



Committee report

Committee	AUDIT COMMITTEE
Date	3 DECEMBER 2015
Title	EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER
Report of	BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is for the committee to receive the external auditor's Annual Audit Letter which effectively concludes the auditor's work in respect of the financial year 2014-15.

BACKGROUND

2. The external auditor's Annual Audit Letter in respect of the financial year 2014-15 is shown at Appendix A. It represents the formal conclusion to the auditor's work and findings that have already been reported to the committee when it met in September. As such, there are no new findings in the letter.
3. The external auditors are responsible for:
 - forming an opinion on the financial statements, including the Pension Fund, and on the consistency of other information published with them
 - reviewing and reporting by exception on the Council's Annual Governance Statement
 - forming a conclusion on the arrangements the Council has to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources
 - undertaking any other work specified by the Audit Commission and the Code of Audit Practice.

The letter summarises the results of their work across all these areas.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

4. The work of the council's external auditors provides an entirely independent opinion on the council's financial reporting and cost –effectiveness of council services. It therefore makes an effective contribution to the council's governance arrangements.

CONSULTATION

5. The Annual Audit Letter has been discussed with the Managing Director.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

6. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7. The external auditor is required to report to members in accordance with Part II of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and in accordance with the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and of Audited Bodies published by the Audit Commission in 2010. Despite the abolition of the Audit Commission, relevant parts of the Audit Commission Act 1998 are transitionally saved by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (Commencement No. 7, Transitional Provisions and Savings) Order 2015 for 2014/15 audits.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

8. The Council has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to seek to eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment in relation to age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership. Following an initial screening it is considered that there are no direct equality and diversity implications of this report for any of the protected groups.

RISK MANAGEMENT

9. The Annual Audit Letter provides the committee with an independent opinion that the accounts of the council have been prepared in accordance with proper accounting practice. As such they provide the committee with further assurance that the council's financial governance arrangements are effective.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. The committee is asked to consider and note the outcomes within the Annual Audit Letter and to seek further information from officers concerning the issues raised and necessary remedial actions.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

11. [Appendix A](#) – Annual Audit Letter 2014-15

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