

Council

Date of Meeting:	19 October 2022
Report Title:	Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee 2021/22
Report of:	Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services
Ward(s) Affected:	All

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. To present to Council the Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee 2021/22, as approved by the Audit and Governance Committee on 29 September 2022.
- 1.2. Producing an annual report on the work of the Committee ensures compliance with best practice requirements and provides assurance to wider stakeholders on the continuing improvements of the Council's governance arrangements.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee 2021/22, attached as Appendix A, be received.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. To report in line with the requirements of the Council's Constitution and the Audit and Governance Committee's Terms of Reference, which require a report to full Council on a regular basis.
- 3.2. The report should cover the performance of the Committee in relation to its Terms of Reference, and the effectiveness of the Committee in meeting its purpose.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. Not applicable.

5. Background

- 5.1. Current CIPFA guidance, *Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2018 Edition* states that audit committees should report regularly on their work and at least annually report an assessment of their performance. Aspects to consider include:
- whether the committee has fulfilled its agreed terms of reference
 - whether the committee has adopted recommended practice
 - whether the development needs of committee members have been assessed and whether committee members are accessing briefing and training opportunities
 - whether the committee has assessed its own effectiveness or been the subject of a review and the conclusions and actions from that review
 - what impact the committee has on the improvement of governance, risk and control within the authority.
- 5.2. The requirement to submit an annual report is recommended by the CIPFA guidance and included within Cheshire East Council's Constitution.
- 5.3. It is acknowledged that CIPFA is due to release the 2022 edition of *Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police* in September 2022. Furthermore, CIPFA has been engaged to undertake an independent review of the effectiveness of the Audit and Governance Committee during 2022/23.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal

- 6.1.1. The Council's Constitution gives responsibility to the Audit and Governance Committee for overseeing the Council's roles and responsibilities in respect of Corporate Governance and Audit and specifically for submitting an annual report to Council. Production of the report ensures compliance with this requirement.

6.2. Finance

- 6.2.1. The annual report of the Audit and Governance Committee outlines the assurances received by the Committee on the adequacy of the Council's governance arrangements, including the integrity of financial reporting processes.

6.3. Policy

6.3.1. The production of the annual report and its presentation to Council ensures compliance with the CIPFA best practice guidance.

6.4. Equality

6.4.1. There are no equality implications for this report.

6.5. Human Resources

6.5.1. There are no direct human resource implications for this report.

6.6. Risk Management

6.6.1. The annual report of the Audit and Governance Committee outlines the assurances received by the Committee on various aspects of the Council's governance arrangements, including the risk management framework.

6.7. Rural Communities

6.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

6.8. Children & Young People/Cared for Children

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

6.9. Public Health

6.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

6.10. Climate Change

6.10.1. There are no direct implications for Climate Change.

7. Consultation and Engagement

7.1. The annual report of the Committee was prepared by Internal Audit following discussion with key officers who regularly provide updates to the Audit and Governance Committee and approved by the Audit and Governance Committee on 29th September 2022.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Josie Griffiths, Head of Audit and Risk Josie.griffiths@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix A – Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee 2021/22
Background Papers:	N/A