

SWT Audit and Governance Committee

Monday, 13th December, 2021,
6.15 pm

The logo for Somerset West and Taunton, featuring the text "Somerset West and Taunton" in white on a teal background with a white swoosh at the bottom right.

The John Meikle Room - The Deane
House

[SWT MEETING WEBCAST LINK](#)

Members: Lee Baker (Chair), Ed Firmin (Vice-Chair), Simon Coles, Hugh Davies, Dawn Johnson, Janet Lloyd, Andy Milne, Martin Peters, Steven Pugsley, Terry Venner and Sarah Wakefield

Agenda

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. Minutes of the previous meetings of the Audit and Governance Committee

To approve the minutes of the previous meetings of the Committee.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive and note any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or prejudicial or personal interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The personal interests of Councillors and Clerks of Somerset County Council, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes.)

4. Public Participation

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three minute time

(Pages 7 - 16)

limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue.

Temporary measures during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Due to the temporary legislation (within the Coronavirus Act 2020, which allowed for use of virtual meetings) coming to an end on 6 May 2021, the council's committee meetings will now take place in the office buildings within the John Meikle Meeting Room at the Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton. Unfortunately due to capacity requirements, the Chamber at West Somerset House is not able to be used at this current moment.

Following the Government guidance on measures to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), the council meeting rooms will have very limited capacity. With this in mind, we will only be allowing those members of the public who have registered to speak to attend the meetings in person in the office buildings, if they wish (we will still be offering to those members of the public that are not comfortable in attending, for their statements to be read out by a Governance and Democracy Case Manager). Please can we urge all members of the public who are only interested in listening to the debate to view our live webcasts from the safety of their own home to help prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

5. Audit and Governance Committee Forward Plan

(Pages 17 - 18)

To receive items and review the Forward Plan.

6. External Auditor's Annual Report 2020/21

(Pages 19 - 58)

This short covering report introduces the second stage of annual reporting by our External Auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP, following completion of the Statement of Accounts for 2020/21. The Auditor's report, attached as Appendix 1, is comprehensive and primarily details the Auditor's findings on arrangements in place at SWTC to secure Value for Money. It reports on whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

The Auditor's report includes a summary of findings and a hierarchy of recommendations to the Council which, in turn, are accompanied by the Council's management comments. The Auditor will present the report verbally at this meeting of the Committee.

7. SWAP Internal Audit – Progress Report 2021-22

(Pages 59 - 82)

The Internal Audit function plays a central role in corporate

governance by providing assurance to the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee, looking over financial controls and checking on the probity of the organisation.

The 2021-22 Annual Internal Audit Plan is to provide independent and objective assurance on SWT Internal Control Environment. This work will support the Annual Governance Statement.

8. Summary of Level 1 and 2 Audit Actions Progress

(Pages 83 - 90)

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress against level 1 and 2 Internal Audit Actions as at the end of October 2021.

9. Treasury Management 2021/22 Mid-Year Report

(Pages 91 - 120)

To provide Members with an update on the Treasury Management activity of Somerset West and Taunton Council and performance against the Prudential Indicators in respect of the first six months of 2021/22.

10. External Auditor Appointment Procurement Process

(Pages 121 - 136)

This report sets out proposals for appointing the external auditor to the Council for the accounts for the five-year period from 2023/24.

11. Health and Safety Management System – Performance Framework and Improvement Programme

(Pages 137 - 154)

The purpose of this report is to provide the Audit and Governance committee with:

- A) an introduction to the Health and Safety (H & S) Performance Framework – the approach for how the Audit and Governance Committee will be kept updated on Health and Safety (H & S) Performance, and
- B) an introduction to, and progress against delivery of the H & S Management System (HSMS) Improvement Programme.

12. Changes to the Constitution

(Pages 155 - 334)

The matters set out in this report amount to modest changes to the SWT Constitution. This is to achieve, better clarity, the updating of minor changes and procedural refinement. This will ease the interpretation and effectiveness of the Constitution.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Pritchard', with a horizontal line underneath.

ANDREW PRITCHARD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Please note that this meeting will be recorded. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy. Therefore unless you are advised otherwise, by taking part in the Council Meeting during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact the officer as detailed above.

Following Government guidance on measures to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), we will be live webcasting our committee meetings and you are welcome to view and listen to the discussion. The link to each webcast will be available on the meeting webpage, but you can also access them on the [Somerset West and Taunton webcasting website](#).

If you would like to ask a question or speak at a meeting, you will need to submit your request to a member of the Governance Team in advance of the meeting. You can request to speak at a Council meeting by emailing your full name, the agenda item and your question to the Governance Team using governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

Any requests need to be received by 4pm on the day that provides 2 clear working days before the meeting (excluding the day of the meeting itself). For example, if the meeting is due to take place on a Tuesday, requests need to be received by 4pm on the Thursday prior to the meeting.

The Governance and Democracy Case Manager will take the details of your question or speech and will distribute them to the Committee prior to the meeting. The Chair will then invite you to speak at the beginning of the meeting under the agenda item Public Question Time, but speaking is limited to three minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes and you can only speak to the Committee once. If there are a group of people attending to speak about a particular item then a representative should be chosen to speak on behalf of the group.

Please see below for Temporary Measures during Coronavirus Pandemic and the changes we are making to public participation:-

Due to the temporary legislation (within the Coronavirus Act 2020, which allowed for use of virtual meetings) coming to an end on 6 May 2021, the council's committee meetings will now take place in the office buildings within the John Meikle Meeting Room at the Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton. Unfortunately due to capacity requirements, the Chamber at West Somerset House is not able to be used at this current moment.

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Full Council, Executive, and Committee agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

For further information about the meeting, please contact the Governance and Democracy Team via email: governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

If you would like an agenda, a report or the minutes of a meeting translated into another language or into Braille, large print, audio tape or CD, please email: governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk