

AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Monday, 4th November, 2024
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

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Present: Councillor Paul Waring (Chair)

Councillors: Burnett-Faulkner Whieldon Lewis

Apologies: Councillor(s) Stubbs and Brockie

Substitutes: Councillor Philip Reece (In place of Councillor Wendy Brockie)

Officers: Sarah Wilkes Service Director - Finance /
S151 Officer

Also in attendance: Councillor Stephen Sweeney Deputy Leader of the Council
and Portfolio Holder - Finance,
Town Centres and Growth

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest stated.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2024 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

[Watch the debate here](#)

3. CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Service Director for Finance (S151 Officer) presented the Corporate Risk Management report. Three risk levels had increased over the last quarter respectively relating to nuisance investigations, safe drinking water at private water supplies and shared service hub within Kidsgrove town deal and the delivery of the shared service. A new risk had been identified around community cohesion leading to public disorder.

Cllr Reece enquired about the context of the community cohesion risk.

– This was added following the Southport knife attack so that awareness of such risks was accounted for.

Cllr Reece asked for clarification on the financial and resources implications as well as major risks and mitigations.

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– All the risks that had been identified and what they implied for the Council had been accounted for. While all risks could not be eliminated, processes were in place to ensure they were mitigated as much as possible within the limits of the Council resources.

Cllr Whieldon commented that risks were assessed at a moment in time and could be low to medium priority for a few weeks before they needed attention.

– The risk register was updated between meetings on a weekly basis.

Cllr Whieldon expressed her appreciation of the traffic light system and the thoroughness of the reports.

- Resolved:**
1. That there were currently no risks that were more than 6 months overdue for a review up to end of Q2 2024/25, be noted.
 2. That there had been 3 risk level increases, be noted.
 3. That new risk change to the Corporate Risk Register, be noted.
 4. That officers be advised of any individual risk profiles that the Committee would like to scrutinise in more details at its next meeting.
 5. That whilst the likelihood of a risk materialising may be mitigated, the likely impacts may not change, be noted.

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4. INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE 2024/25

The Internal Auditor presented the update report on internal audit.

The Chair asked about the National Fraud Initiative.

– Payrolls from one council to another council were compared to see if same employees were paid from two different places.

The Chair thanked the Internal Auditor for a smooth transition taking over from Stoke-on-Trent auditors.

- Resolved:** That progress against the 2024-25 Strategic Internal Audit Plan be noted

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5. TREASURY MANAGEMENT HALF YEARLY REPORT 2024/25

The Chair introduced the Treasury Management report which had been heavily amended and simplified further to comments on the complexity of wording raised at previous meetings.

The Director for Finance (S151 Officer) presented the report, reminding members of the Treasury Management Strategy approved at full Council in February.

Resolved: That the Treasury Management Half Yearly Report for 2024-25 be received.

[Watch the debate here](#)

6. **WORK PROGRAMME**

At the Director for Finance (S151 Officer)'s suggestion it was agreed that the External Audit of the Statement of Accounts be brought back to the Committee in February for official sign-off.

Resolved: That the work programme be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

7. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

**Councillor Paul Waring
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 7.18 pm