

AUDIT COMMITTEE - Table of Outstanding Issues (January 2024) - GENERAL

Governance Principle and Issue	Recommendation / Issue	Lead / Service	Progress / Comments	Status – Target Date
<p>Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it.</p>	<p>Following the consideration of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy last year, it was resolved that:</p> <p>The Head of Democratic Services & Elections be requested to consider including training for Members on anti-fraud and corruption measures as part of the Councillor Development Scheme.</p>	<p>Assistant Director Governance</p>	<p>The development of a Formal Training Programme remains ongoing which will include as necessary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joint general training with other Essex Authorities. 2. Statement of Accounts training, timing of which remains subject to the reporting of the accounts to the Committee. 3. The role of Internal Audit Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy 4. Corporate Governance and Assurance in a Local Authority setting 5. Role and appointment of External Audit 6. Risk Management <p>The above are subject to external training providers’ availability and</p>	<p>Given the Local Elections in May 2023, the first training session, ‘Your Role on The Audit Committee’, was delivered in June 23.</p> <p>Further modules will be delivered during 2024/25.</p>

			associated procurement processes.	
Ensuring Openness and Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement - Planning Enforcement	<p>At its meeting on 26 January 2023, the Committee resolved:</p> <p>That it will re-examine, in due course, the Planning Enforcement function as regards to its effectiveness and efficiency, once the new Policy is fully implemented and all enforcement staff are in place.</p>	Director of Planning	<p>The Planning Enforcement Policy and associated Harm Risk Assessment was agreed for adoption by the Planning Committee on 28 Sep 23.</p> <p>The Planning Enforcement Team is now fully staffed with permanent Officers and all temporary agency support has ceased. The number of recorded live/outstanding enforcement complaints has halved in size between June 2022 and September 2023 following a fundamental review of cases.</p> <p>A further Task & Finish Group looking into Enforcement across the Council, including certain aspects of Planning Enforcement has made recommendations for further improvements that have been agreed by the Resource and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration by the Cabinet in January 2024. The recommendations focus mainly around sharing information on cases with Ward Members, ensuring joined up working across the services and public interest is</p>	Cabinet to consider the recommendations of the Resource and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting in January 2024.

			considered when determining appropriate courses of action. Some of the suggested improvements have already been put in place.	
Determining the Interventions Necessary to Optimise the Achievement of the Intended Outcomes - The Redmond Review	The Audit Committee have received on a regular basis updates in respect of the outcomes of the Redmond Review. The Government and other associated bodies continue to undertake the various activities to implement the Redmond Review recommendations.	Assistant Director Finance and IT	The last update provided to the Audit Committee was included in the main body of the Table of Outstanding Issues report, presented at the 05 Oct 23 meeting.	As further progress is announced by the government, updates will be provided to future meetings of this Committee, which will hopefully set out the necessary practical steps to implement the recommendations made as part of this review. At the time of writing, no updates were available.
Determining the Interventions Necessary to Optimise the Achievement of the Intended Outcomes – Office for Local Government (OFLOG)	On the 05 Oct 23, the Audit Committee received an update on changes to upcoming regulatory requirements and establishment of OFLOG. The Committee requested additional information on this future regulatory reform.	Assistant Director Governance	Future opportunities to provide additional information to Members will be explored e.g. an All Member Briefing.	This item will be put forward as a proposed agenda item within the most appropriate forum.

<p>Defining Outcomes in Terms of Sustainable Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits – Climate Change</p>	<p>At its meeting on the 05 Oct 23, the Committee resolved that:</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for the Environment be requested to oversee the development of a Climate Action Plan from 2024, with its ambitions and actions set in the context of current national policy.</p>	<p>Corporate Director Place and Economy</p>	<p>The Council has contracted with APSE Energy to review our carbon emissions for 2022/23 as a baseline for the Action Plan 2024-27. Officers have completed a first draft of the action plan, which is currently being refined to be sent to APSE Energy for comment in Feb 24. The Consultants will review the carbon impact of the proposed actions and advise and a trajectory for the Council to become net zero. The Council will need to review the cost implications of the off-setting required to reach net zero and the costs of investments to reduce our underlying carbon emissions.</p>	<p>The report is due to go to Cabinet in April or May 24 and will be available to the Committee at that point.</p>
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