

Audit Committee Work Plan – 2014/15			
21st July 2014	Assurances Required / Being Sought	Review of why the paper was on the agenda and did it give you the assurances you were seeking?	Relevancy – Terms of Reference
Core Business			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's Internal Audit Function 	<p>To consider how well the Internal Audit Functions is performing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it what you want – independent, objective and provide a knowledgeable view of how well the Council is being run? Conforms to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards? Has an effective Quality Assurance framework? Successfully delivers results that make a difference in how well the Council is run? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Head of Internal Audit's Annual Report and Opinion 2014 	<p>Gain an understanding of the level of assurances being provided by the Head of Internal Audit over the Council's governance, risk and internal control arrangements and why.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Council's Governance and Assurance Arrangements and the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2014 	<p>Confirm that the Annual Governance Statement reflects the Committee's understanding of how the Council is run and that any significant governance issues / risks have been identified / published.</p> <p>Constructively challenge the information and evidence being presented.</p> <p>Ensuring value for money assurance</p>		

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	<p>arrangements are reported on and assessing how this features in the Annual Governance Statement.</p> <p>Improving how the Council discharges its responsibilities for public reporting e.g. better targeting at the audience and plain English</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny of the Council's Financial Statements 2013/14 (with specialist support/advisor) 	<p>By asking questions (supported by independent advisor), confirm the integrity of the Council's financial statements prior to audit / publication.</p> <p>Improving how the Council discharges its responsibilities for public reporting e.g. better targeting at the audience and plain English</p>		
22nd September 2014	Assurances Required / Being Sought	Review of why the paper was on the agenda and did it give you the assurances you were seeking?	Relevancy – Terms of Reference
Core Business			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Audit Progress Report 	<p>Understand the level of assurances being given as a result of audit work and their impact on the Council's governance, risk and control environment.</p> <p>Ensure management action is taken to improve controls / manage risks identified.</p> <p>Encouraging ownership of the internal control framework by appropriate managers</p> <p>Confirm appropriate progress being made on the delivery of the audit plan and performance targets</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counter Fraud Progress Report 	<p>Confirm that the Council's counter fraud activity is targeted and effective.</p>		

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	<p>Ensure that appropriate progress is being made on the delivery of the Counter Fraud plan.</p> <p>Ensure that lessons have been learnt – understand fraud risks facing the Council and actions being taken to reduce the risk</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Audit Governance Report on the Audit of the Council's Financial Statements and their assessment of the Council's arrangements to secure Value for Money in it's use of resources 	<p>Seek assurance over the adequacy of the External Audit opinion on the financial statements and the Council's value for money arrangements.</p> <p>Ensure any issues / risks identified are being effectively managed.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2014 	<p>Confirm that the final Annual Governance Statement accurately reflects the Committees understanding of how the Council is run and any comments made on the draft have been acted upon.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 	<p>Consider the outcome of the External Audit and the appropriateness of management responses.</p> <p>Ensure that the explanatory forewords to their accounts help the public understand the authority's financial management of public funds.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of draft Annual Report on the work of the Audit Committee 	<p>Provide assurance that the Committee has adequately discharged its terms of reference and has positively contributed to how well the Council is run.</p>		
Other Assurance			

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24th November 2014	Assurances Required / Being Sought	Review of why the paper was on the agenda and did it give you the assurances you were seeking?	Relevancy – Terms of Reference
Other Assurance			
<p>Review the effectiveness of the Council's standards regime, including how well the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has dealt with complaints • promoted and maintained standards • obtained assurance over the completeness and accuracy of the register of interests 	<p>Assessing the effectiveness of the ethical governance arrangements for staff and members</p>		
<p>Invite Executive Directors to a meeting to look in more depth at their assurance arrangements – seeking assurance that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are maintaining good governance during times of change. • Understand the assurance framework through times of change and associated with the Commissioning Strategies. Particularly the impact on the assurance framework resulting from these changes, for example, senior management review, fundamental budget review and the impact on the 1st and 2nd lines of assurance (management / corporate functions). 	<p>Gain understanding of the impact of change on the Council's governance, risk and control arrangements.</p> <p>Seeking assurance that they continue to work well.</p>		
26th January 2015	Assurances Required / Being Sought	Review of why the paper was on the agenda and did it give you the assurances you were seeking?	Relevancy – Terms of Reference
Core Business			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit Progress Report 	<p>Understand the level of assurances being given as a result of audit work and their impact on the Council's governance, risk and control environment.</p>		

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	<p>Ensure management action is taken to improve controls / manage risks identified</p> <p>encouraging ownership of the internal control framework by appropriate managers</p> <p>Encouraging ownership of the internal control framework by appropriate managers</p> <p>Confirm appropriate progress being made on the delivery of the audit plan and performance targets</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Audit Progress Report and Plan 	<p>Seek assurance over progress and delivery of the external audit plan and that any risks to successful production of the financial statements and audit are being managed.</p> <p>Note: Further assurance needed around impact / risks associated with early close down.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on action re Annual Governance Statement 2014 	<p>Gain assurance that management have progressed the agreed actions associated with the significant issues / key risks identified in the Annual Governance Statement.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Accounting Policies 	<p>Seek assurance that the Council has appropriate accounting policies in place to ensure that items are treated correctly in the accounts.</p>		
Other Assurance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combined Assurance Status Reports 	<p>Understand the level of assurances being provided on the Council's critical systems, key risks and projects and how they link to the Committees role and remit and the</p>		

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	Annual Governance Statement.		
March 2015	Assurances Required / Being Sought	Review of why the paper was on the agenda and did it give you the assurances you were seeking?	Relevancy – Terms of Reference
Core Business			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Internal Audit Plan 2015/16 	<p>That the Internal Audit Plan focuses on the key risks facing the Council and is adequate to support the Head of Audit opinion.</p> <p>Confirm that the plan achieves a balance between setting out the planned work for the year and retaining flexibility to changing risks and priorities during the year.</p> <p>Ensure that the Internal Audit Resource has sufficiently capacity and capability to deliver the plan.</p> <p>Seek an understanding of what assurances Internal Audit will be providing the Committee to help it discharge its terms of reference.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Counter Fraud Plan 2015/16 	<p>Gain assurance that the Council has effective arrangements in place to fight fraud locally.</p> <p>Ensure that counter fraud resources are targeted to the Council's key fraud risks.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Audit Standards on the risks associated with the impact of potential fraud and error on the Financial Statements 	<p>Seek assurance that the statements made against the standard accurately reflect the Council's counter fraud arrangements.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Management Progress Report 	<p>Gain assurance that the Council is effectively managing its key risks – has good risk management systems /</p>		

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	<p>processes in place that enable decision makers to understand the level of risk being taken and the Council is prepared to accept.</p> <p>That there has been on big surprises for the Council where it suffered significant financial loss or reputational damage.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Audit Grant Certification Report 	<p>Seek assurances that claims and returns have been managed appropriately and that there are no significant errors that would result in loss of funding.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Audit Progress Report 	<p>Seek assurance over progress and delivery of the external audit plan and that any risks to successful production of the financial statements and audit are being managed.</p> <p>Note: Further assurance needed around impact / risks associated with early close down.</p>		
Other Assurance			

Audit Committee Action Plan – 2014/15			
Action	Terms of Reference Outcome	Key Delivery Activities	Who by and When
Understanding the role and remit of the VfM Scrutiny Committee and being clear about what and how the Audit Committee will seek assurance from it.			
Clarify who should attend the Audit Committee and expectations on the information being presented.			
Undertake a skills and knowledge survey to review and establish any training and development needs as a whole Committee.			
<p>Reviewing and encouraging transparency in partnership decision making.</p> <p>Understand and seek assurance over the governance and risks associated with our key partners. Facilitate risk management training and awareness for members and staff. To clarify the understanding of the level of risk the Council is prepared to accept across its key activities / business units.</p>			

Audit Committee – Work Plan

Action	Terms of Reference Outcome	Key Delivery Activities	Who by and When
Ensure that the 'independent' member is provided with same information as elected members			
How the Committee meets its terms of reference re: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the constitution • Monitoring the Council's complaint process 			
Review of the Committee's Terms of Reference in light of revised CIPFA guidance			