

AUDIT & ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE – SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATION AND DUTIES					
Role and remit					
	Issue	Yes	No	N/a	Comments/action
1	Do the written terms of reference adequately and realistically define the committee's role?				
2	Are the terms of reference approved by the council and reviewed periodically?				
3	Is the committee satisfied that it has been provided with sufficient membership, authority and resources to perform its role effectively and independently?				
4	<p>Is the audit committee receiving on a regular basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) internal audit reports summarising internal audit activity containing details of major audit issues and comparisons of activity against the plan; b) external audit reports; c) follow up' reports confirming that previous audit recommendations have been acted upon; d) explanations why the implementation of agreed action plans have been revised or delayed; e) completed action plans to accompany all 				

	internal and external audit reports, suitably prioritised to indicate the importance of each finding, the urgency of action, the officer responsible for implementation and the proposed implementation date?				
5	Can the committee access other committees and full council as necessary?				
6	Does the committee periodically assess its own effectiveness?				
7	Does the committee make a formal annual report on its work and performance during the year to full council?				
Membership, induction and training					
	Issue	Yes	No	N/a	Comments/action
8	Has the membership of the committee been formally agreed and a quorum set?				
9	Is the chair independent of the executive function?				
10	Have the audit committee members either previous knowledge of, or received appropriate training on, financial and risk management, accounting concepts and standards, and the regulatory regime?				
11	Are new committee members provided with an appropriate induction?				
12	Have all committee members' skills and experiences been assessed and training given for identified gaps?				

13	Has each member declared his or her business interests?				
14	Are members sufficiently independent of the other key committees of the council?				
Meetings					
	Issue	Yes	No	N/a	Comments/action
15	Does the audit committee meet regularly?				
16	Do the terms of reference set out the frequency of meetings?				
17	Does the committee calendar meet the authority's business needs, governance needs and the financial calendar?				
18	Are members attending meetings on a regular basis and if not, is appropriate action taken?				
19	Are meetings free and open without political influences being displayed?				
20	Does the authority's S151 officer or deputy attend all meetings?				
21	Does the committee have the benefit of attendance of appropriate officers at its meetings?				
INTERNAL CONTROL, RISK & GOVERNANCE					
	Issue	Yes	No	N/a	Comments/action
22	Does the committee consider the effectiveness of the system of internal control?				

23	Does the committee have responsibility for review and approval of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and does it consider it separately from the accounts?				
24	Does the audit committee consider how meaningful the AGS is?				
25	Does the committee satisfy itself that the system of internal control has operated effectively throughout the reporting period?				
26	Has the committee considered how it integrates with other committees that may have responsibility for risk management?				
27	Is the committee aware of how the authority manages the risk of fraud and what actions are in place to counter fraud and corruption?				
28	Is the committee made aware of the role of risk management in the preparation of the internal audit plan?				
29	Does the committee review the authority's strategic risk register at least annually?				
30	Does the committee monitor how the authority assesses its risk?				
31	Do the committee's terms of reference include oversight of the risk management process?				
FINANCIAL REPORTING AND REGULATORY MATTERS					
	Issue	Yes	No	N/a	Comments/action
32	Is the committee's role in the consideration and/or approval of the annual accounts clearly				

	defined?				
33	<p>Does the committee consider specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the suitability of accounting policies and treatments b) major judgements made c) large write-offs d) changes in accounting treatment e) the reasonableness of accounting estimates f) the narrative aspects of reporting? 				
34	Is a committee meeting scheduled to receive the external auditor's report to those charged with governance including a discussion of proposed adjustments to the accounts and other issues arising from the audit?				
35	Does the committee review management's letter of representation?				
36	Does the committee annually review the accounting policies of the authority?				
37	Have the members of the committee gained an understanding of management's procedures for preparing the authority's annual accounts?				
38	Does the committee have a mechanism to keep it aware of topical legal and regulatory issues, for example by receiving circulars and through training?				

INTERNAL AUDIT					
	Issue	Yes	No	N/a	Comments/action
39	<p>Is the committee satisfied that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) internal audit received all the co-operation they desired; b) there was no attempt to restrict the scope of internal audit work; c) the audit plan was not modified due to deficiencies in internal control or accounting records; d) there were no significant disagreements with management; e) internal audit do not have any concerns about management's commitment to a strong control environment operating style; f) there is a good working relationship between internal audit and management; g) internal audit are not being subjected to undue pressure. 				
40	Does the committee consider whether the scope of internal audit work addresses the authority's significant risks?				
41	Does internal audit have an appropriate reporting line to the committee?				
42	Does the committee receive an annual report from the Head of Internal Audit?				

43	Does the committee hold periodic private discussions with the Head of Internal Audit?				
44	Is the committee aware of the level of co-operation between the internal and external auditors?				
45	Does the committee review the adequacy of internal audit staffing and other resources?				
46	Is the committee aware of the level of conformance of the internal audit service with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards?				
47	Are internal audit performance measures monitored by the committee?				
48	Has the committee considered the level of information it wishes to receive from internal audit?				
EXTERNAL AUDIT					
	Issue	Yes	No	N/a	Comments/action
49	Does the audit committee know what aspects of the organisation's operation the external auditors consider to be of high risk?				
50.	Is the audit committee aware of how the external audit plan is put together?				
51	Is the audit committee satisfied that external audit received all the co-operation they desired?				
52	Is the audit committee aware of any significant problems in completing the external audit that resulted in audit over-runs?				
53	Are reports on the work of other inspection agencies presented to the committee?				

54	Is the committee satisfied that the auditors were not put under any undue pressure?				
55	Is the committee aware of any revisions to the external audit plan due to deficiencies in internal control or accounting records?				
56	Is the audit committee aware of any significant disagreements with management?				
57	Is the audit committee satisfied that the auditors have no concerns about management's commitment to a strong control environment or operating style?				
ADMINISTRATION					
Agenda management					
	Issue	Yes	No	N/a	Comments/action
58	Does the audit committee have a designated secretary from Committee/Member Services?				
59	Are agenda papers circulated in advance of meetings to allow adequate preparation by committee members?				
60	Are outline agendas planned one year ahead to cover issues on a cyclical basis?				
Papers					

	Issue	Yes	No	N/a	Comments/action
61	Do reports to the committee communicate relevant information at the right frequency, time, and in a format that is effective?				
62	Are there guidelines and/or a proforma concerning the format and content of the papers to be presented?				
Actions arising					
	Issue	Yes	No	N/a	Comments/action
63	Are minutes prepared and circulated promptly to the appropriate people?				
64	Is a report on matters arising made and minuted at the committee's next meeting?				
65	Do action points indicate who is to perform what and by when?				