

Wednesday 20 September 2023

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AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

You are summoned to a meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee, which will be held in Committee Room 1, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB on **Thursday 28 September 2023 at 6.00pm.**



Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Councillors: Mathew Parkinson (Chair), Ruth Smith (Vice-Chair), Jane Doughty, Michele Mead, Andrew Beaney, Elizabeth Poskitt, Colin Dingwall, David Jackson, Andrew Prosser, Alaric Smith, Edward James, Joy Aitman, Geoff Saul, David Melvin, Harry St. John, Rachel Crouch and Alex Wilson.

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Executive, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted. By participating in this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Democratic Services officers know prior to the start of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive any Apologies for Absence from Members of the Committee.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any Declarations of Interest on any items of business to be considered at the meeting.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 10)**

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Thursday 10 August 2023.

4. **Participation of the Public**

To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

5. **Internal Audit Progress Report (Pages 11 - 28)**

Purpose:

To present a summary of the audit work concluded since the last meeting of Committee.

Recommendation(s):

That Committee Resolves to:

1. Note the contents of the Internal Audit Progress Report.

6. **Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit Update Report (Pages 29 - 36)**

Purpose:

To provide the Committee with assurances over the counter fraud activities of the Council.

Recommendation(s):

That Committee Resolves to:

1. Note the contents of the report; and
2. Note the Unit Work Plan at Annex A.

7. **Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy Review (Pages 37 - 48)**

Purpose:

To present the Audit and Governance Committee with an updated Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy for comment.

Recommendation(s):

That Committee Resolves to:

1. Note the Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy; and
2. Provide comment as appropriate to the Executive, to aid its deliberations and decision making.

8. **Strategic Risk Register Update (Pages 49 - 56)**

Purpose:

To update Members on the Strategic Risk Register, for information and assurance, that risks to the Council are being managed and appropriate actions are being taken to mitigate risk.

Recommendation(s):

That Committee Resolves to:

1. Note the update to the Strategic Risk Register.

9. **Statement of Accounts 2021-2022 (Pages 57 - 200)**

Purpose:

To present the Council's audited Statement of Accounts for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, enabling Committee to consider and approve the Council's accounts.

Recommendation(s):

That Committee Resolves to:

1. Note the Grant Thornton Audit Findings for West Oxfordshire District Council;
2. Approve the Statement of Accounts 2021/22, including the Annual Governance Statement;
3. Authorise the Interim Director of Finance, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to write a letter of representation to Grant Thornton on behalf of the Committee and the Council, enabling the opinion to be issued.

10. **Annual Summary of Member Conduct Complaints (Pages 201 - 204)**

Purpose:

To advise the Committee of the number and status of Code of Conduct complaints received and considered by the Council's Monitoring Officer in the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 August 2023.

Recommendation(s):

That Committee Resolves to:

1. Note the report;
2. Request an annual report on Code of Conduct complaints; and
3. Request that a recording of the social media training is made available to all Members.

11. **Annual Local Government Ombudsman Letter (Pages 205 - 216)**

Purpose:

To present the Annual Complaints statistics as provided by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023.

Recommendations:

That Committee Resolves to:

1. Note the content of the report; and
2. Note the Annual Review Letter 2022 – 2023.

12. **Audit and Governance Committee Work Programme 2023-2024** (Pages 217 - 220)

Purpose:

To review the Audit and Governance Committee Work Programme 2023-2024.

Recommendation(s):

That Committee Resolves to:

1. Note the contents of the Audit and Governance Committee Work Programme 2023-2024.

(END)