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13 October 2016

To: Chairman – Councillor Andrew Fraser
Members of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee – Councillors
John Batchelor, Grenville Chamberlain, Simon Crocker, Christopher Cross,
Roger Hall, Douglas de Lacey, Tony Orgee and John Williams

Quorum: 3

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **AUDIT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**, which will be held in **MONKFIELD ROOM, FIRST FLOOR** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **FRIDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2016** at **9.30 a.m.**

Members are respectfully reminded that when substituting on committees, subcommittees, and outside or joint bodies, Democratic Services must be advised of the substitution *in advance of* the meeting. It is not possible to accept a substitute once the meeting has started. Council Standing Order 4.3 refers.

Yours faithfully
JEAN HUNTER
Chief Executive

The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you.

AGENDA

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- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--------|
| 1. | Apologies for Absence
To receive Apologies for Absence from Committee members. | |
| 2. | Declarations of Interest | |
| 3. | Appointment of Vice-Chairman | |
| 4. | Minutes of Previous Meeting
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2016 as a correct record. | 1 - 4 |
| AUDIT REPORTS | | |
| 5. | Internal Audit - Progress Report | 5 - 12 |
| 6. | External Audit Results 2015-16 | |

DECISION ITEMS

7. **Review of Statement of Accounts**
8. **Letter of Representation**
To endorse the draft letter of representation.
9. **Annual Governance Statement** 13 - 38

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

10. **Appointment Person Arrangements for the Appointment of the External Auditor** 39 - 42

INFORMATION ITEMS

11. **Ombudsman Letter** 43 - 50
Attached are the following documents:
- The 2015/16 annual letter
 - A spreadsheet providing more information on the complaints and enquiries received in the period
 - A spreadsheet providing more information on the decisions made in the period
12. **Treasury Management Annual Report**
13. **Matters of Topical Interest**
14. **Committee's Work Programme** 51 - 52
15. **Date of Next Meeting**
Members are asked to bring their diaries. It is suggested that a meeting in December is not required and the next meeting of the Committee should be held on:
- Friday 31 March at 9:30am.

OUR LONG-TERM VISION

South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live, work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

OUR VALUES

We will demonstrate our corporate values in all our actions. These are:

- Working Together
- Integrity
- Dynamism
- Innovation

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL

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Agenda Item 4

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee held on
Friday, 24 June 2016 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT:	Councillor Nick Wright – Chairman	
Councillors:	John Batchelor Roger Hall Ray Manning John Williams	Christopher Cross Douglas de Lacey Tony Orgee
Officers:	Patrick Adams Suzy Brandes Alex Colyer Caroline Ryba Sally Smart	Senior Democratic Services Officer Principal Accountant (General Fund & Projects) Executive Director, Corporate Services Head of Finance Principal Accountant Financial & Systems
External:	Steve Crabtree	Shared Head of Internal Audit

Councillor Philippa Hart was in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Simon Crocker and Andrew Fraser sent their apologies. Councillor Ray Manning was acting as substitute for Councillor Andrew Fraser.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

4. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE 2015/16

Steve Crabtree, Shared Head of Internal Audit, introduced this Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service for 2015/16 by stating that he was able to provide a reasonable assurance that the systems in place at the Council were appropriate and met with expectations.

Audit days

Steve Crabtree reported that Internal Audit had managed to deliver 250 audit days during 2015/16, which was more than forecast.

Core Financial Systems

Steve Crabtree explained that in general, controls were sufficient for Internal Audit to place reliance on them. Internal Audit would be reviewing the processes within the Debtors reminder stages as the systems upgrades prevented this at the time of the audit.

Corporate Fraud Arrangements

The Executive Director explained that following the transfer for anti-fraud staff to the Department for Work and Pensions the Council had set up a Corporate Fraud Project Working Group to review fraud prevention across the authority. The Committee would

receive a report on this at their next meeting.

Project Management and Recruitment and Selection

Steve Crabtree informed the Committee that the Council had good policies in place with regard to Project Management and Recruitment and Selection but these policies were not being applied consistently. The Executive Director reported that EMT had accepted the recommendations in these reports and had implemented measures to strengthen the application of the policies.

Steve Crabtree stated that all Internal Audit's recommendations were followed up.

The Audit and Corporate Governance Committee **NOTED** the report.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Executive Director presented this report, which invited the Committee to carry out its annual review of the Council's Risk Management Strategy. He explained that Executive Management Team had discussed the Strategy and recommended it to the Committee.

The Executive Director introduced Suzy Brandes, Principal Accountant, who would oversee risk management following the retirement of John Garnham.

Amending the Risk Register

Councillor John Williams suggested that the Cabinet should have increased the risk score sooner for the increase in Bed and Breakfast numbers. The Executive Director explained that the Council had to adapt its Risk Register in a number of ways following the new proposals of the new Government.

Shared Services Risk Register

Councillor John Williams suggested that the local authorities involved in the Shared Services arrangements should all have the same risk register. The Executive Director agreed, but stated that he was satisfied that all of the partners' risk management strategies were fit for purpose. Further to the subsequent debate, it was decided that the publicly available Risk Management Strategies of our partners in the Shared Services arrangements should be distributed to all members of the Committee.

The Committee

AGREED to approve the revised Risk Management Strategy, as set out in Appendix B of the report.

6. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Executive Director introduced this report, which invited the Committee to endorse the Statement of Accounts 2015/16. He thanked the Principal Accountant and her team for their work in producing these accounts to an earlier deadline. He explained that whilst he was responsible for signing off the accounts as the Section 151 Officer, it was important for the Committee to discuss it first and suggest amendments.

Ermine Street Housing

The Principal Accountant explained that Ermine Street Housing's accounts were prepared separately and would be sent to company house as it was private company, but these accounts were also incorporated into the Council's accounts, as part of the Group Accounts of the Council.

Pension fund

The Executive Director explained that the Statement of Accounts detailed the position of the pension fund as a snapshot at March 2016. He went on to explain that the future position of the fund was a separate consideration. This would be evaluated by the appointed actuaries who would report towards the end of 2016.

City Deal

It was suggested that the administration work carried out by the Council should be included in the paragraph about City Deal. It was noted that the Greater Cambridgeshire area was the boundary of the District of South Cambridgeshire and included the City of Cambridge.

Housing legislation

The Executive Director explained that the Council would be required to sell the higher value homes when they became vacant to fund the Government's extension of the Right to Buy to housing association tenants. The Government had defined higher value homes by comparing them to prices locally and not nationally.

Amendments

The Committee recommended the following amendments:

- To bring the contents page to the front of the combined Narrative Report and Statement of Accounts document.
- To amend page 59 of the agenda to show that the Independent Group had six members.
- To remove the words "and Councillors" from the second paragraph below the heading "Post-employment benefits" on page 83 of the agenda, as Councillors were no longer eligible for the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- To define what Ermine Street is in an explanatory note on page 70 of the agenda.

The Committee

ENDORSED the Statement of Accounts 2015/16, with the above amendments.

7. MATTERS OF TOPICAL INTEREST**Internal Audit**

The Executive Director explained that Huntingdonshire District Council were planning to join the shared Internal Audit arrangement with Peterborough Unitary Authority, Cambridge City Council and this authority.

Forward Plan

It was agreed that this Committee should have a Forward Plan.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 23 September 2016 at 9:30am.

The Meeting ended at 10.30 a.m.

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
AUDIT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
30 SEPTEMBER 2016**

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2016 / 2017

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RECOMMENDATION:

Members of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee are asked to consider, review, and provide challenge to the attached progress report on the delivery of the audit service up to 31 August 2016.

Report Author:	Steve Crabtree
Position:	Shared Head of Internal Audit (for Peterborough UA / Cambridge City / South Cambridgeshire Councils)
Contact:	Peterborough Office: 01733 384557 Cambridge Office: 01223 458181 South Cambridgeshire Office: 01954 713445

Agenda Item 5

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Management is responsible for the system of internal control and should set in place policies and procedures to help ensure that the system is functioning correctly. On behalf of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee and the Executive Director (Corporate Services), Internal Audit acts as an assurance function providing an independent and objective opinion to the organisation on the entire control environment by evaluating the effectiveness in achieving the organisation's objectives.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to bring the Committee up to date with progress made against the delivery of the 2016 / 2017 Internal Plan, as at August 2016. The information included in the progress report will feed into and inform our overall opinion in the annual Head of Internal Audit (HoIA) report issued at the year end. This opinion will in turn be used to inform the Annual Governance Statement included in the Statement of Accounts and signed by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.
- 1.3 Where appropriate each report we issue during the year is given an overall opinion based on four levels of assurance. To obtain this assurance, this is partly based on the type of recommendations we make in each report. Our assurance ratings were amended at the start of this year (Members were notified via email on 18 April 2016).
- 1.4 Should an audit report identify LIMITED or NO assurance, then as a matter of course those areas are followed up. Our work is carried out to assist in improving control. **However management is responsible for developing and maintaining an internal control framework.**

2. RESOURCES AND OUTPUTS

- 2.1 Since our last report to Audit and Corporate Governance Committee (June 2016) the following issues are brought to Members attention:
- The Annual Audit Opinion report identified 3 audits as being in draft at that time from the 2015 / 2016 Internal Audit Plan (Housing Benefits, Accounts Payable and Corporate Governance). All of these have been finalised and issued and are documented in **Appendix A**.
 - There have been no changes to audit personnel during the year to date.
 - Discussions are in train for a shared service with Huntingdonshire DC in line with the 3C approach.
 - Professional examination success of the Senior Auditor.

2.2 It is too early in the audit year to provide an opinion on the internal controls operating across the Council that have been subject to audit from the 2016 / 2017 audit plans and with the work undertaken in their infancy there are no significant issues to be brought to the Committees attention. Work completed from the current plan are documented in **Appendix B**.

Steve Crabtree
Head of Internal Audit
August 2016

ISSUES ARISING FROM THE DELIVERY OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN DURING 2015 / 2016

Housing Benefits	Prior Review: FULL March 2015	New Assurance: REASONABLE	Critical: 0	High: 1	Medium: 0	Low: 1	Total: 2	There is an expectation that officers within the section notify their team leaders / managers of any individuals they may know who is on benefits. These accounts are then blocked from their access. Regular declarations are made by staff. However, while these are in place, they had not all been actioned on the system. Management agreed to review all declarations to ensure that they had been suppressed on the system.
Accounts Payable	Prior Review: SIGNIFICANT March 2015	New Assurance: REASONABLE	Critical: 0	High: 2	Medium: 0	Low: 0	Total: 0	There has been improvement in the use of the electronic system, E-BIS, to make payments, however further improvements can be made to reduce the reliance on manual intervention.
Corporate Governance (Gifts and Hospitality)	Prior Review: Not applicable	New Assurance: NO	Critical: 0	High: 8	Medium: 1	Low: 0	Total: 9	<p>The Council has clear guidance in place in relation to Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship for both Officers and Members.</p> <p>There was no evidence that any declarations that have been made had been reviewed or who was responsible for such reviews. Furthermore, were the declarations were recorded electronically, no one had access to review these logs.</p> <p>Ownership has been agreed with the Head of Legal Practice who will instigate a full review following the appointment of the Deputy Monitoring Officer.</p>

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2016 / 2017

HOMES FOR OUR FUTURE	
Ermine Street Housing	This audit is planned for Quarter 3 / 4.
Responsive Repairs	WORK IN PROGRESS
Planning	This audit is planned for Quarter 3 / 4
Homelessness	WORK IN PROGRESS Initial meeting held with departmental managers to determine full scope of the review. A number of new areas have been identified which will be factored in.

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AN INNOVATIVE AND DYNAMIC ORGANISATION	
Banking Contract	This audit is planned for Quarter 3 / 4
Procurement and Commissioning	PLANNING Initial meeting held with Contract Manager to understand current arrangements for complying with Public Contract Regulations 2015 (Regulation 84). Audit will be completed in Quarter 3.
Shared Services	This audit is planned for Quarter 3 / 4. (This audit also appears on the Cambridge Audit Plan and the scope will look to form a joint approach).
Asset Management	This audit is planned for Quarter 3 / 4.

CORE SYSTEMS ASSURANCE WORK	
Accounts Receivable	PLANNING Audit brief produced.
Benefits	This audit is planned for Quarter 4
Budgetary Control	This audit is planned for Quarter 3 / 4
Business Rates	PLANNING Audit brief produced.
Council Tax	PLANNING Audit brief produced.
Housing Rents	COMPLETED. A follow up of the last report has been undertaken with the following points noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the exception of 1 agreed audit actions (which is in progress in conjunction with Human Resources), all previous recommendations have been fully implemented. No further weaknesses have been identified.
VAT	PLANNING Audit brief produced.

CORE SYSTEMS ASSURANCE WORK	
Annual Audit Opinion	COMPLETED. The Annual Audit Opinion was submitted to Audit and Corporate Governance Committee in June 2016, highlighting all Internal Audit activity for the previous 12 months together with any areas of concern.
Annual Governance Statement	COMPLETED. The Annual Governance Statement will be submitted to Audit and Corporate Governance Committee in September 2016 following review at Executive Management Team in the same month. Internal Audit has reviewed the methodology used to collect, collate and interpret the information and have identified no gaps. Internal Audit has provided suggestions and commentary on taking this forward.
Internal Audit Effectiveness	Feed into shared service forward plan and is scheduled for Quarter 4.
Fraud and Corruption	This audit is planned for Quarter 4
National Fraud Initiative	WORK IN PROGRESS Preparation for new data uploads / verification of fair processing notices in line with external timetables. Uploads of data is scheduled for early October 2016.
Flexible Working Arrangements	WORK IN PROGRESS Questionnaires issued to managers to establish extent of flexible working. Results are being analysed
Safeguarding	This audit is planned for Quarter 4
Driver Competency	WORK IN PROGRESS Reviewing arrangements at the Depot.
Performance Management	WORK IN PROGRESS Review of current performance indicators which are monitored corporately and at departmental level.
Project Management	This audit is planned for Quarter 3 / 4

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Agenda Item 9

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Audit and Corporate Governance Committee 21 October 2016
AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Corporate Services) / Policy and Performance Manager

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2015/16

Purpose

1. To consider and endorse the draft Annual Governance Statement 2015/16 for approval and sign-off by the Leader and Chief Executive as part of the statement of accounts for the year ending 31st March 2016.

Recommendations

2. That the Committee:
 - (a) Endorse the draft Annual Governance Statement for approval and sign-off by the Leader and Chief Executive (enclosed) and
 - (b) Note that the final version of the Statement will be updated following the receipt of the External Auditors Opinion, to be notified to the Committee under separate cover.

Background

3. The requirement to publish an Annual Governance Statement ("the AGS") is a statutory requirement which was introduced with effect from the 2007/2008 financial year. The AGS provides public assurance about the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control and the Council's corporate governance arrangements and assurance framework.
4. The CIPFA/SOLACE governance framework "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes and highlights the fact that good governance relates to the whole organisation. Six core principles of governance in the framework focus on the systems and processes for the direction and control of the Council and its activities through which it accounts and engages with the community.

Considerations

5. The functions of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee include consideration of the AGS prior to its inclusion in the annual statement of accounts. The AGS should explain the governance framework operating during the accounting period, assess the effectiveness of those controls and identify any significant issues and associated actions.
6. The draft AGS is **attached**. It retains the revised format first used for the 2012-2013 AGS, mapping core principles to the Council's performance framework into a simpler,

plain English document which presents a strategic overview of good governance, with links and appendices providing the more detailed evidence base.

7. In order to demonstrate the integration between performance and governance, **Appendix 1** to the Statement provides a summary of Corporate Plan achievements during 2015-16.
8. The final AGS will include the External Audit opinion for 2015/16 on whether the council has followed the right accounting processes, delivered value for money and that the Council's finances were adequately presented; this opinion is awaited, and upon receipt will be notified to the Committee under separate cover.
9. Internal Audit has made a number of observations identifying potentially significant governance issues likely to require attention during 2016-2017 (as set out in Section 5.2.1 of the Statement), all endorsed by Executive Management Team (EMT) at its meeting on 7 September 2016:
 - (1) 3C shared services was set up in October 2015. The Council should review the effectiveness of its governance arrangements and outcomes achieved in relation to these in order to establish whether or not value for money is being achieved and the original expectations met.
 - (2) Ensure the replacement Financial Management System is delivered to timescale and meets expectations of all Councils. This will include appropriate testing prior to the system going live and being rolled out across partners.
 - (3) Following the departure of a number of senior officers, review the effectiveness of continuity planning/handover arrangements within directorates.
 - (4) Assess the possible impacts of changes imposed by government upon the viability of the business model for Ermine Street Housing
 - (5) In light of a number of services being shared between authorities, there is an opportunity to rationalise policies and procedures. Initial areas to focus on relate to HR and Risk Management.
 - (6) Ensure the effectiveness of internal controls for group entities, in light of the Group relationship with South Cambs Ltd (trading as Ermine Street Housing) and SCDC's significant activities with the company.

Implications

12. In the writing of this report, the following implications have been considered:
 - Financial**
 13. Good corporate governance and internal controls reduce the risk to the Council of financial loss.
 - Legal**
 14. It is a statutory requirement to produce an Annual Governance Statement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the Statement of Reporting Practice 2007 (CIPFA). Operating good corporate governance and internal control systems should demonstrate high ethical standards.
 - Risk Management**
 15. Failure to produce an Annual Governance Statement would affect the approval of the statement of accounts.

Equality and Diversity

16. Preliminary screening of the statement identified no significant equality and diversity implications, therefore a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

Effect on Strategic Aims

17. Delivering strategic objectives in an open, accountable and transparent manner provides evidence of strong governance. Improved service performance and a well-run business are integral of the objective to be an Innovative and Dynamic Organisation set out in the Corporate Plan 2016-2021, and to the wider delivery of the whole plan.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Annual Governance Statement 2014/2015

Delivering Good Governance in Local Government – Guidance and Framework published by CIPFA 2007

Annual Audit Letter

Equality Impact Assessment: Initial Screening Document

Contact Officer: Richard May – Policy and Performance Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713366
Email: richard.may@scambs.gov.uk

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How did we do in 2015/16?

Were we well-governed?

Did we perform well?

**SCDC's annual assessment of its
governance and performance
during the year
to 31 March 2016**

South Cambridgeshire District Council

(1) INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

1.1 This document is an assessment of our “governance”, but what do we mean by that word? There is no legal definition of “governance”, but we believe it is best summarised as having:

- the right **governance structures** (including constitution, committees, delegated powers, internal management structures and audit arrangements)
- the right **plan of action** (including **vision, aims, approaches and ambitions**); and
- the right **way of operating** (including openly, honestly and efficiently)

So that we deliver:

- the **right services**, to the **right people**, at the **right price** and at the **right time**.

1.2 Further guidance is given by CIPFA (the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy) and SOLACE (the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) which, in 2007 (updated in 2012), jointly published a “Framework for Delivering Good Governance in Local Government”.

1.3 This guidance sets out six core principles of good governance, which we think are compatible with the summary above. CIPFA/SOLACE lists these core principles as:

1. **Focusing on the purpose of the Council and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area**
2. **Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles**
3. **Promoting values for the Council and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour**
4. **Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk**
5. **Developing the capacity and capability of Members and Officers to be effective**
6. **Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.**

1.4 The law requires each council to produce an annual statement to provide assurance that it is a well-governed organisation with the right policies and controls in place to ensure excellent public services are delivered and public money is spent wisely. **This is called our ‘Annual Governance Statement’ and includes a ‘review of effectiveness’, where we do a self-assessment of how well all our processes are working to make sure we do things well and in the right way. This report seeks to provide this assurance in respect of South Cambridgeshire District Council.**

1.5 We need to demonstrate that we meet the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 which require the publication of a statement on internal control which shows that we manage risk to a reasonable level. We must also fulfil our duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to continually improve the way we function, having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

1.6 Governance matters because **good governance produces good results**. Governance can sometimes be difficult to measure; however, the delivery of positive outcomes arising from the implementation of our Corporate Plan (in line with core principle (1) above) is not only the ultimate test of good governance but also an indicator that our underlying culture, values, systems and processes are also sound. This report therefore focuses on how far we achieved the objectives we set ourselves, in terms of positive outcomes for our communities, and how we performed against key performance measures of the effective running of the business.

1.7 Some people will, rightly, question whether it is right that we report on ourselves: surely that gives rise to a conflict of interest? In response, we would say that:

- we are required to do so;
- we have tried to be as objective as possible in summarising our performance against our corporate objectives, linking these wherever possible to demonstrable outcomes and specific performance measures;
- feedback from residents has in many cases contributed to our assessment of how far we have delivered;
- all political groups – those in control of the council and those in opposition or independent – have been given the opportunity to input into this report, challenging its content where appropriate; and
- this report is only part of the overall process, as we are also subject to internal and external audit.

This report is written under the authority of the council's Corporate Governance Committee, who approved it formally on *21 October* 2016. It has been signed by the Leader (an elected Councillor) and Chief Executive (an Officer) and published with the final accounts. It was submitted to our external auditors along with our annual accounts prior to publication, and the auditors considered whether the information submitted met their expectations as part of their annual opinion, also published in October 2016.

(2) GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

2.1 In the Introduction above, the first thing we said was that we should have the right governance structures in place. This section reviews those structures. We govern ourselves through **Council**, an **Executive Management Team (EMT)**, **Cabinet** and **Committees**, and we have many **policies** in place that govern our activities and which we follow. These are listed in turn below:

Council

2.2 The Council met ten times during 2015/16 – it agreed the Council’s budget and policy framework, primarily consisting of our Corporate Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), annual capital and revenue estimates and Council Tax and, at extraordinary meetings, considered the Local Development Plan, the implications of the South Cambridgeshire boundary review and devolution proposals. Of the 57 Councillors, the numbers attending were respectively 47, 48, 45, 41, 41, 51, 44, 48, 51 and 44. All meetings of Council were held in open forum and considered reports and recommendations from Cabinet and other committees. Details of agendas and minutes can be found at [SCDC Council Agendas and Minutes](#).

Cabinet

2.3 The Cabinet, or Executive, is the Council’s principal decision-making body charged with implementing the budget and policy framework agreed by Council, consisting of elected Councillors, appointed by the Leader of the Council, each with an area of responsibility called a ‘portfolio’. Across the country, councils are allowed to choose between a number of models for their committee structures. We have been using the Cabinet model since 2001, and although the Cabinet can be made up of any political proportion, at the moment all our Cabinet Members come from the majority political party. Cabinet met seven times during 2015/16 – details of agendas and minutes can be found at [SCDC Cabinet agendas and minutes](#)

Executive Management Team and structure

2.4 The management team structure (i.e. employees, who we call ‘Officers’, as opposed to elected Councillors) is available to view here [SCDC About the council](#)

EMT met weekly throughout 2015/16, alternating formal meetings to consider reports on key policy issues and updates on finance, performance, risk and key programme delivery, and informal sessions and Away Days providing space to explore emerging priority issues. During 2015/16 EMT comprised:

- the **Chief Executive** (Jean Hunter), the Head of the Paid Service, is ultimately responsible for the welfare of the Council’s employees. Jean will be leaving the Council in October 2016 after six years’ service. Alex Colyer has been appointed as Jean’s replacement on a temporary basis (*subject to confirmation by Council on 22 September 2016*), with a recruitment process for a permanent replacement to follow.
- the **Chief Financial Officer** (Alex Colyer) is responsible for looking after the financial affairs of the Council and is the designated Chief Finance Officer responsible for the proper administration of the Council’s financial affairs under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Council’s financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA “Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local

Government” (2010). Caroline Ryba (Head of Finance, Policy and Performance), is the Council’s Deputy Chief Finance Officer (a shared post with Cambridge City Council).

- the **Monitoring Officer** The Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring that decisions by the Council are legal, and are made in an open and transparent way. The Monitoring Officer also reviews any reports or complaints about councillor conduct and behaviour. Seven Code of Conduct Complaints were received and dealt with under the Localism Act 2011 during 2015/16 – only one required further action. (this figure doesn’t include complaints received that either didn’t fall under the Code of Conduct or were passed to Parish Councils for them to investigate). Following the launch of a shared Legal Practice in October 2015, Shirley Tracey was appointed Monitoring Officer, replacing Fiona McMillan, and Graham Watts Deputy Monitoring Officer.
- The Directors of Affordable Homes (Stephen Hills), Health and Environmental Services (Mike Hill) and Planning and New Communities (Jo Mills), were responsible for direct service delivery during 2015/16. Jo Mills left the Council in June 2016. Stephen Kelly was appointed as Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development with Cambridge City Council; Stephen took up post in June 2016.
- The Head of Human Resources (Susan Gardner Craig) is responsible for organisational development and the council’s policies and procedures relating to its staff

The Council’s three statutory officers (Head of Paid Service, Chief Financial Officer and Monitoring Officer) have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources to perform effectively in their roles and their roles are properly understood within the authority. Alex Colyer will fulfil the Head of Paid Service and Chief Financial Officer roles following his appointment as Interim Chief Executive from October 2016.

Corporate Governance Committee

2.5 This Committee met three times during the year. Its main purposes were:

- reviewing and advising on the effectiveness of governance arrangements including risk management and internal controls
- approving the Statement of Accounts, agreeing the Annual Governance Statement (this document) and confirming the annual Audit Risk Index and Strategic Audit Plan
- commissioning studies as appropriate (including on ‘Value for Money’),
- recommending action to the Council in respect of any issues of major concern arising from audit reports and/or management letters
- monitoring overall efficiency and effectiveness of internal and external audit

- monitoring the use of directed surveillance under the Regulations of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)
- receiving information from the Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer of any suspected fraud, maladministration or illegality

In order to better reflect its work, this Committee was renamed the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee at the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2016.

Civic Affairs Committee

2.6 This Committee met five times during the year. Its main purposes were:

- reviewing the Council's Constitution, including proposals for substantive changes for consideration by the Council (excluding those matters which are specifically included within the remit of other bodies on the Council)
- considering changes to electoral arrangements, (including District, ward and parish ward boundaries), and making recommendations to Council
- setting ethical standards (as set out in Article 9.03 of the Council's constitution) and monitoring the Council's Code of Conduct and those of all parish councils in the district

Employment Committee

2.7 The Employment Committee deals with the appointment of senior management, re-gradings and disciplinary and grievance issues. It met once during the year.

Scrutiny and Overview Committee

2.8 The Scrutiny and Overview Committee consists of 9 non-Executive members (ie. not members of the Cabinet) whose role is to hold Cabinet decision takers to account, focusing on issues considered as 'internal'.

It monitors the performance of the Leader and Cabinet, scrutinises services and policies throughout the district, whether or not South Cambridgeshire District Council provides them, and makes recommendations for improvement.

During the year, the Committee met five times and scrutinised the:

- Year End Position Statement on Finance and Performance before it was considered by Cabinet;
- Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Corporate Plan, before they were considered by Cabinet and Council;
- Quarterly Position Statement on Finance, Performance and Risk before it was considered by Cabinet;

- Council’s Corporate Plan 2016-2021 before it was considered by Cabinet;
- outcomes of the Corporate Plan and Key Performance Indicators for 2016-17 and recommended their approval to the Leader of the Council;
- performance of the Council’s Planning department
- performance of the Council’s Customer Contact Centre and considered the Contact Centre’s Annual Performance Review;

It:

- received updates on Shared Services and scrutinised the business cases for the Legal, ICT and Building Control Shared Services before their consideration by Cabinet;
- considered an evaluation of the changes to the Waste and Recycling Service;
- considered an update on the Council’s Commercialisation Programme approach to service delivery;
- received the recommendations of a Working Group, set up in July 2014, to review the 2007 Scrutiny Committee recommendations regarding the Orchard Park development, subsequently presented these findings to Cabinet; all recommendations were adopted;

An annual [report](#) the Council’s scrutiny and overview function, consisting of the work of the Partnerships Review Committee and the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, was presented to the Council’s Annual General Meeting on 19 May 2016.

2.9 Partnerships Review Committee

2.9 The Partnerships Review Committee’s remit is externally focused with members scrutinising, challenging and holding decision takers to account on issues relating to the work of those organisations in the council’s area, including formal partnerships.

Its membership consists of 9 non-executive members and it met three times during the year, when it:

- received updates from the Cambridgeshire Constabulary’s Chief Superintendent and Chief Inspector, as well as from representatives from the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner’s Office;
- received updates from the Managing Director of Stagecoach buses and representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council’s Passenger Transport team, and discussed the provision of bus services and school and community transport in the district;
- considered Cambridgeshire County Council’s Budget Proposals;;
- received updates from Members of the Council appointed to outside bodies.

The Council also has other committees (planning, licensing etc), but as these are not concerned directly with governance arrangements they are not listed here.

Policies

2.10 The table below lists the Council’s main documents, policies and procedures which underpin our assurance framework; we refer to and follow these, to make sure we do things consistently and in the right way. All these policies have been approved by your elected Councillors where required and all are available for inspection at the Council’s reception as well as via our website

The Council has put procedures in place to ensure informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and management of risk. The Council has a Risk Management Strategy which is reviewed annually by Council alongside a strategic risk register which is reviewed quarterly by senior officers and members. It also has a Code of Conduct for staff incorporated in the Constitution, Capability and Disciplinary Procedures and a Whistleblowing policy.

Compliance with the Council’s Anti- Theft, Fraud and Corruption Policy is monitored by the internal auditors in liaison with the council’s Fraud Team. The National Fraud Initiative has led to the delivery of investigating fraud becoming part of the Single Fraud Investigations Service within the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). Internal Audit carried out a review of the Council’s anti-fraud arrangements during 2015-2016, against CIPFA best practice guidelines. We have since carried out a project to draw up options for an integrated corporate framework for addressing fraud, as part of which all relevant policies will be reviewed and updated, and will be making recommendations to management team in Autumn 2016 in this regard.

The Council is committed to the ongoing development of its staff and members. The Council achieved gold accreditation from Investors in People (IIP), reflecting outstanding practice in a number of key areas. The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder has agreed a People and Organisation Development Strategy for 2016-2020 which will enable the Council to implement recommendations arising from the last IIP towards seeking Platinum status in 2018; the new strategy includes priorities for Member development, removing the need for a separate Member Development Strategy.

<i>Title</i>	<i>Contact Officer</i>	<i>Last updated</i>
Constitution (including Procurement Strategy, Finance and Contract Regulations and Codes of Conduct)	Graham Watts	May 2016
People and Organisational Development Strategy	Susan Gardner Craig	July 2016
Risk Management Strategy	Suzy Brandes	June 2016

Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy	Mike Hill	September 2013
Whistleblowing Policy	Tom Lewis	September 2013
Corporate Plan	Richard May	February 2016
Business Plans	Richard May	April 2016
Statement of Accounts	Sally Smart	September 2015

3. VISION, AIMS, AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 In the introduction to this document, the second thing we said we needed was the right plan of action.

During 2015-2016, the Council's Vision was as follows:

"South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live, work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

3.2 Each year we agree a rolling five-year **Corporate Plan**, showing how we will work towards this Vision. We chose to express this in terms of three strategic aims around the themes of Engagement, Partnerships and Wellbeing, delivered through 12 objectives, believing that a clear, simple, transparent set of statements provides the best way of establishing and then achieving them, and of being able to monitor performance – all of which is good governance.

3.3 The 2015-2020 Corporate Plan had three strategic **aims**:

- A. Engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money
- B. Work with partners to create opportunities for employment, enterprise, education and world-leading innovation
- C. Ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents

3.4 For each of these three aims, we set out:

- Four objectives, describing how we will go about achieving those aims
- Specific **actions** take forward during the year towards the delivery of these objectives under each Objective), performance against which is summarised in Appendix 1.

3.5 Councillors agreed a revised Corporate Plan in February 2016, retaining the Council's Vision but expressing current and future priorities in terms of four cross-cutting objectives around Living Well, Homes for our Future, Connected Communities and an Innovative and Dynamic Organisation. The 2016-2021 Corporate Plan is available to view [here](#).

4. REPORTING

4.1 In the Introduction, we said that we needed the right way of operating so that, as outputs, we deliver the right services, to the right people, at the right price, and the right time. We also identified strong performance against key corporate aims and indicators as a mark of good governance in itself, as well as a sign that the underlying governance is also working properly. This section reviews how we operated and delivered.

Regular reporting

4.2 We publish an annual [Statement of Accounts](#) made up of:

- **Statutory accounts:** The format of these is set by accounting regulations, and we recognise that these are hard for many people to understand. To help make them comprehensible, we add an 'explanatory foreword'.
- **Plain English Accounts** - these are intended to be a straightforward and comprehensible version of the statutory accounts.

With respect to the Council's Vision and Objectives mentioned above, we publish:

- **Corporate Plan and in-year three, six, nine-month and year-end progress reports.**

These documents can be found at our [Performance Page](#).

5. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

5.1 The Council must review the effectiveness of its governance arrangements annually by considering the work of Members and Officers on the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the head of internal audit's annual report and comments by external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

Auditing and monitoring

5.2 The Council is subject to the following principal auditing and monitoring processes, which are intended to be objective and (where necessary) critical:

- **Internal audit:** 5.2.1 Since 2013 we have been part of a shared service internal audit arrangement with Cambridge City Council and Peterborough City Council. Internal audit carried out 250 days work during 2015-2016 on a number of specific areas identified in a plan agreed at the start of the year. For each area, we asked them to check our policies and procedures; report on a graded system as to how they think each area is doing; and to make recommendations for changes to our procedures. We then accepted or rejected each of their recommendations. The 2015/16 Internal Audit annual report, sets out details of all the areas they investigated; how many hours they spent doing so; what grading they gave; how many major/minor recommendations they made; and how many of these we accepted, can be found [here](#).

The Head of Internal Audit provided a reasonable assurance that the systems in place at South Cambridgeshire District Council were appropriate and met with expectations, making a number of observations regarding potentially significant governance issues requiring attention during 2016/17. These are set out below, with management responses, lead officer and timescales also identified:

Observation	Management Response	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
1. 3C shared services was set up in October 2015. The Council should review the effectiveness of its governance arrangements and outcomes achieved in relation to these in order to establish whether or not value for money is being achieved and the original expectations met.	Scrutiny and Overview Committee will consider 3C Shared Services performance at its meeting in November 2016	Alex Colyer Brian O'Sullivan	March 2017
2. Ensure the replacement Financial Management System is delivered to timescale and meets expectations of all Councils. This will include appropriate testing prior to the system going live and being rolled out across partners.	Project plan in place to deliver to timescale, scope, cost and quality	Caroline Ryba	As set in project plan
3. Following the departure of a number of senior officers, review the effectiveness of continuity planning/handover arrangements within directorates.	This issue will be addressed through the Organisational Development Strategy agreed by the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder in July 2016. In addition, the Council manages a strategic risk around recruitment and retention	Susan Gardner Craig	As set out in Organisational Development Strategy and Strategic Risk register
4. Assess the possible impacts of changes imposed by government upon the viability of the business model for Ermine Street Housing	Ermine Street Housing has business plans and risk registers in place to be able regularly to assess and react to potential impacts. A company board including newly appointed independents is being recruited to and will oversee the risk register once fully formed.	Alex Colyer Stephen Hills	December 2016
5. In light of a number of services being shared between authorities, there is an opportunity to rationalise policies and procedures. Initial areas to focus on relate to HR and Risk Management.	We have identified a number of possible opportunities to align policies and procedures more closely, whilst work to align risk management processes with the City is underway through the adoption of the '4 Risk' module.	Phil Bird Brian O'Sullivan Caroline Ryba	March 2017
6. Ensure the effectiveness of internal controls for group entities, in light of the Group relationship with South Cambs Ltd (trading as Ermine Street Housing) and SCDC's significant	The following controls are in place and planned: - Internal audit periodic reviews of company to provide assurance on reliability of processes and procedures	Alex Colyer Stephen Hills	Ongoing

activities with the company.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - External audit of company audit, independent of SCDC accounts - Submission of company business plan to Cabinet - SCDC Chief Finance Officer (Executive Director) is company Board Member - Recruitment of Non-Executive Directors to company board (see 4 above) 		
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The Council’s assurance arrangements conform with the governance requirements of CIPFA’s Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit in Local Government (2010)

External audit: 5.2.2 Ernst and Young was the external auditor of the Council. It performed work on the accounts and other documents and processes; checked that we are delivering good value for money; and provided an audit opinion at the end of that work. In 2015-16 it gave the Council an “[awaiting opinion] on the council’s financial statements.

The full report is available here: *Insert link once received*

Other external assurance sources: 5.2.3 During 2015-2016 the Council achieved Gold Standard accreditation against the Investors in People (IIP) standard, demonstrating outstanding practice in a number of areas, in compliance with Core Principle (5), Developing the capacity and capability of Members and Officers to be effective

Peer Review: 5.2.4 The Council has commissioned a Peer Review Challenge by the Local Government Association (LGA) to take place in November 2016. Peer Review is a free and voluntary assessment of the extent to which the Council is meeting the challenges facing it in terms of community leadership, place-shaping and running an effective business. The core components of each review will provide insights into the effectiveness of a number of aspects of the Council’s governance, particularly in respect of financial planning, organisational capacity, political and managerial leadership. The Review Team’s report and recommendations will be used as the basis for an action plan to shape future business planning.

Benchmarking Housing Performance: 5.2.5 The council’s housing service has a number of external methods of scrutinising its performance. The Affordable Homes service submits its key financial and performance data to Housemark, a national benchmarking service, which allows the Council to compare its performance with other landlords across the country. In line

with the Homes & Communities Agency regulatory framework for housing organisations, the council has established an independent tenant lead scrutiny body that will undertake scrutiny reviews of the housing management service.

Major Opposition Leader's annual report: 5.2.6 Another 'critical friend' of the Council is the Leader of the largest opposition political party. For SCDC in 2015/16, when the majority of Councillors were Conservative, the Major Opposition Leader was Cllr Bridget Smith, leading the Liberal Democrat Group. The Major Opposition Group Leader's Annual statement for 2015-16, can be found here:

[Major Opposition Group Leader's Annual Statement](#)

There were also seven members of the Independent Group and one Labour councillor and one non-group councillor.

Analysis performed for this Governance statement

5.3 In drawing up this governance statement we have reviewed the 12 objectives in the Corporate Plan from a governance and performance basis, as set out in Appendix 1. For each action, the table:

- lists the action
- asks 'how did we do?'
- asks 'what's still left to do?'
- shows how that action relates to CIPFA/SOLACE's six core principles of good governance listed on page 2 of Appendix 1.

5.4 We believe that a study of the table in Appendix 1 shows that our results and performance were good, when measured against the visions, aims, approaches and actions that we set ourselves, and (on the basis of the 'work backwards' approach discussed above) we take that as a sign that our governance was also good.

6. OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

6.1 Last year, a number of opportunities for improving controls and procedures were identified by Internal Audit as “meriting attention” and which have been accepted by the Council’s management. These are set out in the following table, along with details of actions undertaken to address each.

Recommendations for 2015/16	Progress
<p>Ensure that working arrangements with external partners are regularly reviewed in order to demonstrate effective management, in particular the arrangements for the responsive repairs contract (Lead Director: Stephen Hills)</p>	<p>In general regular review is an important part of all external partnership arrangements. Regarding the responsive repairs contract in particular, an action plan was agreed in response to the Internal Audit report and a follow-up audit undertaken planned for later this year to ensure all necessary actions have been carried out.</p>
<p>Ensure there are avenues available to enable robust challenge to be made to the ongoing development of shared services in order to protect the interests of SCDC stakeholders (Lead Director: Mike Hill)</p>	<p>Governance arrangements setting out member, lead officer and scrutiny involvement in the process were agreed by Cabinet in July 2015, following consideration by The Corporate Governance Committee. A Joint Group has been formally established to provide strategic direction and leadership and consider proposals for future shared services. The Group’s Terms of Reference were endorsed by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee. Scrutiny and Overview Committee will consider a report on Shared Services Performance at its meeting in November 2016.</p>
<p>Ensure adequate consideration is given to the long term implications of the Greater Cambridge City Deal and other large scale projects and that robust scrutiny of the City Deal by SCDC takes place (Lead Director: Stephen Kelly)</p>	<p>The City Deal Executive Board has taken steps to awarding a contract for a payment by results mechanism where Greater Cambridge is rewarded for prioritising and investing in project that deliver the greatest economic benefit over 15 years. The Audit and Corporate Governance Committee needs to provide a scrutiny of the governance arrangements in relation to the setting up of a Combined Authority, in accordance with its previous commitment to do so</p>

	as part of the last AGS.
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6.2 We consider that the Council’s governance arrangements are fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

We, the Leader and Chief Executive, undertake over the coming year to continue to monitor our governance arrangements to ensure they remain fit for purpose. We are satisfied that they were effective in 2015/16, and will reflect and report on their operation and effectiveness as part of our next annual review.

Signed.....

Jean Hunter

Chief Executive

Signed.....

Peter Topping

Leader of the Council

7. CONCLUSION

The Council’s Corporate Governance Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Council complies with its own governance code, including monitoring the effectiveness of the governance framework and ensuring plans are put in place to address any weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system. The Committee believes that it has discharged that responsibility, and that this report is evidence of that. We recognise that there will always be room for improvement (which will need to be balanced by the costs associated with that, and whether the ‘law of diminishing returns’ applies), but on balance we are delighted to report that **we believe that, during 2015/16, the council was well-governed, and performed well.**

Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan 2015-2020 Actions and KPIs: Summary assessment of how we performed against them

COUNCIL AIM AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS	HOW DID WE DO?	WHAT'S STILL LEFT TO DO?	LINK TO CIPFA/SOLACE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE
ENGAGEMENT – We will listen to and engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money			
Objective (1) - Develop the property company pilot scheme into a full business plan to deliver affordable housing and generate income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet agreed to extend pilot scheme • Ermine Street Housing has acquired 41 properties on the open market. • Additional MoD properties leased at Bassingbourn and Brampton • Much-needed rental housing, with local families prioritised • Interest payment returns to the Council of over £100k during pilot 	<p>Objective is a continuing Corporate Plan priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver £100 million five-year investment programme to buy up to 500 additional properties - Estimated income stream to SCDC in 16/17 is around £250k 	1
Objective (2) - Improve efficiency and value for money within a viable financial strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2016-2021 agreed • General Fund Outturn showed a favourable variance (underspend) of 0.66% (subject to the approval of rollovers) • Investors in People Gold status obtained • New Benefits e-form launched; new claim form completed 622 times between October 2015 – March 2016 • Percentage of Contact Centre calls handled increased from 76% in 2014 to 84% in 2015 • Planning application fee income £631k more than 	<p>Continuing Corporate Plan objective 'An Innovative and Dynamic Organisation': Adopt a more commercial and business-like approach to ensure we can continue to deliver the best possible services at the lowest possible cost.</p> <p>Initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff working group in place to work towards IIP 'Platinum' status through new Organisational Development Strategy, aligned with Member Development Strategy - Development of further e-forms to encourage channelshift - Introducing a simpler and more efficient Delegation scheme for planning applications. 	2-5

Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan 2015-2020 Actions and KPIs: Summary assessment of how we performed against them

COUNCIL AIM AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS	HOW DID WE DO?	WHAT'S STILL LEFT TO DO?	LINK TO CIPFA/SOLACE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE
	projected		
Objective (3) Make the district an even more attractive place to do business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Cambridge Compass' bid for Enterprise Zone status agreed • Corporate Enforcement, Inspection and Better Regulation Policy agreed; • Key Account Management arrangements launched • Business Hub partnership providing comprehensive regulatory advice and consultancy services to businesses • Over 500 businesses on register to receive newsletter and a package of other benefits • Community pub events held to promote reinvigoration and viability of rural businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop governance, business and investment plans for Enterprise Zone • Corporate Plan 2016-2021 objective to 'Continue targeted support for the rural economy'. • Build on lessons from Business Hub pilot and develop a commercial model for the service 	1, 4
Objective (4) Work with tenants, parish councils and community groups to sustain successful, vibrant villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 129 solid wall installations completed by 24 May 2016 • Locality 'Patch' working implemented to respond to local needs • Public houses and village shops amongst local amenities listed as Assets of Community Value • Service level agreements in place for joint youth work initiatives with parishes 	Objective is a continuing Corporate Plan priority: supporting our villages to strengthen their communities and social networks, reducing isolation by improving access, delivering effective community-led services and targeted support for the rural economy.	1, 4, 6

Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan 2015-2020 Actions and KPIs: Summary assessment of how we performed against them

COUNCIL AIM AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS	HOW DID WE DO?	WHAT'S STILL LEFT TO DO?	LINK TO CIPFA/SOLACE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE
PARTNERSHIPS - Work with partners to create opportunities for employment, enterprise, education and world-leading innovation			
Objective (5) Build new council homes to provide affordable accommodation to meet the needs of local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 new Council homes completed and occupied at Swavesey; work on 15 new homes at Linton underway • Joint Housing Development Agency set up with City and County Council to bring together land and expertise to deliver investment in new homes • Refurbishment work at Whaddon Gypsy and Traveller site completed 	Objective reflected in Corporate Plan 2016-2021 actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secure the delivery of a wide range of housing to meet the needs of existing and future communities - Increase the range of housing and tenure options for residents, including Right to Build and Starter Homes 	1
Objective (6). Ensure best use of Council assets and benefit from opportunities to achieve efficiencies from partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant progress with City Deal transport initiatives, establishment of Housing Development Agency and launch of skills service. • Shared Waste, Building Control, ICT and Legal Services launched. Shared Waste Service management team saved £120k. On target to save £300k annually from 2016/17.. 	Objective reflected in continuing Corporate Plan Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver the City Deal, investing in transport, housing, technology and skills to ensure the area continues to be recognised for its economic success and world-leading innovation. - Place greater emphasis on sharing services and information to improve resilience and customer service whilst reducing costs. 	1, 4, 5
Objective (7) Move to a commercial approach to service delivery	Commercialisation initiatives taken forward to generate income during 2016/17 and beyond: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a joint business hub • Provide an in-house enforcement agents service 	Objective reflected in Corporate Plan 2016-2021 action: Take forward commercial activities such as Ermine Housing (our ethical letting company)	1, 4

Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan 2015-2020 Actions and KPIs: Summary assessment of how we performed against them

COUNCIL AIM AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS	HOW DID WE DO?	WHAT'S STILL LEFT TO DO?	LINK TO CIPFA/SOLACE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the Trade Waste service Create a Housing Delivery Vehicle 		
Objective (8) Work with RECAP waste partners to reduce costs, carbon impact and waste sent to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared waste service launched November 2015 with Cambridge City SCDC recycling rate during 2015/16 was 57%, representing top-quartile performance nationally 	Objective reflected in Corporate Plan 2016-2021 action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce black-bin rubbish and increasing income from selling recycled blue-bin waste and paper to keep Council Tax low and reduce waste disposal costs. 	1
WELL-BEING – Ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents			
Objective (9) Work with GPs and partners to link health services and to improve the health of our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community car schemes made 30,000 journeys possible for local people, travelling over 215,000 miles Successful GP Referral scheme helping promote health through physical activity Successful children's holiday camps and annual Park Life event (5,000 attended). 	Objective reflected in Corporate Plan 2016-2021 actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to ensure new transport and digital infrastructure supports and strengthens communities and that our approach to growth sustains prosperity. Support our communities to remain in good health whilst continuing to protect the natural and built environment. 	1, 6
Objective (10) Ensure the impacts of welfare reform are managed smoothly and effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rent collection levels have been maintained throughout 2015/16, achieving 98.98% in March 2016 against a target of 98%. Localised Council Tax Support scheme reviewed and found to be financially viable; revised 2016/17 scheme agreed Council Tax collection rate of 99.4% was the 	Corporate Plan 2016-2021 Objectives B(v) and (vi) commit us to finding solutions for people facing homelessness, and to securing a viable future programme for our Council homes. Ongoing monitoring of tax base and collection rates. Implementation of Pay to Stay from 2017	1, 6

Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan 2015-2020 Actions and KPIs: Summary assessment of how we performed against them

COUNCIL AIM AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS	HOW DID WE DO?	WHAT'S STILL LEFT TO DO?	LINK TO CIPFA/SOLACE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE
	equal highest in England		
Objective (11). Establish successful and sustainable New Communities with housing and employment at Northstowe and the major growth sites, served by an improved A14 and A428	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee resolution to grant planning permission for Northstowe Phase 2, incorporating a legal agreement to secure over £70 million of essential community infrastructure and affordable housing • First planning application for Northstowe Phase 1 received • A14 improvement scheme granted Development Consent • Modifications to Local Plan submitted to Inspector following consultation • 869 net additional dwellings delivered during 2014-2015 (15-16 figures awaited) 	<p>Objective reflected in Corporate Plan 2016-2021 actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence developers to increase the pace of housing and infrastructure construction, including the delivery of affordable housing. • Progress the Local Plan to a doption. • Bring forward strategic transport improvements 	1, 6
Objective (12) Increase the range and supply of temporary accommodation to help minimise the use of bed & breakfast accommodation for homeless households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55 households were in temporary accommodation at 31 March 2016. • We helped 150 households prevent homelessness during 2015/16. • Sub-regional Single Homeless Service is being used to assist single homeless applicants following closure of Homefinder scheme 	<p>Objective reflected in Corporate Plan 2016-2021 actions:</p> <p>Find solutions for people facing homelessness</p>	1

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REPORT TO: Audit and Corporate Governance Committee 30 September 2016
AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Corporate Services) / Policy and Performance Manager

Appointing Person Arrangements for the Appointment of the External Auditor

Purpose

1. This report sets out the options available to the council regarding the adoption of an appointing person arrangement for the appointment of an external auditor for 2018/19 and later years.
2. This is not a key decision because does not have significant budgetary impact or impact communities within the Council area. However, by statute it requires a council decision.

Recommendations

3. To recommend to council the adoption of Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) as the appointing person for the council, subject to receiving a satisfactory invitation to opt into the PSAA's appointing person arrangements.
4. To delegate acceptance of the invitation to the Executive Direct of Corporate Services, as the council's Section 151 Officer.

Reasons for recommendations

5. The adoption of the PSAA as the appointing person for the council meets statutory requirements, should ensure the quality and cost effectiveness of the external audit appointment and avoids the need to establish an auditor panel, with its attendant costs and administrative requirements.

Background

6. The Audit Commission closed in March 2015. The council's current auditor appointment was made under audit contracts previously let by the Audit Commission and now managed by PSAA under transitional arrangements. These audit contracts will end with the completion of the 2017/18 audit.
7. A new appointing person arrangement is required, so that the appointment of an external auditor for the accounts of 2018/19 and later years can be made.

Options for the appointing person arrangement

8. New appointments for the 2018/19 accounts must be made under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and confirmed by 31 December 2017. There are three options available to the council for appointing an auditor. These are:
 - Option 1 - To undertake an individual auditor procurement and appointment exercise;
 - Option 2 - To undertake a joint audit procurement and appointing exercise with other bodies, those in the same locality for example; or

- Option 3 - To join a 'sector led body' arrangement where specified appointing person status has been achieved under the relevant Regulations.
9. For the first two options, the legislation requires an auditor panel to be established. Requirements include:
 - At least three members, two of which must be independent
 - A majority of independent members
 - An independent chairperson
 10. The council could set up its own auditor panel; set up a panel with one or more other authorities; use an existing committee or sub-committee, provided that the requirements above are met; or ask another authority's panel carry out the functions of an auditor panel on its behalf.
 11. Guidance on auditor panels has been issued by CIPFA for local government bodies. The guidance includes a table of advantages and disadvantages of the different ways an auditor panel could be set up. The table is reproduced at Appendix A for information.
 12. Option 3 requires the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to specify a person to appoint a local auditor to opted-in authorities (also known as a sector-led body).
 13. PSAA is an independent company limited by guarantee incorporated by the Local Government Association in August 2014. In July 2016, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government specified PSAA as an appointing person under regulation 3 of the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015. This means that PSAA can make auditor appointments for audits of the accounts from 2018/19 of principal authorities that choose to opt into its arrangements.
 14. More than 200 authorities have indicated their interest in the PSAA's scheme, which is currently being designed to reflect authorities' needs and views. The scheme will be an authorised national scheme which will take full responsibility for local auditor appointments and aim to ensure a high quality professional service and value for money.
 15. The PSAA intends that the scheme will save time and resources for councils and avoid the necessity to establish an auditor panel and manage their own auditor procurement. Assuming a high level of participation, the scheme should be able to attract the best audit suppliers and command competitive prices.
 16. Moreover, the scheme will aim to appoint the same auditors to bodies which are involved in formal collaborations and joint working initiatives. The council's shared service partners, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council have expressed interest in the scheme and are taking reports through their autumn committee cycles to enable them to accept the PSAA's opting-in invitation when received.
 17. Based on the information presented, option 3 is recommended.
 18. We expect that invitations to opt in will be issued before December 2016, with at least eight weeks being given in which to respond. The PSAA aim to award contracts to audit firms by June 2017, giving six months to consult on appointments with authorities before the 31 December 2017 deadline.
 19. The Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015 require that the council may only make the decision to opt into the appointing person arrangement by the members of the

council meeting as a whole. This report therefore asks the Civic Affairs Committee to recommend to full Council that the PSAA's invitation is accepted.

Implications

20. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

21. These are addressed in the report. Additionally, acceptance the PSAA opt-in invitation will avoid the need to undertake a procurement exercise, while ensuring that the council's obligations are met.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim 1 – An innovative and dynamic organisation

22. Approval will enable the Council to put in place processes ensure that external auditors are appointed to take over from the current auditors once their contract ends. External auditors not only provide assurance over the Council's accounts, but also offer comment and advice on processes and value for money.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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APPENDIX A – ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE DIFFERENT WAYS AN AUDITOR PANEL COULD BE SET UP

Option	Possible advantages	Possible disadvantages
Set up own separate and individual panel to oversee separate and individual procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full ownership of the process • Fully bespoke contract with the auditor • Tendering process more based on local circumstances (within EU procurement rules) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May experience difficulties in appointing majority independent panel members and independent panel chair • Will need to ensure that panel members are suitably qualified to understand and participate in the panel’s functions • Will have to cover panel expenses completely • May not be able to procure at a lower cost, eg depending on authority location, risk of limited provider choice and a single authority contract may be less attractive to some providers • Will not achieve economies of scale
Set up a panel jointly with other authority / authorities as part of a procurement exercise for joint contract covering more than one authority or multiple separate contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less administration than a sole auditor panel • Will be able to share administration expenses • May be easier to attract suitable panel members <p>If procuring a joint audit contract:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May still be a relatively tailored process • May be able to achieve some economies of scale <p>If procuring separate audit contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An opportunity for fully bespoke contracts with the auditor if the group of authorities can agree 	<p>If procuring a joint audit contract:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need to compromise on arrangements or auditor contract • May not end up with first choice of auditor, compared to an individual auditor panel. If a large group of authorities work together and decide to appoint one joint audit contract across all authorities, a joint panel may be more likely to advise appointment of an auditor it considers suitable for all authorities taken together • Need to agree appointment of members across multiple authorities and set up a joint decision-making process
Use existing committee or sub-committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing administrative structure in place • Existing (sub) committee should already have a better basic understanding of the authority’s objectives and requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible need to appoint new (sub) committee members to comply with independence regulations
Use another authority’s panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not have to set up an auditor panel • Arguably most independent options for the authority using the host authority’s panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The panel may not understand the specific needs of the authority • May need a formal arrangement with the other authority • May be difficult to find an authority willing to enter into such an arrangement • May be more difficult to ensure adequate liaison with authority’s own audit committee

21 July 2016

By email

Jean Hunter
Chief Executive
South Cambridgeshire District Council

Dear Jean Hunter,

Annual Review Letter 2016

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2016.

The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received and the decisions we made about your authority during the period. I hope that this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

Last year we provided information on the number of complaints upheld and not upheld for the first time. In response to council feedback, this year we are providing additional information to focus the statistics more on the outcome from complaints rather than just the amounts received.

We provide a breakdown of the upheld investigations to show how they were remedied. This includes the number of cases where our recommendations remedied the fault and the number of cases where we decided your authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process. In these latter cases we provide reassurance that your authority had satisfactorily attempted to resolve the complaint before the person came to us. In addition, we provide a compliance rate for implementing our recommendations to remedy a fault.

I want to emphasise that these statistics comprise the data we hold, and may not necessarily align with the data your authority holds. For example, our numbers include enquiries from people we signpost back to the authority, but who may never contact you.

In line with usual practice, we are publishing our annual data for all authorities on our website, alongside an annual review of local government complaints. The aim of this is to be transparent and provide information that aids the scrutiny of local services.

Effective accountability for devolved authorities

Local government is going through perhaps some of the biggest changes since the LGO was set up more than 40 years ago. The creation of combined authorities and an increase in the number of elected mayors will hugely affect the way local services are held to account. We have already started working with the early combined authorities to help develop principles for effective and accessible complaints systems.

We have also reviewed how we structure our casework teams to provide insight across the emerging combined authority structures. Responding to council feedback, this included reconfirming the Assistant Ombudsman responsible for relationship management with each authority, which we recently communicated to Link Officers through distribution of our manual for working with the LGO.

Supporting local scrutiny

Our corporate strategy is based upon the twin pillars of remedying injustice and improving local public services. The numbers in our annual report demonstrate that we continue to improve the quality of our service in achieving swift redress.

To measure our progress against the objective to improve local services, in March we issued a survey to all councils. I was encouraged to find that 98% of respondents believed that our investigations have had an impact on improving local public services. I am confident that the continued publication of our decisions (alongside an improved facility to browse for them on our website), focus reports on key themes and the data in these annual review letters is helping the sector to learn from its mistakes and support better services for citizens.

The survey also demonstrated a significant proportion of councils are sharing the information we provide with elected members and scrutiny committees. I welcome this approach, and want to take this opportunity to encourage others to do so.

Complaint handling training

We recently refreshed our Effective Complaint Handling courses for local authorities and introduced a new course for independent care providers. We trained over 700 people last year and feedback shows a 96% increase in the number of participants who felt confident in dealing with complaints following the course. To find out more, visit www.lgo.org.uk/training.

Ombudsman reform

You will no doubt be aware that the government has announced the intention to produce draft legislation for the creation of a single ombudsman for public services in England. This is something we support, as it will provide the public with a clearer route to redress in an increasingly complex environment of public service delivery.

We will continue to support government in the realisation of the public service ombudsman, and are advising on the importance of maintaining our 40 years plus experience of working with local government and our understanding its unique accountability structures.

This will also be the last time I write with your annual review. My seven-year term of office as Local Government Ombudsman comes to an end in January 2017. The LGO has gone through extensive change since I took up post in 2010, becoming a much leaner and more focused organisation, and I am confident that it is well prepared for the challenges ahead.

Yours sincerely



Dr Jane Martin
Local Government Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

For further information on how to interpret our statistics, please visit our website:
<http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports/interpreting-local-authority-statistics>

Complaints and enquiries received

Adult Care Services	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Education and Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
0	5	2	0	4	0	2	5	0	18

Decisions made

				Detailed Investigations			
Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed After Initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate	Total
1	0	8	5	7	3	30%	24

Notes

Our uphold rate is calculated in relation to the total number of detailed investigations.

The number of remedied complaints may not equal the number of upheld complaints. This is because, while we may uphold a complaint because we find fault, we may not always find grounds to say that fault caused injustice that ought to be remedied.

The compliance rate is the proportion of remedied complaints where our recommendations are believed to have been implemented.

Complaints Remedied

by LGO	Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO Involvement	Compliance Rate
1	0	100%

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	Reference	Authority	Category	Received
1	15000407	South Cam	Environmental Ser	09/04/15
2	15000484	South Cam	Benefits & Tax	10/04/15
3	14019327	South Cam	Environmental Ser	15/04/15
4	14017749	South Cam	Environmental Ser	28/04/15
5	15002938	South Cam	Benefits & Tax	21/05/15
6	15003280	South Cam	Housing	28/05/15
7	14018387	South Cam	Environmental Ser	11/06/15
8	15004836	South Cam	Planning & Develo	22/06/15
9	15006999	South Cam	Planning & Develo	24/07/15
10	15007583	South Cam	Planning & Develo	05/08/15
11	15008809	South Cam	Benefits & Tax	25/08/15
12	15008868	South Cam	Benefits & Tax	26/08/15
13	15009306	South Cam	Planning & Develo	04/09/15
14	15011549	South Cam	Housing	14/10/15
15	15012779	South Cam	Corporate & Other	05/11/15
16	15013646	South Cam	Corporate & Other	20/11/15
17	15015801	South Cam	Benefits & Tax	07/01/16
18	15018763	South Cam	Planning & Develo	24/02/16

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	Reference	Authority	Category	Decision Date	Decision	Remedy
1	15000484	South Cambs DC	Benefits & Tax	10/04/15	Incomplete/Invalid	NULL
2	15000407	South Cambs DC	Environmental Serv	30/04/15	Closed after initial enquiries	NULL
3	15002938	South Cambs DC	Benefits & Tax	21/05/15	Referred back for local resolution	NULL
4	15003280	South Cambs DC	Housing	28/05/15	Referred back for local resolution	NULL
5	14017390	South Cambs DC	Planning & Develop	11/06/15	Not Upheld	NULL
6	14016099	South Cambs DC	Planning & Develop	22/06/15	Upheld	Apology,Financial Redress
7	14013782	South Cambs DC	Planning & Develop	30/06/15	Upheld	NULL
8	14019079	South Cambs DC	Planning & Develop	30/06/15	Not Upheld	NULL
9	14019080	South Cambs DC	Planning & Develop	30/06/15	Not Upheld	NULL
10	14014929	South Cambs DC	Planning & Develop	09/07/15	Not Upheld	NULL
11	14019327	South Cambs DC	Environmental Serv	15/07/15	Closed after initial enquiries	NULL
12	15007583	South Cambs DC	Planning & Develop	05/08/15	Referred back for local resolution	NULL
13	15008809	South Cambs DC	Benefits & Tax	25/08/15	Referred back for local resolution	NULL
14	15008868	South Cambs DC	Benefits & Tax	26/08/15	Referred back for local resolution	NULL
15	14017749	South Cambs DC	Environmental Serv	27/08/15	Not Upheld	NULL
16	15009306	South Cambs DC	Planning & Develop	04/09/15	Referred back for local resolution	NULL
17	15011549	South Cambs DC	Housing	19/11/15	Closed after initial enquiries	NULL
18	15012779	South Cambs DC	Corporate & Other	25/11/15	Closed after initial enquiries	NULL
19	15004836	South Cambs DC	Planning & Develop	14/12/15	Upheld	NULL
20	15013646	South Cambs DC	Corporate & Other	23/12/15	Closed after initial enquiries	NULL
21	15015801	South Cambs DC	Benefits & Tax	07/01/16	Referred back for local resolution	NULL
22	14018387	South Cambs DC	Environmental Serv	21/01/16	Not Upheld	NULL
23	14017202	South Cambs DC	Benefits & Tax	22/01/16	Not Upheld	NULL
24	15018763	South Cambs DC	Planning & Develop	24/02/16	Referred back for local resolution	NULL

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Audit & Corporate Governance Committee – Work Programme

Date of meeting	Title of Report	Purpose of Report, ie For Recommendation / Decision / Monitoring	Lead Officer / Report Author
March 2017	Internal Audit Progress Report	Monitoring	Internal Audit
	Internal Audit Plan 2017/18	Monitoring	Internal Audit
	Self assessment of committee's effectiveness	Monitoring	Internal Audit
	External Audit Plan 2016/17	Monitoring	External Audit
	Ermine Street Housing	Monitoring	Stephen Hills
	Risk Management Strategy	Decision	Alex Colyer / Suzy Brandes
	Certificate of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2015/16	Monitoring	External Audit
June 2017	Internal Audit Progress Report	Monitoring	Internal Audit
	Annual Report of the Internal Audit Services 2016/17	Monitoring	Internal Audit
	Statement of Accounts (to endorse for sign-off)	Recommendation to Executive Director	Alex Colyer/ Sally Smart
	Annual Report on Fraud	Monitoring	Mike Hill/Myles Bebbington
	Draft Annual Government Statement	Recommendation to September's meeting	Alex Colyer/ Head of Legal (Tom Lewis)
	Annual Governance Statement	Decision	Alex Colyer/ Head of Legal (Tom Lewis)

September 2017	Internal Audit Progress Report	Monitoring	Internal Audit
	External Audit Results 2016-17	Monitoring	External Audit
	External Audit Request for Letter of representation	Monitoring	External Audit
	Statement of Accounts (to agree)	Decision	Alex Colyer/ Sally Smart
	Treasury Management Annual Report 2015-16	Monitoring	Alex Colyer/ Sally Smart
	Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2016	Monitoring	LGO
	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act – Annual Report and Policy Review	Decision	Alex Colyer/ Head of Legal (Tom Lewis)

Not on programme

Review of Strategic Risk Register

Review of other reports and policies as appropriate e.g. Changes to Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, accounting policies etc.

Produce annual Audit Committee report (previously rejected following discussion with Cllr Burkitt)