

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Thursday, 5 March 2026

Attendance:

Councillors
Morris (Chairperson)

Brophy
Chamberlain
Godfrey

Pinniger
Power

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Bailey-Morgan

Deputy Members:

Councillor Lee

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillors Cutler (Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation) and
Becker (Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities)

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

As noted above, apologies were received from Councillor Bailey-Morgan for whom Councillor Lee deputised.

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

There were no disclosures of interest made.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Morris announced that, as requested at the previous meeting, EY had provided to the council some further detail used in their asset valuations. The Director (Finance) confirmed that officers would work with the council's external valuers to seek to find a solution to the judgemental differences between the assumptions used by the valuation teams employed by EY and the council.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 29 JANUARY 2026**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 29 January 2026 be agreed as a correct record.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no member of the public present.

6. **INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER AND RISK BASED PLAN 2026-27**
(AG185)

Antony Harvey (SIAP) introduced the report and together with the Director (Finance) responded to questions from Members' thereon, including confirming that the plan could be amended if required to deal with new and emerging risks.

RESOLVED:

That the Internal Audit Charter 2026-27 (Appendix A of the report) and Internal Audit Risk Based Plan 2026-27 (Appendix B of the report) be approved.

7. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY 2026/27**
(AG183)

The Senior Policy and Programme Manager introduced the report and drew members' attention to the changes since the previous year as summarised in paragraph 11.7 of report CAB3548.

The Senior Programme and Policy Manager, the Director (Legal), the Director (Finance) together with Councillor Cutler responded to members' questions on the report. It was noted that the current controls section of risk CR003 should be corrected to refer to the Residents' Survey which had been undertaken and completed in 2024. The Director (Legal) confirmed this would be corrected.

The following points were raised for further review:

- a) In relation to risk CR010, further consideration of whether it should be expanded to include reference to risks relating to the Nature Emergency. The Director (Finance) agreed to discuss this further with the Executive Leadership Board.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation have regard to the discussion of this committee on the policy and the points outlined above in his presentation of report CAB3548 which would be considered at Cabinet on 12 March 2026.

8. **LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 2026/27**
(AG184)

The Senior Policy and Programme Manager introduced the report and responded to members' questions thereon. It was noted that the related Annual Governance Statement would be submitted to the July meeting of the committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Local Code of Corporate Governance 2026 be approved, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

9. **Q3 GOVERNANCE MONITORING 25/26**
(AG182)

The Senior Policy and Programme Manager introduced the report and drew members' attention to the proposed revised terms of reference for the committee, which followed the CIPFA suggested terms of reference for local authority audit committees as set out in Appendix 4 of the report. The proposed amendments followed an Internal Audit assessment against the CIPFA Code of Practice for the Governance Internal Audit in UK Local Government as set out in the new Global Internal Audit Standards.

Councillor Becker highlighted that Appendix 2 reported that there were currently no outstanding code of conduct complaints and congratulated officers for their work in enabling this achievement.

The Senior Policy and Programme Manager, the Director (Legal) and the Director (Finance) responded to members' questions, including on the revised terms of reference. The following points were highlighted:

- a) Including training on the revised terms of reference as part of the annual member training programme.
- b) With regard to the requirement to produce an annual report and the appropriate format for this report, the Director (Legal) confirmed this would be added to the committee annual work programme and officers would look for examples of good practice from other local authorities.
- c) Members expressed some concern about the requirement to ensure that external audit provided good value for money, given the lack of flexibility over the annual fees. However, it was noted that the committee did regularly challenge the external audit providers on this point.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of the report be noted, including the progress made against the actions in the Annual Governance Statement.

2. That the Director (Legal), under delegated authority adopt the updated draft Terms of Reference for the Audit and Governance Committee, as set out in Appendix 4 of the report. The amended terms of reference will be included in Article 9 of the Council's constitution and the

changes reported to Full Council later this year for noting in accordance with Article 15.

10. **TO NOTE THE FUTURE MEETING DATES FOR THE COMMITTEE IN 2026/27**

RESOLVED:

That the future dates of the committee during the 2026/27 municipal year be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 7.50 pm

Chairperson