

Audit and Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 28th May 2020

Report Title: Audit and Governance Committee Self-Assessment – Action Plan

Senior Officer: Jane Burns, Executive Director of Corporate Services

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. At the March 2020 meeting, Members considered the results of an initial self-assessment of the effectiveness of the Audit and Governance Committee carried out by the Chair and Vice Chair using the CIPFA “*Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (2018 Edition)*.”
- 1.2. The actions identified by the Committee in their consideration of the self-assessment are outlined in Appendix 1.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members are asked to consider and endorse the action plan included in Appendix 1.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1. A good standard of performance against recommended practice, together with a knowledgeable and experienced membership, are essential requirements for the Audit and Governance Committee to be effective.
- 3.2. Regular self-assessments against best practice, as outlined in the CIPFA “*Audit Committees Practical Guidance for Local Authorities (2018)*” can be used to support the planning of the Committee’s work programme, training plans and inform the annual report. The self-assessment forms part of the review of the system of internal control as required by Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and which supports the production of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

- 3.3. The adoption and monitoring of an action plan will enable the Committee to track the implementation of agreed actions and evaluate their impact on the effectiveness of the Committee.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. Not applicable

5. Background

- 5.1. The plan in Appendix 1 includes the various actions identified by the Committee, including suggested timescales and anticipated benefits.
- 5.2. A number of the actions identified around training and development will need to be carefully considered in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The impact of social distancing continuing for a longer timescale will mean the use of e-learning and virtual training sessions rather than face to face sessions being scheduled.
- 5.3. Progress against the plan will be reported regularly to the Committee, and form part of the Committee's annual report to Council.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal Implications

- 6.1.1. The self-assessment forms part of the review of the system of internal control as required by Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 which supports the production of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

6.2. Finance Implications

- 6.2.1. Any actions identified from the Audit and Governance Committee self-assessment will be resourced from existing capacity and budgets. There are no implications for the Council's medium-term financial strategy.

6.3. Policy Implications

- 6.3.1. There are no direct implications for policy.

6.4. Equality Implications

- 6.4.1. There are no direct implications for equality matters.

6.5. Human Resources Implications

- 6.5.1. There are no direct implications for Human Resources

6.6. Risk Management Implications

6.6.1. The process of self-assessment, the discussion of it by the Audit and Governance Committee and the actions arising from this process are vital in reviewing the effectiveness of the Audit and Governance Committee and contributing to the continuing improvement of the Council's assurance mechanisms.

6.7. Rural Communities Implications

6.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

6.8. Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

6.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people.

6.9. Public Health Implications

6.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

6.10. Climate Change Implications

6.10.1. There are no direct implications for climate change.

7. Ward Members Affected

7.1. All wards are affected.

8. Consultation & Engagement

8.1. Audit and Governance Committee received the self-assessment report at their meeting in May 2020.

9. Access to Information

9.1. The action plan is available as Appendix A to this report.

10. Contact Information

10.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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