

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Audit and Governance Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Wednesday, 16 April 2025 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R Holloway (Chair)
Councillor S Michael (Vice-Chair)

Councillor R Cozens, Councillor S Forde, Councillor J Hall, Councillor S Haynes and Councillor C Penny and Mr C Richardson (Non-Voting Co-Optee)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor I Brown

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor P Farmer, Councillor A Freeman, Councillor P Harris, Councillor M Shakeshaft and Councillor T Thompson

156 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

Other than the Council recording in accordance with usual practice, there were no declarations of intention to record the meeting.

157 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

That no Member or Officer declared any interest pursuant to any statutory requirement in any matter discussed or voted upon at the meeting.

158 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 FEBRUARY 2025

AGREED that the minutes from the meeting held on 19 February 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The Chair informed the meeting that report item 10 would be taken after item 5.

159 ANNUAL EXTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY MEMORANDUM 2024/25

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Financial Services presenting the External Audit Strategy Memorandum for the 2024/25 Statement of Accounts work for Members to review and comment.

The representative from Mazars, Mark Surridge presented the External Auditor's report having joined the meeting through Teams and Livestreamed.

The External Audit Strategy Memorandum at Appendix A of the report sets out the proposed work of the Council's external auditors for 2024/25, relating to the audit of the financial statements and the commentary on the Council's Value for Money arrangements.

AGREED (unanimously) that the External Audit Strategy Memorandum be noted.

160 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT

The Committee considered the report from the Safety and Risk Manager providing an update to Members highlighting the Council's 2025/26 Strategic Risk Register and its current status.

The report highlighted that in accordance with the Risk Management Policy, a facilitated strategic risk workshop was undertaken with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in February 2025. This workshop evaluated all existing strategic risks and identified emerging risks for the forth coming year.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Committee noted amendments to the Strategic Risk Register and highlighted any issues of concern.

161 PROJECTED GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2025 AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Financial Services to update with the forecast outturn position for the 2024/25 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets. The report showed performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income.

The report ensured the Council has overall financial sustainability for the current financial year compared to the budgeted position.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the Committee noted the General Fund projected favourable outturn variance of £0.250m;
- (b) the Committee noted the Housing Revenue Account projected favourable outturn variance of £0.500m to the Major Repairs Reserve;
- (c) the Committee noted the Capital Programme revised budget and financing of £42.166m; and
- (d) the Committee noted the Prudential indicators at Appendix A.

162 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES 2024/2025

The Committee considered the report from the Assistant Business Manager for Financial Services providing Members with updates made to the Council's accounting policies in relation to the closedown of the 2024/2025 financial year.

The report provided a review at Appendix A with reference to not a lot of change to policies.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members approved the amended Statement of

163 UNDERLYING PENSION ASSUMPTIONS FOR 2024/2025 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Committee considered the report from the Assistant Business Manager for Financial Services providing Members with information regarding the assumptions made by the pension fund actuary in calculating the IAS 19 (International Accounting Standard 19 - Employee Benefits) figures to be reported in the 2024/2025 Statement of Accounts.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members noted and approved the assumptions used in the calculation of pension figures for 2024/2025.

164 UNDERLYING VALUATION ASSUMPTIONS FOR 2024/2025 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Committee considered the report from the Assistant Business Manager for Financial Services providing Members with information regarding the assumptions made by the Valuers in calculating the figures to be reported in the 2024/25 Statement of Accounts, as per the revaluation model approach taken by the Council under IAS 16 (International Accounting Standard 16 – Property, Plant and Equipment).

AGREED (unanimously) that Members noted and approved the assumptions used in the calculation of asset valuation figures for 2024/2025.

165 COUNTER-FRAUD ACTIVITIES FROM 1 MAY 2024 TO 31 MARCH 2025

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Financial Services informing Members of counter-fraud activity undertaken since the last update reported on 1 May 2024.

The report gave an element of the role of the Audit & Governance Committee is to provide assurance to the Council that its anti-fraud arrangements are operating effectively. In order to do this, counter-fraud activity reports are brought to the Committee twice a year. These reports detail the number of cases detected, amounts lost, the outcome of cases and amounts recovered, together with any other counter fraud work that has been undertaken.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members noted the report.

166 FRAUD RISK ASSESSMENT

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Financial Services informing Members of the update of the Fraud Risk Register undertaken during March 2025.

The report reminded Members that a fraud risk assessment was first undertaken in June 2014 and a fraud risk register produced and presented to the Audit and Accounts Committee.

The fraud risks are assessed annually and the register updated. The amended Fraud

Risk Register as at April 2025 was attached at Appendix A to the report.

The exempt appendix was not discussed in the open meeting or the exempt discussed during the meeting.

AGREED (unanimously) that Members noted the content of the report.

167 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The Committee considered the joint report of the Assistant Director Legal & Democratic Services, Monitoring Officer and the Business Manager for Financial Services which attached the Committee's Work Plan for consideration.

The Committee noting that an additional Committee meeting would take place on 7 May 2025, to consider the Governance reports.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Work Plan be noted.

168 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 7 MAY 2025

Meeting closed at 6.57 pm.

Chair