



CHESTERFIELD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

ANNUAL

REPORT

2020/21

Standards and Audit Committee

Chesterfield Borough Council

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1. Background

- 1.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) in their guidance note "Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities", recommend that an Audit Committee should produce an annual report on their activity.
- 1.2 The Standards and Audit Committee produce an annual report as a means of assessing how the Committee is performing and raising the profile of the work of the Committee across the Council.
- 1.3 Audit Committees are widely recognised as a core component of effective governance, their key role is to independently oversee and assess the internal control environment, comprising governance, risk management and control and advise the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements. At Chesterfield Borough Council the statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members is also overseen by the Committee.
- 1.4 The Committee is responsible for: –
 - Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct
 - Good governance
 - Internal Audit
 - External Audit
 - Risk Management
 - The control environment
 - Anti-fraud and anti- corruption arrangements

- Carrying out hearings into alleged misconduct by councillors

Details of the responsibilities of the Committee are set out in the Council's Constitution (Part 2, Article 9).

- 1.5 The Committee meets on a regular basis. Chaired by Councillor Mark Rayner it is advised by the Interim Service Director - Finance, Helen Fox, the Internal Audit Consortium Manager, Jenny Williams, and the Monitoring Officer, Gerard Rogers.

2. Membership and Meetings

- 2.1 The Standards and Audit Committee is composed of eight members, 6 councillors and 2 parish representative members (appointed by Brimington Parish Council and Staveley Town Council respectively). During 2020/21 these members were: -

Councillor Rayner (Chair)
Councillor Kellman (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Brady
Councillor Murphy
Councillor Snowdon
Councillor Brittain
Councillor Caulfield
Councillor Wilson

- 2.2 The meetings are also attended by the Council's external auditor Mazars.
- 2.3 During the 2020/21 financial year the Standards and Audit Committee met on 6 occasions.

3. Standards and Audit Committee Business

- 3.1 During the year the Committee conducted the following business: -

Internal Audit

- Received the annual internal audit report for 2019/20
- Approved the internal audit plan for 2020/21
- Received internal audit updates of progress against the audit plan for 2020/21
- Monitored the implementation of internal audit recommendations
- Discussed the inadequate procurement report and called in the Chief Executive and the Assistant Director Customers, Commissioning and Change to present a progress report.
- Agreed to the procurement of an assessor to undertake the external review of internal audit.
- Received and approved the Internal Audit Charter.

External Audit

- Received the external auditors Audit Completion Report for the year ending 31 March 2020

Statement of Accounts

- Approved the 2019/20 statement of accounts
- Approved the "Letter of Representation" prepared by the Council's responsible financial officer in respect of compiling the financial statements.

COVID - 19 Related

- Approved the arrangements for the operation of remote meetings.
- Considered a report by the Monitoring Officer reviewing the effectiveness of the emergency delegated decision-making process introduced because of the pandemic.
- Considered and approved 2 new proposed delegations in response to the Business and Planning Bill to be enacted July 2020. Approved a further delegation to enable the provisions

of the Business and Planning Act relating to determining additional Environmental Approvals to be put into effect.

Treasury Management

- Considered the treasury management 2019/20 annual report and monitoring report 2020/21
- Approved the 2021/22 Treasury Management Strategy

Risk Management

- Considered the Risk Management Strategy for 2020/21 and an annual review of 2019/20.

Good Governance

- Reviewed, amended and approved the Code of Corporate Governance and Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20
- Produced the 2019/21 Annual Report of the Standards and Audit Committee for Council
- Undertook a self -assessment of the Standards and Audit Committee against the CIPFA model and produced a summary of the results / action plan.
- Considered the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2019/20

Standards of Conduct

- Considered and provided feedback for the Local Government Association (LGA) on the draft and final LGA model Member Code of Conduct

4. The Committee's Main Achievements / Outcomes

The Standards and Audit Committee aims to add value through its activity and this year its most significant achievements have been to: -

- Act as the key driver in ensuring that the issues relating to procurement are now being addressed.
- Ensuring that the Council can continue to operate during the COVID- 19 pandemic by reviewing and approving revised delegation procedures and the operation of remote meetings.
- Ensured that the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement is a true and transparent reflection of the Council's governance, risk and control arrangements.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 In conclusion, the Committee has continued to make a positive contribution to the Council's overall governance risk, and control arrangements including in relation to COVID-19.
- 5.2 The Committee will continue to support the Council in the year ahead by supporting the work of internal and external audit, the Service Director -Finance and the Monitoring Officer.

Councillor Mark Rayner (Chair)
Chesterfield Borough Council Standards and Audit
Committee