

Meeting:	Audit & Governance Committee
Meeting date:	19 March 2015
Title of report:	Future work programme for A&G Committee
Report by:	Governance Manager

Classification

Open

Key Decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards Affected

Countywide

Purpose

To agree the future work programme for the Audit and Governance Committee for 2015-16.

Recommendation

THAT:

subject to any amendments made by the committee, the work programme for 2015-16 for the Audit and Governance Committee, be agreed.

Alternative options

This is a draft programme to be discussed and finalised by the committee. There are no alternative options as regards whether or not to have a work programme as the committee will require such a programme in order to set out its objectives for the coming year.

However, following discussion, adjustments to timescales and content may be required.

Reasons for recommendations

- 1 The work programme is recommended as the committee is required to define and make known its work for the coming year. This will ensure that matters pertaining to audit and governance are tracked and progressed in order to provide sound

governance for the council.

Key considerations

- 2 A number of items considered by the committee in the current year are ongoing and updates are carried forward into the new work programme to ensure early completion. These are: transparency code; Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) investigation; review of the constitution; and whistleblowing policy.
- 3 A report providing assurance as to how the council is meeting the requirements of the transparency code is currently under development and will be presented to the first meeting of the committee.
- 4 Following consideration of the PIDA report provided by Grant Thornton, and the action plan in response to the report, the committee had established an informal working group to scope and research work on governance structures, systems and procedures relating to procurement and projects, to include matters such as avoiding over reliance on any individual and incorporating 'what if' challenges. Although the working group held an initial meeting in December this work has not progressed as swiftly as would have been wished because of the need to resource recent additional overview and scrutiny committee activity and other urgent legal priorities. The information requested by the working group will be presented to the new committee to inform its future work planning.
- 5 Technical amendments to the contracts and financial procedure rules within the constitution are scheduled elsewhere on the committee agenda today. Following the motion passed by Council in December a cross party working group has met to begin the work of identifying areas for improvement. This work will inform further identification of possible improvements which will be brought to the committee for consideration in the new municipal year developing recommendations to Council as appropriate.
- 6 The council's whistleblowing policy and procedure has been under review and revised documentation is to be presented to the committee, following consultation with staff representatives, for approval in order to effect implementation. This will ensure that employees and stakeholders have a clear reporting mechanism for any concerns relating to suspected malpractice or wrongdoing and will support the recommendations arising from the PIDA investigation outlined above.
- 7 The routine business of the committee has been reflected as far as is known in the draft programme, including the regular reporting from internal and external auditors.
- 8 It was identified that the staff survey results will be reported to the Audit and Governance Committee and this has been identified within the programme.
- 9 The work programme recognises that there may need to be a response to the 2016 Tipping Point report by Grant Thornton during the year.

Community impact

- 10 The work of the committee supports the council in demonstrating its values, and in particular the commitment to being open, transparent and accountable.

Equality duty

11 This report does not impact on this area.

Financial implications

12 There are no financial implications.

Legal implications

13 There are no legal implications.

Risk management

14 The draft programme can be adjusted in year to respond as necessary to risks as they are identified; the committee also provides assurance that risk management processes are robust and effective.

Consultees

15 Internal and external auditors.

Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Work Programme 2015-16

Background papers

- None identified.