

Somerset County Council
Audit Committee 20 June 2019

Forward Work Plan

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Cabinet Member: Cllr Mandy Chilcott, Cabinet Member for Resources

Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary/link to the County Plan

- 1.1. Members have asked that we review forthcoming items coming to Audit Committee, and that officers ensure that the Committee has Partial Assurance audits brought to it in a timely manner. A draft Forward Work Plan will be brought to the Audit Committee at least quarterly.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1. Members are asked to note the outline agendas for the 25 July 2019 and 19 September 2019 public meetings, as set out in **Appendix A** to this report, and to comment on any further items that they would like to be scheduled at these or at future meetings.
- 2.2. Members are asked to consider other items on this agenda, and whether they would like to have a further update or training event on any of these audits, risks or topics.

3. Background

- 3.1. There are a number of “staple” Audit Committee items that are part of our annual cycle around the Statement of Accounts, or around the annual Internal Audit Plan, which the Audit Committee will need to review in order to secure the necessary assurance to carry out its role. Within that cycle, there can be scope for additional items to come to the Audit Committee where members or officers perceive a risk or issue that needs to be managed.

Audit Committee has set out the requirement for any internal audit from SWAP that only achieved Partial Assurance to come to a future public meeting and for the manager(s) responsible to update members as to their progress against the agreed action plan for improvements. We will continue to bring Partial Assurance audits to the Audit Committee regularly, to ensure that they are responded to promptly. Elsewhere on this agenda is a schedule of current partial audits and members may wish to discuss and agree which are considered in more detail at the September Audit Committee meeting.

- 3.2. The Adverse Value For Money opinion from Grant Thornton, our external auditors, dated July 2018, has included a number of recommendations as to how the County Council can improve a number of its processes. This is being tracked within JCAD, our risk management system. Members have indicated that they wish to see this tracker at every Audit Committee meeting.

- 3.3. June's meeting will have a progress report from the External Auditor including initial findings for the end of year 2018/19. It will also have the draft Annual Governance Statement and the Value for Money Tracker both of which will inform the Annual Statement of Accounts at the next meeting.
- 3.4. June's meeting will also be where the Internal Audit Annual Opinion and Progress Report will be presented alongside the regular Risk and Partial Audit update, which is a key document to inform the Annual Governance Statement. This will be an opportunity for the Internal Auditor to give her overall opinion on the level of assurance that can be offered to members through her work.
- 3.5. The Committee will also receive the latest Debt Management Report.
- 3.6. The July meeting will focus on the Statement of Accounts – for the County Council and the Pension Fund, including considering the external auditor's report and findings. These findings will include a new Value for Money assessment.
- 3.7. Ahead of the July meeting the usual Statement of Accounts training for members will be taking place (afternoon of 20th June 2019) in order that members are suitably prepared to effectively review the Statement of Accounts.
- 3.8. The July meeting will also contain the regular agenda items on;
 - Internal Audit Progress Report
 - Strategic Risk Management Report and the Internal Audit Partial Audits Tracker
 - Audit Committee Work Plan

4. Consultations undertaken

- 4.1. None required

5. Implications

- 5.1. Any items requested not yet covered by the draft Forward Work Plan at Appendix A will require scheduling by officers, in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair.

6. Background papers

- 6.1. Previous Audit Committee decisions on the process for dealing with Partial Audits.

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author