



**South Somerset
District Council**

Audit Committee

Thursday 14th May 2020

2.00 pm

Virtual Meeting Using Zoom Meeting Software

The following members are requested to attend the meeting:

Chairman: Martin Carnell
Vice-chairman: Mike Hewitson

Robin Bastable
Mike Best
Dave Bulmer

Malcolm Cavill
Brian Hamilton
Paul Maxwell

Robin Pailthorpe
Jeny Snell

Any members of the public wishing to address the meeting at Public Question Time need to email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on Wednesday 13 May.

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Tuesday 5 May 2020.

Alex Parmley, *Chief Executive Officer*

This information is also available on our website www.southsomerset.gov.uk and via the mod.gov app

Information for the Public

The purpose of the Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance, to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment and to oversee the financial reporting process.

The Audit Committee should review the Code of Corporate Governance seeking assurance where appropriate from the Executive or referring matters to management on the scrutiny function.

The terms of reference of the Audit Committee are:

Internal Audit Activity

1. To approve the Internal Audit Charter and annual Internal Audit Plan;
2. To receive quarterly summaries of Internal Audit reports and seek assurance from management that action has been taken;
3. To receive an annual summary report and opinion, and consider the level of assurance it provides on the council's governance arrangements;
4. To monitor the action plans for Internal Audit reports assessed as "partial" or "no assurance;"
5. To consider specific internal audit reports as requested by the Head of Internal Audit, and monitor the implementation of agreed management actions;
6. To receive an annual report to review the effectiveness of internal audit to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and the level of assurance it provides on the council's governance arrangements;

External Audit Activity

7. To consider and note the annual external Audit Plan and Fees;
8. To consider the reports of external audit including the Annual Audit Letter and seek assurance from management that action has been taken;

Regulatory Framework

9. To consider the effectiveness of SSDC's risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and corruption arrangements and seek assurance from management that action is being taken;
10. To review the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and monitor associated action plans;
11. To review the Local Code of Corporate Governance and ensure it reflects best governance practice. This will include regular reviews of part of the Council's Constitution and an overview of risk management;
12. To receive reports from management on the promotion of good corporate governance;

Financial Management and Accounts

13. To review and approve the annual Statement of Accounts, external auditor's opinion and reports to members and monitor management action in response to issues raised;

14. To provide a scrutiny role in Treasury Management matters including regular monitoring of treasury activity and practices. The committee will also review and recommend the Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy, MRP Strategy, and Prudential Indicators to Council;
15. To review and recommend to Council changes to Financial Procedure Rules and Procurement Procedure Rules;

Overall Governance

16. The Audit Committee can request of the Section 151 Officer, the Monitoring Officer, or the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Services) a report (including an independent review) on any matter covered within these Terms of Reference;
17. The Audit Committee will request action through District Executive if any issue remains unresolved;
18. The Audit Committee will report to each full Council a summary of its activities.

Members questions on reports prior to the Meeting

Members of the Committee are requested to contact report authors on points of clarification prior to the Committee meeting.

Audit Committee

Meetings of the Audit Committee are usually held bi-monthly including at least one meeting with the Council's external auditor, although in practice the external auditor attends more frequently. However during the coronavirus pandemic these meetings will be held remotely via Zoom video-conferencing. For more details on the regulations regarding remote/virtual meetings please see the Local Authorities and Police and Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 as part of the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Agendas and minutes of this committee are published on the Council's website at <http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

Agendas and minutes can also be viewed via the mod.gov app (free) available for iPads and Android devices. Search for 'mod.gov' in the app store for your device, install, and select 'South Somerset' from the list of publishers and then select the committees of interest. A wi-fi signal will be required for a very short time to download an agenda but once downloaded, documents will be viewable offline.

Public participation at meetings (held via Zoom)

Public question time

We recognise that these are challenging times but we still value the public's contribution to our virtual meetings. If you would like to participate and contribute in the meeting, please join on-line through Zoom at: <https://zoom.us/join> You will need an internet connection to do this.

Please email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk for the details to join the meeting.

The period allowed for participation in Public Question Time shall not exceed 15 minutes except with the consent of the Chairman and members of the Committee. Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes.

If you would like to address the meeting at Public Question Time, please email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on Wednesday 13 May 2020. When you have registered, the Chairman will invite you to speak at the appropriate time during the virtual meeting.

Virtual meeting etiquette:

- Consider joining the meeting early to ensure your technology is working correctly.
- Please note that we will mute all public attendees to minimise background noise. If you have registered to speak during the virtual meeting, the Chairman will un-mute your microphone at the appropriate time.
- Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes.
- When speaking, keep your points clear and concise.
- Please speak clearly – the Councillors are interested in your comments.

Recording and photography at council meetings

Recording of council meetings is permitted, however anyone wishing to do so should let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to the start of the meeting. The recording should be overt and clearly visible to anyone at the meeting, but non-disruptive. If someone is recording the meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting. If anyone making public representation does not wish to be recorded they must let the Chairperson know.

The full 'Policy on Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Council Meetings' can be viewed online at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/documents/s3327/Policy%20on%20the%20recording%20of%20council%20meetings.pdf>

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Audit Committee

Thursday 14 May 2020

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. Minutes

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 January 2020.

2. Apologies for absence

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (as amended 26 February 2015), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the agenda for this meeting.

4. Public question time

Items for Discussion

5. External Audit Plan for 2019/20 (Pages 6 - 26)

6. Informing the Audit Risk Assessment 2019/20 (Pages 27 - 57)

7. Internal Audit Plan and Charter 2020-21 (Pages 58 - 76)

8. Civil Contingencies & Whistleblowing Update (Pages 77 - 79)

9. Health & Safety Update (Pages 80 - 84)

10. Financial Procedure Rules (Pages 85 - 111)

11. Audit Committee Forward Plan (Pages 112 - 113)

12. Date of next meeting (Page 114)