



**Committee: Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee**

**Date: Wednesday 19 March 2025**

**Time: 6.30 pm**

**Venue: Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA**

## **Membership**

**Councillor Alisa Russell  
(Chairman)**

Councillor Besmira Brasha

Councillor Nicholas Mawer

Councillor Robert Parkinson

Independent Person – Harry  
Lawson (No voting rights)

**Councillor David Rogers (Vice-Chairman)**

Councillor Frank Ideh

Councillor Ian Middleton

Councillor Dom Vaitkus

Independent Person – Sarah Thompson (No voting  
rights)

## **AGENDA**

**1. Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

**3. Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

The Chairman to report on any requests to submit petitions or to address the meeting.

**4. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 January 2025.

**5. Chairman's Announcements**

To receive communications from the Chairman.

**6. Urgent Business**

The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any item of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

**7. Draft Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee 2024-25**  
(Pages 13 - 28)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)

**Purpose of report**

This report presents the draft annual report of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee for the year 2024/25. It has been prepared to enable the committee to demonstrate to Council how it has fulfilled its terms of reference.

**Recommendations**

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee resolves to:

- 1.1 Review the draft annual report, agree any required amendments to its content, and arrange for it to be finalised in preparation for the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee Chair's presentation to Council.

**8. Internal Audit Work Programme 2025-26** (Pages 29 - 40)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)

**Purpose of report**

This report presents the programme of internal audit work to be undertaken in 2025/26.

**Recommendations**

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee resolves to:

- 1.1 Approve the 2025/26 internal audit work programme.

**9. Counter Fraud Progress Report** (Pages 41 - 50)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)

**Purpose of report**

This report presents an update on counter fraud work undertaken so far in 2024/25.

**Recommendations**

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee resolves to:

1.1 Note the counter fraud progress report.

**10. 2025-26 Counter Fraud Plan (Pages 51 - 72)**

Report of the Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)

**Purpose of report**

This report presents the programme of internal audit work to be undertaken in 2025/26.

**Recommendations**

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee resolves to:

1.1 Approve the 2025/26 internal audit work programme.

**11. Risk Based Verification Policy (Pages 73 - 86)**

Report of Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)

**Purpose of report**

To update the Committee with details of the Risk Based Verification (RBV) policy and to seek approval for the reviewed RBV policy for 2025/26

**Recommendations**

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee resolves:

1.1 To note the contents of the report.

1.2 To approve the RBV policy for the financial year 2025/26, as set out at Appendix A to this report.

**12. Risk Monitoring Report Q3 2024-25 (Pages 87 - 98)**

Report of Assistant Director – Customer Focus

**Purpose of report**

To update the committee on how well the council is managing its Strategic Risks.

**Recommendations**

The Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee resolves:

1.1 To note the Risk Monitoring Report for Quarter 3 2024-25.

**13. Annual Health and Safety Report 2023-24 (Pages 99 - 112)**

Report of Assistant Director of Human Resources

**Purpose of report**

To provide the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee with the Council's Health and Safety performance over the 2023-24 year and its plan for the current year.

**Recommendations**

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To review the content of the report
- 1.2 To provide feedback if any further detail or additional information is required in future reports which will be submitted quarterly.

**14. 2023-24 Final Statement of Accounts (Pages 113 - 330)**

Report of Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)

**Purpose of report**

To ask the Committee to note the final 2023/24 Statement of Accounts and the changes that have been made since the draft version which was brought to the Committee at its July 2024 meeting.

**Recommendations**

The Accounts Audit and Risk Committee resolves to:

- 1.1 Note the final 2023/24 Statement of Accounts (Appendix 1) and the associated changes between draft and final version.
- 1.2 Note the final letter of representation for 2023/24 (Appendix 2).
- 1.3 Note the final Auditor's Annual Report (Appendix 3) and Audit Completion Report (Appendix 4) from the council's external auditors, Bishop Fleming.

**15. External Audit Plan 2024/25 (Pages 331 - 352)**

Report of Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)

**Purpose of report**

To receive the External Audit Plan for 2024/25 from the Council's external auditors, Bishop Fleming LLP.

## **Recommendations**

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To note the External Audit Plan for 2024/25 (Appendix 1).

## **16. Accounting Policies 2024-25 (Pages 353 - 382)**

Report of Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)

### **Purpose of report**

To ask the Committee to review and approve the Accounting Policies for inclusion in the 2024/25 Statement of Accounts which are due to be published by 30 June 2025. The council is required to set accounting policies which set out the specific principles, bases, conventions, rules, and practices applied by an authority in preparing and presenting financial statements.

## **Recommendations**

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To approve the accounting policies as recommended by the Chief Finance Officer (Appendix 1).

## **17. Treasury Management Report Q3 2024-25 (Pages 383 - 392)**

Report of Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)

### **Purpose of report**

To provide information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy for 2024-25 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

To demonstrate that all treasury management activities undertaken during the reporting period complied with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the council's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

## **Recommendations**

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To note the contents of this Treasury Management Q3 2024/25 report.

**Councillors are requested to collect any post from their pigeon hole in the Members Room at the end of the meeting.**

## **Information about this Meeting**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence should be notified to [democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) or 01295 221534 prior to the start of the meeting.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item.

### **Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates**

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare the fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

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### **Queries Regarding this Agenda**

Please contact Patrick Davis, Democratic and Elections [democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk), 01295 221534

**Shiraz Sheikh**  
**Monitoring Officer**

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