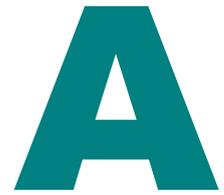




HILLINGDON  
LONDON



# Virtual Audit Committee

**Date:** TUESDAY, 20 APRIL 2021

**Time:** 5.10 PM

**Venue:** VIRTUAL - LIVE ON THE  
COUNCIL'S YOUTUBE  
CHANNEL: HILLINGDON  
LONDON

**Meeting  
Details:** Members of the Public and  
Media are able to watch a live  
broadcast on the Council's  
YouTube channel

This Agenda is available online at:  
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camera and scan the code below:



## Members of the Committee

John Chesshire (Chairman)  
Councillor Tony Eginton (Opposition  
Lead)  
Councillor Duncan Flynn  
Councillor Raymond Graham  
Councillor Richard Mills

**Published:** Monday, 12 April 2021

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Putting our residents first

Lloyd White  
Head of Democratic Services  
London Borough of Hillingdon,  
Phase II, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

# Terms of Reference

The Constitution defines the terms of reference for the Audit Committee as:

## Introduction

The Audit Committee's role will be to:

- Review and monitor the Council's audit, governance, risk management framework and the associated control environment, as an independent assurance mechanism;
- Review and monitor the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and/or weakens the control environment;
- Oversee the financial reporting process of the Statement of Accounts.

Decisions in respect of strategy, policy and service delivery or improvement are reserved to the Cabinet or delegated to Officers.

## Internal Audit

1. Review and approve (but not direct) the Internal Audit Strategy to ensure that it meets the Council's overall strategic direction.
2. Review, approve and monitor (but not direct) Internal Audit's planned programme of work, paying particular attention to whether there is sufficient and appropriate coverage.
3. Through quarterly Internal Audit summary reports of work done, monitor progress against the Internal Audit Plan and assess whether adequate skills and resources are available to provide an effective Internal Audit function. Monitor the main Internal Audit recommendations and consider whether management responses to the recommendations raised are appropriate, with due regard to risk, materiality and coverage.
4. Make recommendations to the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services on any changes to the Council's Internal Audit Strategy and Internal Audit Plans.
5. Review the Annual Internal Audit Report and Opinion Statement and the level of assurance this provides over the Council's corporate governance arrangements, risk management framework and system of internal controls.
6. Consider reports dealing with the activity, management and performance of Internal Audit.
7. Following a request to the Corporate Director of Finance, and in consultation with the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services, to request work from Internal Audit.

## **External Audit**

8. Receive and consider the External Auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.
9. Monitor management action in response to issues raised by External Audit.
10. Receive and consider specific reports as agreed with the External Auditor.
11. Comment on the scope and depth of External Audit work and ensure that it gives value for money, making any recommendations to the Corporate Director of Finance.
12. Be consulted by the Corporate Director of Finance over the appointment of the Council's External Auditor.
13. Following a request to the Corporate Director of Finance, and in consultation with the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services, to commission work from External Audit.
14. Monitor arrangements for ensuring effective liaison between Internal Audit and External Audit, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance.

## **Governance Framework**

15. Maintain an overview of the Council's Constitution in respect of contract procedure rules and financial regulations and where necessary bring proposals to the Leader of the Council or the Cabinet for their development.
16. Review any issue referred to it by the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Director, any Council body or external assurance providers including Inspection agencies.
17. Monitor and review, but not direct, the authority's risk management arrangements, including regularly reviewing the Corporate Risk Register and seeking assurances that appropriate action is being taken on managing risks.
18. Review and monitor Council strategy and policies on anti-fraud and anti-corruption including the 'Raising Concerns at Work' policy, making any recommendations on changes to the relevant Corporate Director in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
19. Oversee the production of the authority's Annual Governance Statement and recommend its adoption.
20. Review the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and make recommendations to the Corporate Director of Finance on suggested actions to improve alignment with best practice.
21. Where requested by the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services or Corporate Director of Finance, provide

recommendations on the Council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls.

### **Accounts**

22. Review and approve the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from financial statements or from the external auditor that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.
23. Consider the External Auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the external audit of the accounts.

### **Review and reporting**

24. Undertake an annual independent review of the Audit Committee's effectiveness and submit an annual report to Council on the activity of the Audit Committee.

# Agenda

## **PART I**

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Declarations of interest
- 3 To confirm that all items marked Part I will be considered in Public and that any items marked Part II will be considered in Private
- 4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 February 2021 1 - 6
- 5 EY 2020/21 ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN & PENSION FUND AUDIT PLAN 7 - 84
- 6 EY update on the 2019/20 Housing Benefit Assurance Process 85 - 96
- 7 Internal Audit Progress Report Quarter 4 2020/21 (including the Quarter 1 2021/22 Internal Audit Plan) 97 - 124
- 8 Draft Internal Audit Plan 2021/22 125 - 144
- 9 2020/21 Quarter 4 Counter Fraud Progress Report 145 - 158
- 10 Draft Counter Fraud Strategic Plan 2021/22 159 - 174
- 11 Audit Committee Member Skills Matrix 175 - 182
- 12 Audit Committee Forward Programme 2021/22 183 - 186

## **PART II**

*That the reports in Part 2 of this agenda be declared not for publication because they involve the disclosure of information in accordance with Section 100(A) and Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), in that they contain exempt information and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.*

- 13 2020/21 Quarter 3 Corporate Risk Register 187 - 206