



Councillor Mike Jordan – Chair of Audit and Governance Committee

Update to Council 22 February 2018

The Audit and Governance Committee has met once since the last update provided to Council on 12 December 2017. The Committee held a meeting on Wednesday 17 January 2018.

Audit and Governance Committee – 17 January 2018

At the last meeting, the Audit and Governance Committee considered a number of items that it has a statutory obligation to consider. The meeting was attended by Senior Officers, the Internal Auditors (Veritau), and the External Auditors (Mazars).

Prior to the meeting, the Committee had a Members-only briefing with the Council's External Auditors, and was pleased to be informed that Mazars felt the Council was well run.

During the meeting, the reports scrutinised by the Committee included the Council's Risk Management Strategy and a review of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Action Plan. As a result of changes, the AGS and Statement of Accounts were now required to be submitted earlier than in previous years, and the Committee was assured that the work and 2018/19 meetings had been planned in line with the new timescales. The Committee noted that there had been five meetings scheduled during 2017/18 in order to accommodate the above changes, but that there would be a return to the usual four meetings in 2018/19.

The Committee also discussed counter fraud, and was given insight into fraudulent activity undertaken by criminals nationally, in order to obtain Council funds. The Committee was informed that some cases had resulted in other Councils encountering high value fraudulent activity in excess of £100,000, but the Committee was assured that the Council's Counter Fraud Team had made good progress, which included raising awareness of fraud and how to report it.

The Committee was largely satisfied with the contents of each report. However, during consideration of the Information Governance Annual Report 2016/17, the Committee was informed that since its publication there had been a data protection breach that involved the disclosure of complainants' identities. It was explained that further information would be available once officers knew more about the incident.

Councillor M Jordan
Chair, Audit and Governance Committee