

Minutes

Meeting name	Audit and Standards Committee
Date	Tuesday, 28 January 2025
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair J. Mason (Vice-Chair in the Chair)

Councillors J. Adcock I. Atherton
M. Brown S. Carter
R. Sharp

In Attendance External Auditor – Director for Grant Thornton, Helen Lillington

Officers Director for Corporate Services
Assistant Director for Governance and Democracy (Monitoring Officer)
Revenues and Benefits Manager
Chief Internal Auditor
Democratic Services Officer (CR)

Minute No.	Minute
32	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Evans and Higgins.</p> <p>Councillors Freer and S. Orson were not present.</p>
33	<p>Minutes The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2024 were confirmed.</p>
34	<p>Declarations of Interest No declarations of interest were received.</p>
35	<p>External Audit Interim Annual Report 2023/24 Helen Lillington, External Auditor from Grant Thornton introduced the report, the purpose of which was to summarise the work undertaken for the Council.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that partner councils within the Leicestershire ICT Partnership alternate (on a yearly basis) responsibility to undertake internal audit work on ICT Services. Melton Borough Council undertook the audit for 2022/23. Blaby District Council were due to undertake the audit for 2023/24 but failed to do so. Blaby District Council were leaving the ICT Partnership and as such, it was agreed that Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council would undertake 2 audits (for 2023/24 and 2024/25). The 2023/24 audit was at final draft stage but it was unlikely that the 2024/25 audit would be completed before the end of the year. It was anticipated that the audits for 2024/25 and 2025/26 would be undertaken next year. Alternate audit work would continue between this Council and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, as the 2 remaining councils in the Leicestershire ICT Partnership. In response to a Member question, Ms. Lillington advised that the contract for the management of Waterfield Leisure Centre and Melton Sports Village was a significant Council contract. External Audit recognised the work undertaken/the recommendations of Internal Audit in respect of this and that the recommendations had already been implemented. External Audit would require assurance that these arrangements were sustained and remained embedded. <p>RESOLVED that the Committee NOTED the External Audit Interim Annual Report 2023/24.</p>
36	<p>External Audit Review of Housing Benefit Subsidy 2021/22 The Director for Corporate Services, Dawn Garton introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide Members with a summary of the 2021/22 Housing Benefit Audit.</p>

	<p>During discussion, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In reference to the Council’s £299.42 overpayment of rent allowances, as detailed at paragraph 5.2.1(b) of the report, a Member asked whether attempts to recover such a low amount would be made. The Revenues and Benefits Manager confirmed that recovery action would be taken on all overpayments to claimants via various means (deductions made to housing benefit entitlement, sundry debts, etc). • Concerning the errors in earnings figures referred to at paragraph 5.2.1 (b), the Benefits and Revenues Manage confirmed that these were errors made by assessment officers when processing claims. <p>RESOLVED that the Committee NOTED the finding of the 2021/22 Housing Benefits Audit and the action being taken in response to the Audit findings.</p>
37	<p>Internal Audit Progress Report</p> <p>The Chair highlighted that Appendix B was exempt and that should Members wish to comment on/discuss the contents of the exempt Appendix, the Committee would need to decide whether it should resolve to exclude the public while discussion takes place.</p> <p>Rachel Ashley-Caunt, Chief Internal Auditor introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide the Committee with an update on delivery of the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to a Member question on whether all tenanted properties were fitted with carbon monoxide monitors, the Chief Internal Auditor confirmed that both carbon monoxide and smoke detectors had been included within Internal Audit’s audit coverage. The findings had revealed that over 90% of properties had these devices fitted and any property non-compliance was due to not being able to gain access to fit the devices. <p>RESOLVED that the Committee NOTED the progress made by Internal Audit in delivery of the Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 and the outcomes of the finalised audit reviews.</p>
38	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>There was no urgent business.</p>

The meeting closed at: 7.01 pm

Chair