

Self Assessment: Improvement Actions (2015) – Updated Position (February 2016)

Ref.	Proposed Improvement Actions	Target Date	Action Owner	February 2016 Position	February 2016 Status
	Roles & Responsibilities				
1	<u>Audit Committee Terms of Reference</u> Officers to undertake a review of the Committee's Terms of Reference prior to Annual Council in May 2015 to ensure fit for purpose and in line with current best practice.	May 2015	Audit & Risk Manager	The Audit Committee Terms of Reference was reviewed and approved in May 2015.	Actioned.
2	<u>Volume of Meeting Papers</u> Members noted that although the agenda supports the Work Programme there are often large volumes of paper associated with each agenda item. It can be difficult for Members to digest prior to the meeting given other demands. Officers to be reminded that the information put in front of Members to be relevant and concise and not overly detailed. Where Members of the Committee have concerns over such matters to report to the Committee Chair.	Ongoing	Corporate Director Resources & Audit & Risk Manager	To reduce the agenda size in Audit Committee meetings three new approaches have been introduced. 1) An Audit Committee SharePoint site has been created so that documentation of interest to the Audit Committee can be stored for Member information. This is being developed, with solutions being sought for Independent Members who are not currently able to access the SharePoint site. 2) Emails are being circulated to Members for information communications, to limit Audit Committee agendas. 3) Members are invited to a pre meeting of the Audit Committee giving them an opportunity to raise and discuss any issues prior to the formal meeting.	Actioned
3	<u>Information Items</u> Items for information to be taken off the Agenda and distributed for information only. Any ongoing actions to be reviewed and where appropriate to be reported, in brief, under Outstanding Actions (for information only.)	Ongoing	Secretariat	As above, information only items are being reduced in Audit Committee meetings. Pre meeting allows Members with the opportunity to raise issues.	Actioned

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4	<p><u>Assurance Summary</u> The Audit Committee annually are presented with an Assurance Summary of the key governance issues and corporate risks. Members of the Committee to continue to receive this summary annually to provide a level of assurance against the Committee's Work Programme.</p>	Annually	Audit & Risk Manager	<p>On a biannual basis, the Audit Committee receives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An action plan of the 'Significant Governance Issues' affecting the Council, as updated by the Senior Management Team, and; • the Corporate Risk Register (detailed and summary versions). 	Actioned
5	<p><u>Circulation of Work Programme</u> The Committee's Work Programme is to be published more widely amongst elected Members similar to Scrutiny.</p>	Ongoing	Democratic Services	Meeting papers published on the Council Website.	Ongoing
6	<p><u>Audit Committee & Scrutiny Committees</u> In order to address the issue of items being considered by Scrutiny overlapping with Audit Committee a protocol is to be developed by officers.</p> <p>In order to support this notion the Audit Committee Chair would consider it beneficial to meet with the Scrutiny Chairs on an annual basis.</p> <p>In future, Scrutiny work programmes to be shared with Audit Committee Members and used to inform Audit Committee work programme to avoid duplication.</p>	Ongoing	Secretariat	<p>A draft Scrutiny and Audit Protocol has been developed to promote work synergies.</p> <p>The Audit Committee Chair also attended a Scrutiny Chair's Liaison Forum in quarter two (2015/16).</p>	Draft protocol Prepared - Ongoing
7	<p><u>Chairperson's Letters</u> There have been instances where issues have been reported to the Committee on more than one occasion, where action has not been taken. In order to escalate these matters the Chair will in future write to the Chief Executive, relevant Cabinet Member or relevant Scrutiny Chair if the Director cannot provide a resolution.</p>	Ongoing	Audit & Risk Manager	This is now happening and the Chair does raise issues with the Chief Executive, Cabinet Member or relevant Scrutiny Chair as considered appropriate.	Actioned

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8	<u>Independent Members</u> Engagement with Members - To benefit the independent Members an item to be included on each agenda which can be used for elected members to bring any matters of interest to the independent Members.	Ongoing	Democratic Services	All Members receive induction training.	Actioned
	Members Newsletter - The newsletter circulated to elected Members to be distributed to the Independent Members.			There is a pre meeting before every Audit Committee meeting, where there is an opportunity for all Members to have discussions and to bring any matters of interest to the independent members. Being considered as to best means of sharing this. Potential to use SharePoint website once access provided to Independent members.	Ongoing
Monitoring & Oversight					
9	<u>Internal Audit Resource</u> The impact of reducing resources within the Internal Audit Team to be highlighted in the Audit Committee's Annual Report.	March 2015	Audit & Risk Manager	The impact of reducing resources within the Internal Audit Team was highlighted in the Audit Committee's Annual Report and emphasised in the Annual Governance Statement. Regular updates to Audit Committee mention resource issues and next year's Audit Plan will highlight any resource implications on audit coverage.	Ongoing
10	<u>Chief Executive Attendance</u> The Committee would appreciate if the Chief Executive would attend the Audit Committee on an annual basis to provide an update on the progress of the Organisational Development Plan and the strategic direction of the Council.	December 2015	Corporate Director Resources, Secretariat & Chief Executive	The CEO and Leader have attended Audit Committee to provide updates on the ODP and have agreed to continue to provide updates and attend as appropriate.	Actioned
11	<u>Monitoring Officer</u> The Monitoring Officer to attend Audit Committee when the Annual Governance Statement is considered.	In accordance with the Work Programme	County Clerk	The Monitoring Officer now attends Audit Committee whenever a governance item is included on the Agenda. She also attends the Agenda conference meeting with the Chair.	Actioned
12	<u>Audit Committee Self Assessment</u> The assessment exercise to be held on an annual basis.	January 2016	Secretariat & Audit & Risk Manager	The Audit Committee Self Assessment position will be reviewed annually. Agreed the next workshop would be held in Sept 2016.	Actioned & Ongoing

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	Internal & External Audit Process				
13	<u>Meeting with Audit Manager</u> A formal arrangement will be offered to Members of the Committee to meet with the Internal Audit Manager and External Auditors on an individual basis.	Commencing June 2015	Secretariat & Audit & Risk Manager & Wales Audit Office	Members are aware that this is possible. The introduction of time to get together pre Audit Committee helps raise issues of interest and retain focus during the meeting.	Actioned
14	<u>Wales Audit Office</u> External Auditors to be represented at all meetings.	Ongoing	Wales Audit Office	In Place.	Actioned
	Membership				
15	<u>Vice Chair</u> It was agreed that a Vice Chair should be nominated by the Committee for the municipal year and to act in the absence of the Chair.	June 2015	Audit Committee	Actioned and a Vice Chair appointed in June when the Chair was appointed. MP (independent member) for current year.	Actioned
	Meetings				
	No matters to report			N/A	N/A
	Skills & Training				
16	<u>Individual Self Assessment</u> The Committee Members may wish to undertake a personal self assessment in context with the role of an Audit Committee Member which may identify gaps in knowledge and areas where training can be arranged. The suggested framework was presented to Council in December 2013 : The Wales Charter for Member Support and Development: An Introduction for Authorities. Specifically the role of a Member of an Audit Committee.	-	Chairperson, Secretariat, Corporate Director Resources & Audit & Risk Manager	This opportunity has been offered to members	Actioned