

# AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

23 July 2019

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| <b>Title:</b> Audit and Standards Committee Work Programme 2019/20   |  |
| <b>Report of the Chief Executive</b>   |  |
| <b>Open Report</b>   | <b>For decision</b>  |
| <b>Wards Affected:</b> None  | <b>Key Decision:</b> No  |
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| <b>Accountable Strategic Leadership Director:</b><br>Chris Naylor, Chief Executive   |  |
| <b>Summary:</b><br>This report outlines the responsibilities and commitments of the Audit and Standards Committee and sets out the draft work programme for 2019/20. |  |
| <b>Recommendation(s)</b><br>The Committee is asked to note the report including the draft work programme for 2019/20.  |  |

## 1. Introduction and background

This is the first meeting of the Committee and Members are asked to agree the work programme, which can be amended as necessary.

## 2. Audit and Standards Committee

The Audit and Standards Committee shall have the following roles and functions which are contained within the Council's constitution.

### 2.1.1 Audit functions

#### Internal Audit

- i) Considering regular update reports concerning the work of Internal Audit, including progress on delivering the annual programme of work, emerging themes, risks and issues, and officer responsiveness in implementing recommendations and responding to Internal Audit.

- ii) Considering and agreeing an Annual Audit Report from the Chief Financial Officer and a summary of Internal Audit activity (actual and proposed), and the level of assurance it can give over the Council's corporate governance, internal control, and risk management arrangements.
- iii) Considering summaries of specific Internal Audit reports as requested.
- iv) Considering reports dealing with the management and performance of the providers of Internal Audit services.

### **Statutory and External Audit Functions**

- v) Considering the Annual Governance Report (both main and pension) and other relevant reports.
- vi) Considering the Annual Audit Letter, and other relevant reports.
- vii) Considering the Summary of Grant Certifications.
- viii) Considering other specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.

### **Governance**

- ix) Receiving reports and making appropriate recommendations concerning corporate governance, risk management, decision-making and information governance and ensuring compliance with best practice.
- x) Receiving reports and making appropriate recommendations concerning customer complaints and Local Government Ombudsman enquiries.
- xi) Considering regular updates concerning Council policies relating to internal governance (including whistle blowing, bribery and anti-fraud) and ensuring the implementation of relevant legislation relating to governance, fraud and corruption.
- xii) Considering proposed changes to the Council's Financial Regulations and Rules, as they relate to audit functions.
- xiii) Approving the Council's Annual Governance Statement which accompanies the Annual Statement of Accounts.

### **Finance**

- xiv) Considering and approving the Annual Statement of Accounts and all related documents.

### 2.1.2 Standards functions

- i) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Members and Co-Opted Members of the authority;
- ii) Appointment of a Hearing Sub-Committee to hear and make recommendations to the Monitoring Officer concerning complaints about Members and Co-opted Members referred to it by the Monitoring Officer (the composition, Terms of Reference and responsibility of functions for the Sub-Committee are referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4 below);
- iii) Receiving periodic reports from the Monitoring Officer on dispensations granted / refused, complaints received against Members, complaints resolved informally, complaints resolved after an investigation by the Hearing Sub-Committee and assessing the operation and effectiveness of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- iv) Advising on training or arranging to train Councillors and Co-opted Members on matters relating to the Councillors' Code of Conduct;
- v) Assisting Councillors and Co-opted Members to observe the Councillors' Code of Conduct;
- vi) Receiving referrals from the Monitoring Officer into allegations of misconduct, in accordance with the Council's assessment criteria;
- vii) Advising on the contents of and requirements for codes / protocols / other procedures relating to standards of conduct throughout the Council;
- viii) Maintaining oversight of the Council's arrangements for dealing with complaints;
- ix) Informing the Assembly and the Chief Executive of relevant issues arising from the determination of Code of Conduct complaints;
- x) On referral by the Monitoring Officer, granting dispensations pursuant to S33(2) (b), (c) and (e) of the Localism Act 2011 to enable a Councillor or Co-opted Member to participate in a meeting of the Authority;
- xi) Hear and determine appeals against refusal to grant dispensations by the Monitoring Officer pursuant to S33(2)(a) and (d) of the Localism Act 2011.

3.3 The work programme is attached as **Appendix A**, a document that is subject to change and Members can add, remove, and defer items as necessary meeting by meeting.

#### **4. Dates of Formal Audit and Standards Committee Meetings and timings**

4.1 The scheduled dates for meetings in 2019/20 are as follows:

23 July 2019  
28 October 2019  
3 February 2020  
27 April 2020

4.2 The dates take into account a number of factors including statutory deadlines for a range of audit matters including reports from BDO, the Council's External Auditors. It also has regard to the summer and winter holiday periods and concludes in April.

4.3 Although the meetings dates for the Committee are set down in the Council calendar they can be amended with reasonable notice. Moving meetings is however not advisable as re-scheduling inevitably results in clashes with other Member meetings.

4.4 All formal meetings are scheduled at Barking Town Hall and meetings are webcast. The Council Chamber at the Town Hall has been booked for 2019/20 which has recording facilities.

#### **5. Implications**

- Financial

There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.

- Legal

There are no legal implications directly associated with this report.

#### **List of appendices:**

Appendix A- draft work programme 2019/20