

Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee 2020/21

DRAFT
(May 2020 - April 2021)

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Foreword by the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee

As Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee for the year in review, I am pleased to present this detailed report on the work of the Committee over 2020/2021.

The report informs full Council of the broad range of work which has been considered over the year to support the Committee in fulfilling its Terms of Reference and provides assurance on the effectiveness of the Committee in meeting its purpose.

I hope that this report helps to demonstrate the key role which is undertaken by the Audit and Governance Committee and the positive contribution it makes to the Council's overall governance.

The Committee's Terms of Reference were developed in accordance with the CIPFA guidance, and the detailed Committee Work Programme designed to ensure that they are fulfilled is subject to review at each meeting of the Committee.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the Committee meetings over the last year, supporting the Committee's work with varied reports and presentations, which are the culmination of much more preparation and work undertaken 'behind the scenes'.

As everyone is aware, 2020/21 provided a unique challenge to everyone in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated lockdown restrictions. This included holding meetings remotely and I am pleased to report that the arrangements that were put in place to facilitate this, were successful and ensured that the Committee was able to continue to operate effectively and fulfil its terms of reference. I would like to thank officers for the support that they provided to both myself and the rest of the Committee during this difficult period.

My tenure as Chair of Audit and Governance Committee ended at the March 2021 meeting and I am certain that the current Chair, Councillor Margaret Simon, and the rest of the Committee, will continue to successfully provide independent assurance on the Council's control environment and the governance framework.



Councillor Rod Fletcher

Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee 2020-21

November 2021

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1. Introduction to the Audit and Governance Committee

Governance is defined in the “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework” (CIPFA/SOLACE 2016) as follows

Governance comprises the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.

To deliver good governance in the public sector, both governing bodies and individuals working for public sector entities must try to achieve their entity’s objectives while acting in the public interest at all times.

Audit Committees are therefore an essential element of good governance. Good corporate governance requires independent, effective assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting and annual governance processes.

These functions are best delivered by an Audit Committee independent from the decision making and scrutiny functions.

Effective Audit Committees help raise the profile of internal control, risk management and financial reporting issues within an organisation, as well as providing a forum for the discussion of issues raised by internal and external auditors. They enhance public trust and confidence in the financial governance of an authority.

2. Audit and Governance Committee - Statement of Purpose

The Audit and Governance Committee is a key component of the Council’s corporate governance. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

It provides an independent assurance to the Council of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment.

It provides independent review of the Council’s governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes.

It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

It promotes high standards of ethical behaviour by developing, maintaining and monitoring performance and Codes of Conduct for Members of the Council (including co-opted Members and other persons acting in a similar capacity).

The Audit & Governance Committee has delegated responsibilities from Council. This report provides details of how the Committee has discharged those responsibilities and delivered against its terms of reference which can be found in the Council's [Constitution](#).

Meetings of the Audit & Governance Committee were held on the following dates during 2020/21:

- 28th May 2020
- 30th July 2020
- 24th September 2020
- 11th November 2020
- 28th January 2021
- 11th March 2021

More information on the Audit & Governance Committee Meetings, including agendas, minutes and attendance details is available [here](#).

3. Governance, Risk and Control within Cheshire East Council

Reports have been received by the Audit and Governance Committee in the following areas, providing assurance and updates on the Council's governance, risk and control framework over the past year.

Internal Audit

Meeting	Reports received
30 July 2020	Internal Audit Annual Report 2019/20
24 September 2020	Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Plan 2020/21 – Progress Update
28 January 2021	Internal Audit Update – April 2020 to December 2020
11 March 2021	Internal Audit Plan 2021/22

External Audit

Meeting:	Reports received:
28 May 2020	External Audit Update Report
30 July 2020	External Audit Update Report
24 September 2020	External Audit Update Report
11 November 2020	External Audit Findings and Action Plan 2019/20
11 March 2021	External Audit Update and Annual Audit Letter 2019/20 Certification of Claims and Returns 2019/20

Risk Management

Meeting:	Reports received:
24 September 2020	Annual Risk Management Report 2019/20
11 November 2020	Strategic Risk Register 2020/21 Update (Q2)
11 March 2021	Strategic Risk Register 2020/21 Update (Q3)

Corporate Governance & Annual Governance Statement (AGS)

Meeting:	Reports received:
30 July 2020	Annual Monitoring Officer Report 2019/20
11 November 2020	Annual Governance Statement 2019/20
11 March 2021	Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 - Progress Update Member Code of Conduct: Standards Report

Accounts, Financial Statements & Treasury Management

Meeting:	Reports received:
28 May 2020	Treasury Management Update (implications of Covid-19 government funding)
30 July 2020	Draft Pre-Audit Statement of Accounts 2019/20
24 September 2020	Treasury Management Annual Report 2019/20
11 November 2020	Statement of Accounts 2019/20 Draft Treasury Management Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2021/22

Information Governance

Meeting:	Reports received:
30 th July 2020	Annual Information Governance Update 2019/20

Significant assurances the Committee has received during the year include:

- **2019/20 Internal Audit opinion:**
This was presented to the 30 July 2020 meeting.
- **2019/20 Financial Statements Opinion (External Audit):**
This was presented to the 11 November 2020 meeting.
- **Audit Review of Procurement Controls**
This was presented to the 28 January 2021 meeting.

4. Effectiveness of the Committee

The Committee regularly undertakes a formal review of its own effectiveness. The 2020/21 self-assessment was carried out against the CIPFA guidance, Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2018 via an online survey and through discussion with the Chair and Vice Chair.

The self-assessment results were reported to Committee in May 2020, along with a plan setting out development actions. A key action for the Committee during the year was to respond to the Corporate Peer Challenge recommendation regarding the size and membership of the committee.

“The Audit and Governance Committee of the Council has made improvements in recent years with much more effective challenge being provided through this committee.” There is currently one ‘independent person’ on the Committee who is not a member of the council and can therefore help to provide independent challenge. However, the size and membership of the committee may benefit from review to ensure the committee can operate effectively and provide sufficient challenge across all areas of responsibility, including on financial matters

The Committee agreed to establish a working group to consider its composition and structure at their meeting in November 2020, prior to the current co-opted independent member completing his term in March 2021 and prior to the move to the new Committee structure in May 2021.

Further reports were received in January and March 2021 which recommended the Committee should be reduced to 9 elected members and 2 co-opted independent members.

To minimise conflicts of interest arising as the Council moved to a committee system of decision making, it was also recommended that membership should not include the Leader and Deputy of the Council, Chairs or Vice Chairs of the

Services Committee and that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee should not sit on a services Committee.

A draft Terms of Reference (ToR) was presented, and both the composition and ToR were approved by Committee in March 2021 and recommended to full Council.

The Committee has continued to provide challenge and feedback to the reports received.

5. Additional Assurance

Additional assurance work requested by the Committee has been provided around emerging issues including:

Covid-19 Updates on Response, Recovery and Financial Impact

Updates on the financial impact of Covid-19 and the response and recovery effort were reported to Committee on a regular basis, highlighting the Council's ongoing actions to address the pandemic response and consideration of future developments.

The report to Committee in July 2020 set out the changes to the Council's normal financial arrangements and provided a summary of the methodology used to date on projecting the full year's implications of the Covid-19 response on the Council's finances. It also provided a summary of the main financial implications to date and the financial support received from government. Discussions highlighted that Corporate Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet, at their September meetings, were scheduled to receive the latest information and data of the effects of Covid-19 on the Council's finances.

In addition, a report providing a summary of the volume and amount paid in support of businesses, lessons learned through the administration of the scheme and any issues identified through fraud during the period February 2020 to October 2020 was provided to Committee in January 2021. The report set out details of the grants issued for three schemes announced in February 2020 which provided support to small business and businesses within the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors.

Ombudsman complaints and lessons learnt

The Committee received update reports at each meeting detailing the decision notices received by the Council from the Local Government Ombudsman and

Social Care Ombudsman. The detailed reports provided the Committee with information on those decision notices which concluded that there had been maladministration causing injustice.

It is noted that on 26th March 2020, the Ombudsman took the decision to suspend all casework activity that demands information from, or action by, any local authority. Councils were expected to respond appropriately to any complaints received during this time and to direct complaints to the Ombudsman service upon completion of the Council's complaints procedure. However, following a national consultation the Ombudsman decided to restart their casework from 21 May 2020, although limited only to the cases they were already considering prior to their shutdown.

Reporting of all WARNs's (Waiver and Record of Non-adherence)

The Audit and Governance Committee has a key role in overseeing governance arrangements and requirement to review all approved WARNs. The WARN process forms part of the Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's) which are intended to promote good procurement and commissioning practice, transparency and clear public accountability.

Since June 2016, summary information on the number and reasons for WARN's has been provided to the Committee as a standard part one agenda item, with the details being considered as part two, following exclusion of press and public from the meeting pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

Following the outbreak of COVID-19, the Cabinet Office issued a number of Procurement Policy Notes, setting out the following information and guidance:

- Procurement of goods, services and works with extreme urgency and permitted authorities to do so using regulation 32(2)(c) under the Public Contract Regulations 2015
- Payment of their suppliers to ensure service continuity during and after the current COVID-19 outbreak, stating that contracting authorities must act quickly to ensure suppliers at risk were able to resume normal contract delivery once the outbreak was over.
- Use of procurement cards, with the aim to accelerate payments to suppliers to support and improve cash flow.

The Committee noted that the number of waivers being reported had increased due to Covid-19.

Member's Code of Conduct

The Committee received an update report in March 2021 relating to the Member's Code of Conduct. The report detailed the number of complaints made against Cheshire East Councillors and Town and Parish Councillors; the paragraph of the Code alleged to have been breached and the outcome of each complaint, where completed. This information is provided to support the Committee's role in monitoring and maintaining high ethical standards within the authority.

Counter Fraud Update

Counter Fraud updates were included in the updates against the Internal Audit plan. In September 2020 a detailed report was provided highlighting that the Internal Audit resource has been diverted to support the wider organisation in responding to Covid-19 and to ensure that Internal Audit continues to provide value and support in the achievement of the Council's objectives.

A breakdown of the consultancy and non-assurance work provided identified that this included advice and guidance when implementing new processes to ensure that fraud risks were addressed and the undertaking of relevant pre- and/or post-payment checks on Covid-19 grants to ensure that the risk of fraudulent claims was minimised and to identify and reclaim monies paid outside of the eligibility criteria.

6. Members of the Committee

Members of the Committee during 2020/21 are set out in **Appendix 2**.

The Audit and Governance Committee has been supported by officers providing reports in accordance with the Committee's work programme and at the request of the Committee.

The Committee has routinely been attended by the Executive Director Corporate Services, Director of Governance and Compliance, the Director of Financial and Customer Services and Head of Audit and Risk.

7. Statutory Requirements, New Guidance and Recommended Practice

During the year, the Committee has carried out statutory requirements including approving the Financial Statements and the Annual Governance Statement.

Committee members were provided with a copy of the Committee's Terms of Reference in advance of the May 2020 meeting.

The Committee has received updates on changes to relevant legislation, particularly in relation to Covid-19.

8. Training and Development

The following training was carried out during the 2020/21 year:

- Annual Governance Statement & Role of the Audit Committee
- Approving the Financial Statements
- Treasury Management

The training has been recorded and made available to all Councillors to improve understanding of the role of this Committee.

Where needed, induction briefings for new and deputising Members of the Committee have been provided. In addition, Members have access to copies of the CIPFA Better Governance Forum *Audit Committee Update* featuring a round-up of legislation, reports and developments of interest to Audit & Governance Committee Members.

9. Work programme for 2021/22

The Committee has an agreed work programme for 2021/22, which includes the annual statutory requirements (e.g. approval of the Statement of Accounts, approval of the AGS etc.) of the Committee and also those regular reports and assurances it receives on External Audit, Internal Audit, Risk Management, Treasury Management and other areas.

The forward looking work programme ensures comprehensive coverage of the Committee's responsibilities and in addition to this, the Committee will:

- Continue to develop the proactive nature of the Committee to facilitate actions by officers to ensure that risks are identified as early as possible and remedial actions are taken in a timely fashion;

- Oversee any development required of the Audit and Governance Committee work programme to comply with the requirements of the CIPFA Audit Committees guidance;
- Continue to review governance arrangements to ensure the Council adopts the latest best practice and continues to be an open and transparent public organisation;
- Continue to support the work of internal and external audit and ensure that responses are given to their recommendations;
- Receive assurance on compliance with best practice such as the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit;
- Continue to support the Council in managing the risk of fraud and corruption;
- Continue to develop the Audit and Governance Committee to review risk and partnership issues and safeguarding of public sector assets;
- Equip existing and new Members to fulfil their responsibilities by providing more detailed and focused training on all key areas of responsibility, including financial arrangements and risk management, governance and audit planning; and
- Continue to ensure that arrangements and ways of working introduced in light of the Covid-19 pandemic are subject to effective governance arrangements and robust systems of internal control.

How the Audit and Governance Committee's Terms of Reference were met during 2020/21:

Terms of Reference of Committee	Relevant activity in 2020/21
Governance, Risk and Control	
To review the Council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework and consider annual governance reports and assurances.	<p>The Committee approved the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement in November 2020.</p> <p>The Committee received an Annual Governance Statement progress report in March 2021.</p> <p>The Annual Monitoring Officer's Report 2019/20 and the Annual Information Governance Update 2019/20 were received and approved in July 2020.</p>
To review and approve the Annual Governance Statement and consider whether it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances, taking into account internal audit's opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the council's framework of governance, risk management and control.	<p>The Committee received the final 219/20 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) in November 2020.</p> <p>In addition, an update report was received in March 2021.</p>
To consider the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and to review and scrutinise assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.	<p>The Committee received regular reports on the quantity and reasons for Waivers and Non-Adherences approved since the last Committee.</p> <p>Committee received a report relating to the operational procurement and contract award arrangements in January 2021.</p>
To consider the Council's framework of assurance and ensure that it adequately addresses the risks and priorities of the council.	<p>The Committee received a variety of reports during the year addressing this aspect;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updates on Strategic Risks

Terms of Reference of Committee	Relevant activity in 2020/21
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal Audit reports and plan updates - Annual Governance Statement; draft, final and progress updates - Information Assurance updates - LGO Complaints and lessons learned.
To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the council.	The Committee received update reports on Risk Management in September 2020 and March 2021.
To monitor progress in addressing risk related issues reported to the committee and to review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the Council from fraud and corruption. To monitor the counter fraud strategy, actions and resources.	The Committee monitors Anti-Fraud and Corruption arrangements through regular updates on activity provided as part of the regular Internal Audit update reports.
To consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions, including calling managers to explain lack of progress.	Internal Audit progress reports were provided to Committee in September 2020 and January 2021.
To review the governance and assurance arrangements for significant partnerships or collaborations.	Governance and assurance arrangements are set out as part the Annual Governance Statement, however further, more focused reports to Committee could be provided.
To review and monitor the Council's treasury management arrangements in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.	<p>The Treasury Management 2019/20 Annual Report was received in September 2020.</p> <p>The 2020/21 Draft Treasury Management Strategy and Minimum Revenue Position (MRP) Statement was reviewed at the November 2020 meeting.</p> <p>A Treasury Management Update report was presented in May 2020 to update the Committee on the implications for the</p>

Terms of Reference of Committee	Relevant activity in 2020/21
	Council's Treasury Management Strategy in response to the receipt of government funding re Covid-19.
Internal Audit	
To approve the internal audit charter.	An updated Internal Audit Charter was approved at the March 2020 Committee meeting. This has been reviewed within 2020/21 with no further changes required.
To review proposals made in relation to the appointment of external providers of internal audit services and to make recommendations	This has not been relevant during 2020/21.
To approve the risk-based internal audit plan, including internal audit's resource requirements, the approach to using other sources of assurance and any work required to place reliance upon those other sources. To approve significant interim changes to the risk-based internal audit plan and resource requirements	The Committee approved the 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan in March 2020. The Committee monitored progress against the plan in September 2020 and January 2021.
To make appropriate enquiries of both management and the head of internal audit to determine if there are any inappropriate scope or resource limitations.	The Audit and Governance Committee regularly consider this as part of discussion on the internal audit plan and progress updates.
To consider any impairments to independence or objectivity arising from additional roles or responsibilities outside of internal auditing of the head of internal audit. To approve and periodically review safeguards to limit such impairments	The Audit and Governance Committee is made aware of the other operational responsibilities of the Head of Audit and Risk through the Internal Audit Charter. During the course of 20/21, where Internal Audit team members have provided operational support in other parts of the business, the Committee received information about these roles, and how the impact on future audit work will be managed.
To consider reports from the head of internal audit on internal audit's performance during the year.	Internal Audit progress reports were provided to Committee in September 2020 and January 2021.

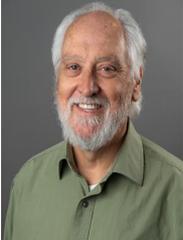
Terms of Reference of Committee	Relevant activity in 2020/21
To consider the Head of Internal Audit's annual report.	The 2019/20 Internal Audit Annual Report, including the annual audit opinion was presented to the Committee in July 2020.
To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested	Committee received a report relating to the operational procurement and contract award arrangements in January 2021.
To receive reports outlining the action taken where the Head of Internal Audit has concluded that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the authority or there are concerns about progress with the implementation of agreed actions. To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.	Internal Audit interim reports against the 2019/20 plan were received in September 2020 and January 2021. Internal Audit interim reports include a summary of Internal Audit work completed and the significant issues arising from individual assignments.
To contribute to the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme and in particular, to the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years.	The Committee is updated in the Head of Internal Audit annual opinion report on the progress made on assessment criteria required to comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.
To provide free and unfettered access to the audit committee chair for the head of internal audit, including the opportunity for a private meeting with the committee.	The Head of Audit and Risk met on a regular basis with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee
External Audit	
To consider the external auditor's annual assessment of independence, annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance.	A summary of the External Audit findings from the 2019/20 audit were presented to Committee in March 2021 by the External Auditor. The 2019/20 Annual Audit Letter was reported to the March 2021 Committee meeting.

Terms of Reference of Committee	Relevant activity in 2020/21
To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.	The Committee received and considered the work of the External Auditor (all meetings during the year).
To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money	Regular reports are received from the External Auditors who also meet with the Chair and Vice Chair prior to each Committee meeting.
To commission work from internal and external audit and to advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspection agencies or relevant bodies.	<p>The Committee consider the work plan at all meetings and commission additional work where Committee members determine that additional assurance is required.</p> <p>The relationship between Internal and External Audit is reviewed at least annually together with any requirements to liaise with any other relevant agencies.</p>
Financial Reporting	
To review and approve the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.	<p>The Annual Statement of Accounts 2018/19 was presented to the Committee in July 2020.</p> <p>An update on the financial impact of Covid-19 was brought to Committee in July 2020.</p>
To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.	<p>A summary of the External Audit findings from the 2019/20 audit were presented to Committee in March 2021 by the External Auditor.</p> <p>The 2019/20 Annual Audit Letter was reported to the March 2021 Committee meeting.</p>
Accountability Arrangements	
To report to those charged with governance on the committee's findings conclusions and recommendations concerning the	The Committee received the Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report in July 2020 ahead of presentation to Council.

Terms of Reference of Committee	Relevant activity in 2020/21
adequacy and effectiveness of their governance, risk management and internal control frameworks; financial reporting arrangements, and internal and external audit functions.	The Audit and Governance Committee's Self-Assessment Action Plan was presented in May 2020.
To report to full Council on a regular basis on the committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference and the effectiveness of the committee in meeting its purpose.	The Committee received the Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report in July 2020 ahead of presentation to Council.
To publish an annual report on the work of the committee.	The Committee received the Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report in July 2020 ahead of presentation to Council.
Related Functions	
To approve and monitor Council policies relating to "whistleblowing" and anti-fraud and corruption.	<p>The Committee is provided with updates in relation to these matters via the interim reports on internal audit activity received during the year.</p> <p>Details relating to whistleblowing statistics are reported via the Monitoring Officer report which was received by the Committee in July 2020.</p>
To seek assurance that customer complaint arrangements are robust	The Committee received regular update reports throughout 2020/21 on the number of decision notices received from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.
Working Groups	
The Committee may establish standing and time-bound working groups (which may but need not be politically balanced) to consider any matters within the terms of reference of the Committee.	<p>The Terms of Reference was updated to include this specific responsibility in November 2020.</p> <p>A working group was set up to consider the Audit and Governance Committee structure and composition in November</p>

Terms of Reference of Committee	Relevant activity in 2020/21
	2020 and reported to the Committee in January 2021 and March 2021.
Standards Arrangements	
Promoting high standards of ethical behaviour by developing, maintaining and monitoring Codes of Conduct for Members of the Council (including co-opted Members and other persons acting in a similar capacity).	<p>A Members Code of Conduct Standards Report recording the number and outcome of decisions relating to complaints was submitted to the Committee in March 2021.</p> <p>The Committee meeting in July 2020 approved the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Localism Act 2011 – General Dispensations for a four year period (to 28 Sept 2024); and • General dispensation allowing Members to take part in and vote on Community Governance Review matters in which they have disclosable pecuniary and prejudicial interests for a 4-year period (to 29 July 2024)
Ensuring that Members receive advice and training as appropriate on the Members Code of Conduct.	<p>Members of the Audit & Governance Committee have been advised on the Member Code of Conduct processes during the year.</p> <p>A review of the Member's Code of Conduct was scheduled pending the outcome of a model Code of Conduct and has begun during 2021/22.</p>
Granting dispensations under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 to enable a member or co-opted Member to participate in a meeting of the Authority.	The Committee meeting in July 2020 approved the Localism Act 2011 – General Dispensations for a four year period (to 28 Sept 2024).

Membership of the Audit and Governance Committee during 2020/21:

Members of the Audit and Governance Committee during 2020/21	
	<p>Councillor Rod Fletcher (Chair)</p> <p>Councillor Fletcher has been an elected member of Cheshire East Council since its beginning in April 2009 and has served on the Committee since May 2011. He chaired his first meeting in May 2019.</p>
	<p>Councillor Rachel Bailey (Vice-Chair)</p> <p>Councillor Bailey has been an elected member of Cheshire East Council since its beginning in April 2009. She joined the Committee in May 2019.</p>
	<p>Councillor Mike Sewart</p> <p>Councillor Sewart became an elected member of Cheshire East Council in May 2015. He joined the Committee in March 2017.</p>
	<p>Councillor Andrew Kolker</p> <p>Councillor Kolker has been an elected member of Cheshire East Council since its beginning in April 2009. He served as Vice-Chair of the Governance and Constitution Committee for a time and has been on the Audit and Governance Committee from June 2010 to date.</p>
	<p>Councillor David Edwardes</p> <p>Councillor Edwardes became an elected member of Cheshire East Council in May 2019.</p>
	<p>Councillor Byron Evans</p> <p>Councillor Evans became an elected member of Cheshire East Council in May 2019.</p>

Members of the Audit and Governance Committee during 2020/21	
	<p>Councillor Sally Handley Councillor Handley became an elected member of Cheshire East Council in May 2019 and was a member of the Committee until July 2020.</p>
	<p>Councillor Steven Hogben Councillor Hogben has been an elected member of Cheshire East Council since June 2011. He re-joined the the Committee in May 2019 and was replaced in January 2021.</p>
	<p>Councillor Marilyn Houston Councillor Houston became an elected member of Cheshire East Council in May 2019.</p>
	<p>Councillor Margaret Simon Councillor Simon re-joined the Committee in March 2020 having previously served on the Committee from its first meeting in June 2010 until March 2017.</p>
	<p>Councillor A Harewood Councillor Harewood became an elected member in May 2011 and joined the Committee in January 2021.</p>
	<p>Councillor C Bulman Councillor Bulman became an elected member in May 2019 and joined the Committee in July 2021.</p>
No image available.	<p>Philip Gardener Independent Member of the Committee, Mr Gardener was co-opted to the Committee in March 2017.</p>

It should be also noted that Councillor C Bulman deputised for a member of the Audit & Governance Committee in May 2020 having previously received the necessary induction training in October 2019.