

PART 9 – GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT

9.1 Governance and Audit Committee

9.1.1 There shall be a Governance and Audit Committee consisting of eight members comprising of three Lay Members (with voting rights) and five councillors appointed at the Annual General Meeting of the council . . . At least one third of the Members of the Governance and Audit Committee must be Lay Members .

9.1.2 A “Lay Member ” means a person who is not a member or an officer of any Local authority, has not at any time in the period of twelve months ending with the date of that person’s appointment been a member or an officer of any local authority and is not the spouse or civil partner of a member or an officer of any local authority .

9.1.3 The Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee and Deputy Chair shall be appointed by the Governance and Audit Committee .The person appointed Chair must be a lay member . The person appointed as Deputy Chair cannot be a member of the Cabinet or an Assistant to a Cabinet member

9.1.4. A meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee is to be chaired by the Chair of the committee or if the Chair is absent, by the Deputy Chair . If both the Chair and Deputy Chair are absent the Committee may appoint a member of the Committee who is not a member of the Cabinet or an Assistant to a member of the Cabinet to chair the meeting

9.1.4 No more than one of the members of the Governance and Audit Committee is to be a member of the Cabinet. The Leader cannot be a member of the Committee.

9.1.5 The Governance and Audit Committee may require members and officers of the Authority to attend before it to answer questions and may invite other persons to attend meetings of the Committee.

9.2 Terms of Reference of the Governance and Audit Committee

9.2.1 The Governance and Audit Committee shall have responsibility for overseeing the following functions:

- Ensuring that Council assets are safeguarded
- Maintaining proper accounting records
- Ensuring the reliability of financial and performance management information
- Ensuring independence and effectiveness of internal and external audit
- Developing effective internal financial control and performance management systems

- Encouraging the creation of a sound control environment (including measures to prevent and detect fraud)
- Review and scrutinise the Authority's financial affairs
- Make reports and recommendations in relation to the Authority's financial affairs
- Review and assess the risk management, internal control, performance assessment and corporate governance arrangements of the Authority
- Make reports and recommendations to the Authority on the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements
- Review and assess the Authority's ability to handle complaints effectively
- Make reports and recommendations in relation to the Authority's ability to handle complaints effectively
- Oversee the Authority's internal and external audit arrangements
- Review the financial statements prepared by the Authority
- To consider a draft report relating to the Council's self assessment of its performance, to review it and make any recommendations for changes to the conclusions or to any actions set out in the report and any actions it has already taken .

Specifically the Governance and Audit Committee will undertake the following functions:

Audit Activity

- To consider the head of internal audit's annual report and opinion, and a summary of internal audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance it can give over the council's corporate governance arrangements.
- To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.
- To consider reports dealing with the management and performance of the providers of internal audit services.
- To consider a report from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.
- To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance.
- To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
- To scrutinise the annual Treasury Management Strategy.
- To scrutinise Treasury Management out-turn.

- To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and assess external auditors' performance to ensure it gives value for money.
- To liaise with the Wales Audit Office over the appointment of the council's external auditor.
- To commission work from internal and external audit.

Regulatory Framework

- To maintain an overview of the council's constitution in respect of contract procedure rules and financial regulations.
- To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance in the council.
- To monitor council policies on the antifraud and anti-corruption strategy.
- To oversee the production of the authority's Annual Governance Statement and to recommend its adoption.
- To consider the council's arrangements for corporate governance and recommend actions to ensure compliance with best practice.
- To consider the council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls, as they relate to the remit of this committee.

Accounts

- To review 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.

9.3. Rules of Proceedings of the Governance and Audit Committee

9.3.1 The following paragraphs of Part 4 of this Constitution shall apply to meetings of the Governance and Audit Committee as if reference to the Council were to the Committee and references to the Presiding Member were to the Chair of

the Committee: Paragraphs 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, 4.19, 4.20, 4.21, 4.22, 4.23, 4.24, 4.25, 4.26, 4.27.

9.3.2 The Governance and Audit Committee shall meet at least once during each calendar year. The Governance and Audit Committee must also meet if the Council resolves that the Committee should meet or at least one third of the members of the Committee requisition a meeting by one or more notices in writing given to the person who chairs the committee. It is the duty of the chair of the Committee to secure that meetings are held as required above.

9.4. Access to Information

9.4.1 The provisions of paragraph 4.27 shall apply to proceedings of the Committee as they apply to Council.

Statutory Provisions: Section 101 and Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972

End of Part Nine