

SWT Audit and Governance Committee

Monday, 14th March, 2022,
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 meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting 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 - 18)

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 be requesting that members of the public who have registered to speak attend the meetings in person at 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 19 - 20)

To receive items and review the Forward Plan.

- 6. External Audit – Progress Report and Sector Update** (Pages 21 - 40)

The attached report provides the Audit and Governance Committee with a progress update regarding the work of the external auditors, Grant Thornton, together with information relating to emerging issues relevant to the Council.

- 7. External Audit Risk Assessment 2021/22** (Pages 41 - 72)

Grant Thornton LLP is the Council's appointed auditor responsible for the audit of the accounts for the periods 2019/20 through to 2022/23. As part of the preparation for the 2021/22 audit, Grant Thornton has followed its risk assessment procedures to obtain an understanding of management processes in several areas. This report shares the information provided by the Council's management to help inform this risk assessment.

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| <p>8. External Audit - Audit Plan 2021/22</p> <p>This report introduces the External Audit Plan for 2021/22. The Plan is prepared by the Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton, ahead of the financial year-end (31 March).</p> <p>The purpose of the Plan is to summarise the approach to the 2021/22 audit programme together with the audit view on risk and materiality.</p> <p>A verbal report on the Plan will be provided by the Audit Director, covering all known aspects of the Plan ahead of it being issued.</p> | <p>(Pages 73 - 74)</p> |
| <p>9. SWAP Internal Audit - Progress Report 2021-22 Internal Audit Plan</p> <p>This report summarises the work of the Council's Internal Audit Service and provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details of any new significant weaknesses identified during internal audit work completed since the last report to the committee in December 2021.• A schedule of audits completed during the period, detailing their respective assurance opinion rating, the number of recommendations and the respective priority rankings of these. | <p>(Pages 75 - 90)</p> |
| <p>10. SWAP Internal Audit - 2022-23 Internal Audit Plan and Internal Audit Charter</p> <p>This report introduces the Internal Audit Plan for 2022/23 and also incorporates an 'Internal Audit Charter' which sets out the operational relationship between Somerset West and Taunton (SWT) and the South West Audit Partnership (SWAP).</p> <p>This is a flexible plan that may be amended during the year to deal with shifts in priorities or new and emerging risks. The following plan has the support of the Section 151 Officer and has been approved by the Senior Management Team.</p> | <p>(Pages 91 - 110)</p> |
| <p>11. Summary of Level 1 and 2 Internal Audit Actions</p> <p>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 January 2022.</p> | <p>(Pages 111 - 118)</p> |

12. Capital Investment and Treasury Strategy 2022/23

(Pages 119 - 188)

The purpose of this report is to bring to Members three recommended strategies covering Capital, Investment and Treasury Management (CIT Strategies) for their consideration and adoption.

Appendix A to this report combines three Strategies together with the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement. Its format has been developed to meet the requirements of statutory guidance issued under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003, with particular reference to CIPFA's Prudential Code of Practice and Treasury Management Code of Practice.

13. Audit and Governance Committee Chair's Annual Report 2021/22 - For Information Only

(Pages 189 - 192)

This report provides an update from the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, Councillor Lee Baker, on the work of the Audit and Governance Committee for the year 2021/22.



**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