

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Governance and Audit Committee

10 Members

Conservative: 7; Liberal Democrat: 1; Labour: 1; Independent: 1.

The purpose of this Committee is to:

1. ensure the Council's financial affairs are properly and efficiently conducted, and
2. review assurance as to the adequacy of the risk management and governance framework and the associated control environment.

On behalf of the Council this Committee will ensure the following outcomes:

- (a) Risk Management and Internal Control systems are in place that are adequate for purpose and effectively and efficiently operated.
- (b) The Council's Corporate Governance framework meets recommended practice (currently set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE Good Governance Framework), is embedded across the whole Council and is operating throughout the year with no significant lapses.
- (c) The Council's Internal Audit function is independent of the activities it audits, is effective, has sufficient experience and expertise and the scope of the work to be carried out is appropriate.
- (d) The appointment and remuneration of External Auditors is approved in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance, and the function is independent and objective.
- (e) The External Audit process is effective, taking into account relevant professional and regulatory requirements, and is undertaken in liaison with Internal Audit.
- (f) The Council's financial statements (including the Pension Fund Accounts) comply with relevant legislation and guidance and the associated financial reporting processes are effective.
- (g) Any public statements in relation to the Council's financial performance are accurate and the financial judgements contained within those statements are sound.
- (h) Accounting policies are appropriately applied across the Council.
- (i) The Council has a robust counter-fraud culture backed by well designed and implemented controls and procedures which define the roles of management and Internal Audit.

- (j) The Council monitors the implementation of the Bribery Act Policy to ensure that it is followed at all times.
- (k) Ensure that there are effective governance arrangements in place for Kent County Council's wholly owned limited companies and trading vehicles
- (l) Receive and review the annual financial statements and dividend policies of any KCC limited companies and to consider recommending corrective action where appropriate
- (m) Review the establishment of new limited companies before the company commences trading and make recommendations to the responsible Cabinet Member where appropriate in relation to:
 - i. Governance matters
 - ii. The financial impact of the proposed company on Kent County Council