



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 19 October 2021

Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report 2020-21 & Committee Work Plan (For Information)

Purpose:	This report supports the development of a strong relationship between Scrutiny and Audit, inviting the Chair of the Governance & Audit Committee to talk about the work of the Governance & Audit Committee and discuss the relationship.
Content:	<p>The Chair of the Governance & Audit Committee, Paula O'Connor, will attend the meeting. On the work of the Committee, the following documents are provided which help the Scrutiny Programme Committee to understand the role and function of the Governance & Audit Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report 2020/21• Governance & Audit Committee Work Plan• Governance & Audit Committee Statement of Purpose
Lead Members:	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee Paula O'Connor, Chair of the Governance & Audit Committee
Lead Officers:	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer Ben Smith, Chief Finance Officer
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Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer:	Paul Cridland

1. Developing the Relationship between Scrutiny and the Governance & Audit Committee.

- 1.1 The Council has long recognised the relationship between Scrutiny and Audit and need for:

- mutual awareness and understanding of the each other's work
- respective work plans to be coordinated and avoid duplication / gaps
- clear mechanism for referral of issues, if necessary

1.2 It is important that there is:

- clarity between the core roles of both functions
- regular conversation about Committees' work programmes, and responsibilities
- a way to ensure that issues can be passed between Committees, avoiding duplication

1.3 Action already taken as part of this process:

- i) Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee / Convener of Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel copied into Governance & Audit Committee agendas and vice versa, for information.
- ii) Work Programme / Work Plans published, at least annually, in each other's agenda for information.
- iii) Respective Chairs speaking, at least annually, at each other's Committee meeting on their work and the relationship between Scrutiny and Audit.
- iv) Governance & Audit Committee chair invited to participate in the Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference.
- v) Chairs raise any issues re. coordination / duplication on ongoing basis
- vi) Where matters to be referred from Governance & Audit Committee the chair writes letter to chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee, and vice versa.

1.4 The relationship benefits from a number of councillors sitting on both Committees, including the current Chair & Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee which is advantageous.

1.5 To facilitate discussion the following papers are provided to the Scrutiny Programme Committee:

- Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report 2020-21 (**Appendix 1**). This was presented to Council on 1 July 2021.
- Current Governance & Audit Committee Work Plan (**Appendix 2**)
- Current Governance & Audit Committee Statement of Purpose (**Appendix 3**)

1.6 The Chair of Governance & Audit Committee has been invited to attend the meeting to talk about the work of the Committee. The Scrutiny Programme Committee can discuss any issues arising concerning the relationship between Scrutiny and Audit.

1.7 Similarly, the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee attended the Governance & Audit Committee meeting on 12 October to talk about the work of scrutiny.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

3. Legal Implications

3.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report 2020-21

Appendix 2: Current Governance & Audit Committee Work Plan

Appendix 3: Current Governance & Audit Committee Statement of Purpose