Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

Audit & Standards Committee

Terms of Reference (Approved at full Council on 17 May 2017)

Audit Activity

- To receive, review and approve, but not direct the annual internal audit plan, and audit charter.
- To review quarterly Internal Audit progress reports and the main issues arising and to seek assurance that action has been taken where necessary.
- To consider reports from Internal Audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale and to monitor the Council's response to ensure that this is acceptable.
- To ensure that there are effective relationships between external and Internal Audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted.
- To consider the Audit Managers annual report and opinion, and the level of assurance internal audit can give over the Council's corporate governance arrangements.
- To consider any reports dealing with the management or arrangements for the provision of the internal audit service.
- To ensure the internal audit section is adequately resourced and has appropriate standing within the Council.
- To receive, review and approve but not direct the annual external audit plan.
- To consider the external auditors annual audit and inspection letter, relevant reports to those charged with governance, delegating the consideration of such reports and any investigations to other committees as necessary.
- To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
- To monitor the Councils response to the external auditor's findings and the implementation of external audit recommendations.

Regulatory Framework

- To consider the internal control environment and the level of assurance that may be given as to its effectiveness, to include the review of the Annual Governance Statement and the recommendation to the Council of its adoption.
- To satisfy itself that the Council's assurance statements including the Annual Governance Statement, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it.
- To approve, monitor, review and amend from time to time the Councils Code of Corporate Governance to ensure that it is adequate and effective.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the Councils risk management arrangements, including the actions taken to manage risks and to receive regular reports on risk management. To review the effectiveness of corporate governance arrangements to ensure that the Council complies with best practice.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the Council's policies and arrangements for Anti-Fraud, Anti-Corruption, Whistleblowing, Bribery and Anti-Money Laundering.
- To review any issue referred to it by the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, Executive Director or any Council body.
- To maintain an overview of the Councils Constitution in respect of Contract Procedure Rules, Financial Regulations and Codes of Conduct and make recommendations to Council in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer for any amendments.

DRAFT

Accounts

- To approve the Council's Statement of Accounts.
- To consider the external auditors report to those charged with governance on issues arsing from the audit of the accounts.

Standards

- To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members
- To oversee the Register of Members Interests
- To monitor compliance with the Members' Code of Conduct;
- To advise the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct
- To oversee the effectiveness of the Council's procedures for investigating and responding to complaints of breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct
- To interview and make recommendations to Council on the appointment of Independent Person(s) in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011
- To deal with complaints of alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct which the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person(s), considers warrant detailed consideration and to make final recommendations thereon
- To advise, train or arrange to train Members and Independent Person(s) on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
- To consider requests from Members to grant dispensations from being precluded from participation in a meeting
- To oversee, review and make any recommendations on the effectiveness and operation of the Constitution and any of the provisions of it
- To have an overview of the complaints submitted to and being investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman.
- To oversee the maintenance of the List of Politically Restricted Posts within the Borough Council

Other Areas

- To consider reports from external inspectors (for example Office of the Surveillance Commissioner, Health & Safety Executive).
- To receive reports from the Corporate Health & Safety Officer.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the Councils information governance arrangements
- To receive reports in respect of the Councils Treasury Management arrangements.

DRAFT