

AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Monday, 22nd April, 2024
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

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Present:	Councillor Paul Waring (Chair)		
Councillors:	Burnett-Faulkner Holland	Whieldon Brockie	Lewis
Apologies:	Councillor(s) Stubbs		
Officers:	Sarah Wilkes Anthony Harold Deborah Harris Alex Canon Robert Fenton Richard Lee	Service Director - Finance / S151 Officer Service Director - Legal & Governance / Monitoring Officer Chief Internal Auditor Audit Manager Senior Manager, KPMG Director, KPMG	
Also in attendance:	Councillor Stephen Sweeney	Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth	

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2024 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. **INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER 2024**

The Deputy Leader / Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth provided an introduction on the Internal Audit Charter.

The new Chief Auditor Debbie Harris introduced herself and her colleague Alex Canon, Audit Manager, who would be leading the delivery of the Audit Plan for the year ahead. The Chief Auditor subsequently presented the report on the Internal Audit Charter.

Resolved: That the Internal Audit Charter 2024 be approved.

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5. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25

The Deputy Leader / Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth introduced the report on the Internal Audit Plan.

The Service Director for Finance (S151 Officer) presented the report.

Resolved: 1. That in accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference, the Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 be approved.

2. That the Committee agree to receive quarterly reports on the delivery of the assignments within the plan and on the implementation of actions arising.

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6. COUNTER FRAUD ARRANGEMENTS 2024-25

The Deputy Leader / Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth introduced the report on the Counter Fraud Arrangements.

The Service Director for Finance (S151 Officer) presented the report.

Resolved: That the following policies which support the Counter fraud function be noted:

1. Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework
2. Fraud Response Plan
3. Whistleblowing Policy
4. Anti-Money Laundering Policy

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7. CORPORATE RISK POLICY STATEMENT AND STRATEGY 2024/2025

The Deputy Leader / Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth introduced the report on the Corporate Risk Policy Statement and Strategy.

The Service Director for Legal and Governance / Monitoring Officer presented the report. Members asked questions and responses were provided as follows.

Cllr Holland wished for re-assurance that the strategy had been looked at carefully since the previous year and that necessary updates had been made. – Indeed it had been reviewed by the legal team to ensure the document was robust. Specific details could be discussed outside of the meeting.

Cllr Brockie enquired about the risks associated with major developments and if there were sufficient staff and infrastructure to ensure these were monitored at all time. – Several processes were in place to keep things under control of which monthly corporate risk reviews and monthly monitoring of projects ensuring all risks were accounted for.

Cllr Whieldon highlighted the wording of paragraph 6 of the Risk Management Policy Statement stating a list of actions the Council 'would' take to meet its responsibilities as opposed to 'may' or 'could', which she found re-assuring.

Resolved:

1. That the reviewed Risk Management Policy and Strategy for the 2024/25 year, subject to changes, be accepted.
2. That if approved by the Committee, the Chief Executive and Leader would sign the Policy Statement, be noted.
3. That the Committee own respective responsibility in risk management be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

8. **EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN & STRATEGY 2023-24**

KPMG Director Richard Lee introduced himself and his colleague Robert Fenton, Senior Manager, as newly appointed external auditors. Mr Fenton then presented the report on the External Audit Plan and Strategy for the year ending 31st March 2024.

Cllr Holland welcomed the new auditors and pointed out a typo in the report in the name of the borough. – It was confirmed this would be corrected.

Resolved: That the External Audit Plan and Strategy be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

9. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Resolved: That the work programme be noted.

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10. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

**Councillor Paul Waring
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 7.36 pm