

Report of	Meeting	Date
Head of Audit and Risk	Governance Committee	Tuesday, 8 August 2023

CIPFA Audit Committee - Practical Guidance for local authorities and police 2022

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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Purpose of the Report

1. To present to members the latest CIPFA's Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022 and CIPFA guidance – Audit Committees - Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2022. The report will also present proposals to assess the skills and knowledge of the Committee to ensure a comprehensive training plan can be developed.

Recommendations

2. The Committee to consider the attached guidance and assist with the review of the skills and knowledge.

Reasons for recommendations

3. To be successful, the Governance Committee needs to have a good level of understanding of its role and responsibilities and the report aims to contribute to this.

Other options considered and rejected

4. None.

Corporate priorities

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (Please bold one)

An exemplary council	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

Background to the report

6. The purpose of an Audit / Governance Committee is to provide those charged with governance, independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting and annual governance processes.
7. CIPFA have recently issued both a revised Position Statement and new guidance "Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2022". The Position Statement and guidance sets the arrangement for the Committee including:
 - Purpose;
 - Model;
 - Core Functions and
 - Membership.
8. The guidance represents best practice and CIPFA expects that all local authorities make their best efforts to adopt the principles contained within the guidance, aiming for effective audit / governance committee arrangements. This guidance replaces the version issued in 2018.
9. To assist members, the Position Statement is attached at Appendix 1 and a full copy of the guidance is attached at Appendix 2.

Revised Terms of Reference and Effectiveness of the Governance Committee Review.

10. Members will note that the guidance contains a suggested Terms of Reference (Appendix B) and a Self-Assessment of good practice (Appendix E). It is the intention for the both of the above documents to be assessed and the results brought back to the Committee at the meeting in September for consideration.

Skills and Knowledge of the Committee.

11. CIPFA'S guidance acknowledges that there is a range of knowledge and experience that members can bring to the Committee to enable it to perform effectively. It emphasises that there are core areas of knowledge that are beneficial for all Committee members to have.
12. The guidance includes a Skills and Knowledge Framework to allow members to carry out a self-assessment and it is requested by members complete this and return to Democratic Services by the 31st August 2023. Hard copies of the framework will be available at the meeting.
13. The results of the self-assessment will be collated by Internal Audit and shared with the Chair of the Governance Committee and will be used to inform the Member Development Programme in 2023 - 24 and beyond.

Climate change and air quality

14. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

Equality and diversity

15. Not applicable.

Risk

16. As the Governance Committee plays an important role in the good governance of the authority, this report sets out to strengthen the arrangements and mitigate the associated risks.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

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

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

18. It is clearly important to carry out a skills and knowledge assessment in accordance with up to date guidance. If any gaps in knowledge emerge then appropriate training can be identified to address that.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 CIPFA's Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022

Appendix 2 – CIPFA's Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2022.

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