

Title of report: Draft Annual Report of the Audit Committee

Meeting: Audit and Governance Committee

Meeting date: Tuesday 11 June 2024

Report by: Democratic Services Officer

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

(All Wards)

Purpose

To provide the committee with the draft annual report covering the work undertaken by the Committee, during the 2023/24 municipal year.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is invited to consider and agree:

- a) the report and any adjustments it wishes to make and;**
- b) that the report be published on the Councils website.**

Alternative options

1. The Committee could decide to omit some items or include others in the report. This is not recommended because it demonstrates the work of the committee during the 2023/24 municipal year.
2. The committee could choose not to produce an annual report. This is not recommended because it provides a visible demonstration of how the committee is fulfilling its role and compliments the council's objectives of being open and transparent.

Key considerations

3. The draft annual report located at Appendix A of this report is from the Audit and Governance

Committee and provides an update on the work undertaken by the Committee, during the municipal year.

4. The audit and governance committee is responsible for providing assurance on the council's audit, governance (including risk management and information governance) and financial processes in accordance with the functions scheme. The responsibilities for functions are set out in paragraphs 3.5.9(e) to paragraph 3.5.15 of the [Council constitution](#).

Community impact

5. As part of Herefordshire Council's Code of Corporate Governance, internal and external audit reports provide assurance that the council's control arrangements are operating effectively, and demonstrate effective management of risk.
6. A clear and transparent annual report provides a visible demonstration of how the committee is fulfilling its role as set out in the council's constitution.

Environmental impact

7. Whilst this is an update on the work of the committee during the municipal year it will have minimal environmental impacts, consideration has been made to minimise waste and resource use in line with the council's Environmental Policy.

Equality duty

8. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. As this is a decision on back office functions, we do not believe that it will have an impact on our equality duty.

Resource implications

9. There are no financial implications.

Legal implications

10. The annual report reflects any statutory or constitutional requirements.

Risk management

11. The annual report can be adjusted as necessary to risks as they are identified; the committee also provides assurances that risk management processes are robust and effective.

Consultees

12. None

Appendices

Appendix A Draft Annual Report of the Audit Committee

Background papers

None identified.