

## AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL

Council - 19 July 2022

Report of: Cllr McGarvey, Chair of the Audit Committee

Status: For Consideration

### Introduction and Background

- 1 This is our report to the Council on the work of the Audit Committee since April 2022.
- 2 The Audit Committee is responsible for discharging the functions conferred by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The key responsibilities include approving the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts, approving the Annual Governance Statement, approving the Annual Internal Audit Plan and monitoring and reviewing the work of Internal Audit, and reviewing the arrangements for the management of business risks.
- 3 In line with its Terms of Reference, the Audit Committee meets four times per year and has met once since the last report to Council.
- 4 As Chair of the Committee, I have continued to hold monthly briefings with Officers.
- 5 Details of the range of issues considered by the Committee on 14 July are set out below:

#### Internal Audit

Date of Meeting	Agenda Items
14 July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Internal Audit Annual Report and Annual Opinion 2021/22</li></ul>

#### Governance, Risk & Anti-Fraud

Date of Meeting	Agenda Items
14 July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Counter Fraud and Compliance Report 2021/22</li><li>• Annual Governance Statement 2021/22</li><li>• Audit Committee Terms of Reference</li></ul>

Date of Meeting	Agenda Items
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the Effectiveness of the Audit Committee 2021/22</li> </ul>

### Accounts and External Audit

Date of Meeting	Agenda Items
14 July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External Audit - Auditors Annual Report 2020/21</li> <li>• Statement of Accounts - Establishment of Member Working</li> </ul>

- 6 The Audit Committee maintains a constructive dialogue and effective working relationship with the Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton who attended on 14 July.
- 7 Training of Audit Committee Members is important to ensure that they can add value to the discussions at the Committee. A Member Development Plan has been agreed by the Committee. As part of that a Member Development Briefing on External Audit took place at the July meeting.
- 8 The Statement of Accounts were presented to the Audit Committee on 29 March 2022 where it was agreed that following completion of the audit, delegated authority be given to the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance & Trading and the Chairman of the Audit Committee to sign the accounts.
- 9 At the Council meeting on 22 February 2022, it was approved that up to two additional co-opted non-voting members could be appointed to the Audit Committee. Interviews for these independent member positions were held on 23 May 2022. The interview panel included Cllr McGarvey (Chairman of the Audit Committee), Cllr Kitchener (Member of the Audit Committee) and Adrian Rowbotham (Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance & Trading).
- 10 I am pleased to report that we interviewed some very strong candidates, and a decision was made to offer the positions to Mo Chughtai and Lynda McMullan who both accepted. Members of the committee look forward to working with Mo and Lynda who should bring some additional insight to the committee.
- 11 It is my opinion that the work of the Committee has a positive impact on the overall control environment within the Council and has developed good working relationships with officers and External Audit, and has offered constructive comments on a range of issues. The Committee continues to

develop and improve its understanding of the many technical issues presented to it.

- 12 I thank all members of the Audit Committee for their personal contribution to the work of the Committee. I also thank Officers, in particular Adrian Rowbotham, Jennifer Warrillow, Alan Mitchell and Glen Moore for the help and support they have given the Committee.

**Cllr Philip McGarvey, Chairman, Audit Committee**