

Chairman - Councillor M G Dodson

Present (for all or part of the meeting):-

Councillors:

K M Aspin

A M Loughran

B McKeown

A R McNaughton

D P Rouxel

Also present:- Councillors R P Cooke (Resources Portfolio) and J Thorley

Officers in attendance:-

C Forrester - Deputy Chief Executive - Resources and Section 151
Officer

J Aupers - Head of Transformation and Assurance

S Baddeley - Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager

J Dean - Democratic Services Officer

AAC6 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2025 as published on 22 May 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

AAC7 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P A Leason (substituted by Councillor B McKeown).

AAC8 Internal Audit Annual Report 2024-25

Considered the report of the Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager presenting the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2024-25.

Mr Baddeley referred Members to the associated appendices to the report before responding to questions concerning:-

- Property Management and rentals
- Response to the Internal Audit satisfaction survey
- Matters detailed in paragraph 3.8 of appendix 2
- Partial assurance audit

The Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager highlighted that based on the work undertaken during the year and the implementation by management of the audit recommendations, Internal Audit provided Limited assurance that the Council's governance arrangements including risk management and systems of internal control were operating adequately and there were no instances where any breakdown of control resulted in a material discrepancy.

Members duly voted on the recommendation as set out, which was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that in accordance with the powers delegated to the Committee:-

- (a) the Internal Audit Annual Report be noted;
- (b) the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets attend the next meeting of the Committee to address questions arising from the Property Management and Rentals audit.

AAC9 VFM Progress Report - Quarter 4/End of Year Report for 2024/25

Considered the report of the Head of Transformation and Assurance advising Members on the progress in the delivery of the VFM Improvement Plan at the end of Quarter 4 of 2024/25.

Committee were referred to the associated appendix to the report where the key achievements of publication of the statement of accounts for 2023/24, updating the procurement regulations and completion of consultation on the new Corporate Plan were highlighted. Updates were duly provided for those actions in progress.

Members duly voted on the recommendations as set out, which were declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that in accordance with the powers delegated to the Committee:-

- (a) the progress made in 2024/25 in the delivery of the VFM Improvement Plan be noted;
- (b) the proposals for refocusing the improvement plan for 2025/26 be noted.

AAC10 Updated Strategic Risk Register

Considered the report of the Head of Transformation and Assurance setting out details of the Council's Strategic Risk Register as at 1 April 2025 and providing an update on the implementation of the new Risk Management Framework.

The Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager highlighted the detail as contained within paragraphs 3 and 5 of the report, and the associated appendices, noting that the report would be submitted to Cabinet at its meeting on 7 July 2025. Members were pleased to receive the report in its revised format, as detailed from page 59 of the agenda.

Members duly voted on the recommendation as set out, which was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that in accordance with the powers delegated to the Committee the draft Strategic Risk Register and the progress made in the identification and management of the strategic risks be noted.

AAC11 Annual Governance Statement 2024-25

Considered the report of the Head of Transformation and Assurance setting out the Annual Governance Statement for the year 2024-25.

The Head of Transformation and Assurance noted the key sources of assurance as detailed in paragraph 3.3 of the report and the efforts undertaken to simplify the systems of control in preparing the AGS.

Members duly voted on the recommendations as set out, which were declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that in accordance with the powers delegated to the Committee:-

- (a) the Annual Governance Statement for 2024-25 (as set out in appendix 1 of the report) be approved;
- (b) the Governance Improvement Plan (as set out in appendix 2 of the report) be approved.

The Annual Governance Statement for 2024-25 was duly signed by the Chairman of the Committee.

CHAIR