

10. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

- To approve the Annual Accounts and Report of the Council (with delegated power).
- To approve the Council's Statement of Accounts pursuant to Regulation 8(2) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996.
- To consider the Head of Internal Audit's annual report and opinion, and a summary of internal audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance it gives over the Council's governance, risk management arrangements, internal control arrangements and environment and anti-corruption arrangements.
- To consider and approve any Council strategy relevant to the functions of the Audit Committee.
- To consider reports dealing with the management and performance of the providers of internal audit services.
- To comment on the scope and depth of both internal and external audit work, to ensure that there are effective working relationships and to ensure they give value for money.
- To consider the external auditors annual letter, relevant reports and the report of those charged with governance and to ensure the implementation of any appropriate action plan and seek assurance that action is being taken on risk related issues identified by the auditor (or any other inspection).
- To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
- To consider regular Internal Audit performance reports relating to Council services and the effectiveness of the Authority's governance arrangements.
- To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports, as requested.
- To consider a report from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.
- To liaise with the Audit Commission over the appointment of the Council's external auditor.
- To commission work from internal and external audit and approve the Annual Internal Audit Plan and undertake monitoring of performance against this plan.
- To oversee the production of the authority's annual governance statement and to recommend its adoption and be satisfied that that the authority's assurance statements properly reflect the risk environment and any actions to improve it.
- To consider the Council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls.
- To make recommendations to the Cabinet, Council and other organisations where appropriate.
- Ensure the value of the audit process is actively promoted.
- Maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors and Co-opted Members.
- Monitoring the Council's Corporate Governance arrangements.
- To consider the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and agreeing necessary actions to ensure compliance with best practice.
- To consider the Council's Risk Register.