proposed audit for Commercial Property Income.

7 WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered additions to the Work Programme to include updates on progress against the work following the Housing Regulator's inspection and requested that the Constitution Task and Finish Group be reconvened to consider the subjects of ex-officio members, Advisory Shareholder Sub-Committee meetings and the voting process for Constitutional change.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme, as amended, be approved.