



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and date of Committee	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 23RD NOVEMBER 2023
Subject	CIPFA's POSITION STATEMENT ON AUDIT COMMITTEES
Wards affected	N/A
Accountable member	Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance Email: Alaric.Smith@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Andrea McCaskie, Monitoring Officer Email: Andrea.McCaskie@westoxon.gov.uk
Report author	Lucy Cater, Head of Internal Audit. Assistant Director, SWAP Internal Audit Services Email: Lucy.Cater@swpapaudit.co.uk
Summary/Purpose	To present to the Audit and Governance Committee The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy ("CIPFA's") Updated Audit Committee Guidance along with the self assessment and evaluation toolkit to enable Committee Members to identify any training needs to ensure they meet the principles as set out in the CIPFA guidance
Annexes	Annex A – CIPFA's AUDIT COMMITTEE POSITION STATEMENT 2022 Annex B – CIPFA's AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBER IN A LOCAL AUTHORITY Annex C – SELF ASSESSMENT OF GOOD PRACTICE (APP E) Annex D – EVALUATING THE IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE (APP F)
Recommendation(s)	<i>That the Audit and Governance Committee discusses the attached documents and Members undertake a self assessment, in readiness for the next meeting of the Committee, to identify any training needs to ensure that all skills identified in the CIPFA guidance can be met.</i>
Corporate priorities	Ensure that all services delivered by the Council are delivered to the highest standard.

Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Not Applicable

1. BACKGROUND

Audit committees are a key component of an authority's governance framework. Their purpose is to provide an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk and control arrangements. The committee's role in ensuring that there is sufficient assurance over governance risk and control gives greater confidence to all those charged with governance that those arrangements are effective

2. MAIN POINTS

Audit Committees

In a local authority the full council is the body charged with governance. The audit committee may be delegated some governance responsibilities but will be accountable to full council.

The committee has oversight of both internal and external audit together with the financial and governance reports, helping to ensure that there are adequate arrangements in place for both internal challenge and public accountability.

Audit Committee Members

As a member of your authority's audit committee, you play an important role in the good governance of the authority. The audit committee contributes to its overall success by examining how its arrangements for decision making, consideration of risk and operations work. The committee has a unique view – one that is non-political. Instead of focusing on policy and decision making, it examines the 'engine' of the authority – how things get done. Most importantly, it shines a light on areas where things might be missed or need to adapt or improve. To be a success, your audit committee must have a good grasp of its role and responsibilities. It will also need to follow some good practice principles. These are set out in the CIPFA Position Statement on Audit Committees. The aim of this practical guide is to support you in your time as an audit committee member. This section of CIPFA's guidance is for members of an audit committee in an authority. It will support both elected members and co-opted independent members (also known as lay members) to understand the purpose of

the committee and its functions and their responsibilities as members of the committee. It will link to other sections of CIPFA's guidance, which will provide additional resources.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

N/A

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

Under equality legislation, the Council has a legal duty to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in relation to:

- Race
- Disability
- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief

The Council also has a duty to foster good relations, and to consider the impact of its decisions on human rights. The law requires that this duty to pay 'due regard' is demonstrated in the decision making process. The recommendations in this report do not have a particular impact on any of the above groups

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

- Internal Audit Reports

7.2 These documents will be available for inspection online at www.westoxon.gov.uk or by contacting democratic services democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting.

(END)