

Meeting of:	GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	25 JANUARY 2024
Report Title:	FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24 AND 2024-25
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	DEBORAH EXTON DEPUTY HEAD OF FINANCE
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governance and Audit Committee has a number of core functions and responsibilities within its remit. • It receives a number of reports and presentations throughout the year to enable it to carry out those core functions and responsibilities effectively and to provide it with confidence in the financial governance of the Authority. • To enable the Committee to provide this assurance and to ensure it is covering its range of responsibilities, a Forward Work Programme (FWP) is presented at each meeting, setting out the reports to be presented at future meetings, for approval or amendment, as necessary. • The report details the items to be considered at the last meeting of the municipal year in April 2024, as part of the 2023-24 Forward Work Programme and provides a draft Forward Work Programme for 2024-25 for consideration at Appendix A.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the updated Forward Work Programme for 2023-24 and for the draft Forward Work Programme for 2024-25.

2. Background

- 2.1 The core functions of an effective Governance and Audit Committee include the responsibility to:

- review, scrutinise and issue reports and recommendations in relation to the Authority's financial affairs.
- consider the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting, governance processes, performance assessment and complaints arrangements.
- seek assurances that action is being taken on risk-related issues identified by auditors and inspectors.
- consider the effectiveness of the Council's anti-fraud and corruption arrangements.
- be satisfied that the Council's assurance statements properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it.
- oversee the work of internal audit (including the annual plan and strategy) and monitor performance.
- review summary internal audit reports and the main issues arising, and seek assurance that action has been taken where necessary.
- receive the annual report of the Head of Internal Audit.
- consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies, where applicable.
- ensure that there are effective relationships between external and internal audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted.
- review and approve the financial statements, external auditor's opinion and reports to Members, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit.
- review and make any recommendations for change to the Council's draft self-assessment report.
- consider panel performance assessment reports into how the Council is meeting its performance requirements.

2.2 Effective Governance and Audit Committees help to raise the profile of governance, internal control, risk management and financial reporting issues within an organisation, as well as providing a forum for the discussion of issues raised by internal and external auditors. They enhance public trust and confidence in the financial governance of an authority.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 In order to assist the Committee in ensuring that due consideration is given to all aspects of their core functions the remaining Forward Work Programme items for the 2023-24 municipal year, to be considered at the meeting on 18 April 2024, are detailed below. Committee is asked to approve the proposed agenda items.

Proposed Agenda Items – 18 April 2024	
1	Governance and Audit Committee Action Record
2	Audit Wales Governance and Audit Committee Reports
3	Internal Audit Shared Service Charter
4	Internal Audit Progress Reports
5	Internal Audit Recommendation Monitoring Report
6	Annual Self-Assessment of the Council's Performance

7	Code of Corporate Governance
8	Complaints Process
9	Updated Forward Work Programme

3.2 A draft Forward Work Programme for 2024-25 is attached at **Appendix A**. Committee Members are asked to endorse this schedule and indicate whether any additional information or research is required. Dates of Committee meetings are subject to approval at the Annual Meeting of Council in May.

3.3 The schedule of items for discussion at specific meetings may be subject to change, to take into account other items that need to be considered, and operational factors.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no safeguarding or corporate parent implications arising from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 That the Committee considers and approves the updated Forward Work Programme for 2023-24 and the draft Forward Work Programme for 2024-25.

Background documents

None