

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

1. Membership and Meetings

- 1.1 The Governance and Audit Committee shall comprise eight Members of the Council plus one independent Member.
- 1.2 In order to promote the independence of the Committee there should be limited cross membership between the Executive or Overview and Scrutiny Commission and the Governance and Audit Committee limited to a maximum of two Members from the Executive and two from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. Membership should also include one independent external person who is not a Bracknell Forest Councillor.
- 1.3 The Committee shall meet four times per year in accordance with a schedule agreed by Council. Additional meetings may be arranged with the agreement of the Chairman.

2. Specific Functions

The Committee's specific functions shall include but not be limited to -

2.1 External Audit

- To consider the external auditors' annual letter and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to the issues raised
- To approve the external audit plan
- To comment on the scope and depth of the external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money and to make recommendations as appropriate
- To consider any other reports by the external auditors
- To liaise with the Audit Commission over the appointment of the Council's external auditor
- To identify areas of potential work that may be appropriate for the external auditors

2.2 Internal Audit

- Delivery of an adequate and effective system of internal audit
- To consider the Head of Audit and Risk Management's annual audit opinion and the level of assurance given over the Councils corporate governance arrangements
- To consider regular reports summarising internal audit activity and make recommendations as appropriate
- To consider regular reports on the performance of internal audit provider as presented by the Head of Audit and Risk Management
- To consider and approve the Internal Audit Strategy
- To approve the annual internal audit plan, ensuring that there is sufficient and appropriate coverage
- To consider any other reports the Chief Internal Auditor may make to the Panel.

2.3 Risk Management

- To monitor the adequacy of procedures and processes in place to manage risk
- To seek assurances that action is being taken on risk related issues
- To ensure that assurance statements, including the Annual Governance Statement, properly reflect the risk environment

2.4 Governance

- To monitor the adequacy of arrangements in place to meet best practice standards for good governance
- To consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement.
- To ensure that appropriate action is taken with respect the issues raised in the Annual Governance Statement
- To review any issues of governance referred to the Committee
- To review and monitor the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Review procedures for complaints

2.5 Accounts

- To 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 the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council
- To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

3. Delegated Function

- 3.1 The management of the internal audit service is delegated to the S151 officer.

4. Review of Terms of Reference

- 4.1 These Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis. Any changes proposed shall be submitted to Council for approval.