

Governance, Risk and Audit Committee



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20th September 2021

A meeting of the **Governance, Risk and Audit Committee** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the **Council Chamber - Council Offices** on **Tuesday, 28 September 2021** at **12.30 pm**.

At the discretion of the Chairman, a short break will be taken after the meeting has been running for approximately one and a half hours

Members of the public who wish to ask a question or speak on an agenda item are requested to notify the committee clerk 24 hours in advance of the meeting and arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. This is to allow time for the Committee Chair to rearrange the order of items on the agenda for the convenience of members of the public. Further information on the procedure for public speaking can be obtained from Democratic Services, Tel: 01263 516047, Email: matthew.stembrowicz@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

Anyone attending this meeting may take photographs, film or audio-record the proceedings and report on the meeting. Anyone wishing to do so must inform the Chairman. If you are a member of the public and you wish to speak on an item on the agenda, please be aware that you may be filmed or photographed.

Please note that Committee members will be given priority to speak during the debate of agenda items

Emma Denny
Democratic Services Manager

To: Mr J Rest, Mr S Penfold, Mr C Cushing, Mr H Blathwayt, Dr P Bütikofer and Mr P Fisher

All other Members of the Council for information.

Members of the Management Team, appropriate Officers, Press and Public



**If you have any special requirements in order
to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance**

If you would like any document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us

Chief Executive: Steve Blatch

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A G E N D A

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. SUBSTITUTES

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To receive public questions, if any.

4. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

To determine any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1 - 2

Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests that they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The code of conduct for Members requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest.

6. MINUTES

3 - 12

To approve as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee held on 15th June 2021.

7. PROGRESS REPORT ON INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY: 16 JUNE 2021 TO 20 SEPTEMBER 2021

13 - 18

Summary:

This report examines the progress made between 16 June and 20 September 2021 in relation to delivery of the annual internal audit plan for 2021/22.

Conclusions:

Quarter two work has commenced and is being progressed with one report currently in draft.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee notes internal audit progress within the period covered by the report.

Cabinet member(s):
All

Ward(s) affected:
All

Contact Officer, telephone number,
and e-mail:

Faye Haywood
01508 533873, fhaywood@s-norfolk.gov.uk

8. **FOLLOW UP ON INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS 16 JUNE 2021 TO 20 SEPTEMBER 2021** 19 - 34

Summary: This report provides an overview of progress made in implementing agreed audit recommendations due for completion within the period covered by this report.

Conclusions: Progress continues to be made in addressing audit recommendations.

Recommendations: **It is recommended that the Committee notes management action taken to date regarding the delivery of audit recommendations.**

Cabinet member(s):
All

Ward(s) affected:
All

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Faye Haywood, Head of Internal Audit for North Norfolk DC
01508 533873, fhaywood@s-norfolk.gov.uk

Summary:	This report presents to the Committee the draft Statement of Accounts for the 2020/21 financial year. These are for the Committee to note, in advance of approval of the final audited version at a date to be confirmed.
Options considered:	No options are applicable
Conclusions:	The Council's assets should be regularly reviewed to ensure they generate a service or other benefit to the District, and that they are financially sustainable.
Recommendations:	That the Committee note the contents of the draft Accounts
Reasons for Recommendations:	To enable more effective Member scrutiny of the Council's financial performance and Accounts.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
Cllr Eric Seward	All

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Lucy Hume (Chief Technical Accountant) lucy.hume@north-norfolk.gov.uk 01263 516246

10. UPDATED WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

159 - 182

- Summary:** North Norfolk District Council has a Whistleblowing Policy which is for review every 3 years. The present Whistleblowing Policy has been reviewed, updating the relevant key persons under the policy and providing a more streamlined procedure. So as to comply with paragraph 8.6 of the policy, this revised policy has been to CLT for approval, prior to its being submitted to the Governance Risk and Audit Committee (GRAC)
- Options considered:** To adopt the revised Whistleblowing Policy. It is not feasible to be without a Whistleblowing Policy.
- Conclusions:** The revised Whistleblowing Policy is attached. It is requested that it be considered for approval.
- Recommendations:** **That GRAC considers and approves the revised Whistleblowing Policy.**
- Reasons for Recommendations:** Having a Whistleblowing Policy creates an open culture and communicates to staff that the Council acts in the public interest, taking wrongdoing seriously. The policy sets out the procedure where a person wishes to raise a concern, and persons who can be contacted. It provides a protected process and procedure for dealing with the concern.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Cabinet Member(s)

Ward(s) affected: All

Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Cara Jordan, 01263 516373, cara.jordan@north-norfolk.gov.uk

11. LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2020/21 183 - 234

Summary: The Corporate Governance framework is made up of the systems and processes, culture and values by which an organisation is directed and controlled. For local authorities this includes how a Council relates to the community it serves. The Local Code of Corporate Governance is a public statement of the ways in which the Council will achieve good corporate governance. This is based on the development of the new '*Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework*' (2016) produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and focusses on the seven core principles and sub-principles of good governance. The Annual Governance Statement is prepared following a review of all the evidence available to the Council in seeking compliance with its Local Code. As with last year, both of these documents have been considered in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Conclusions: The arrangements set out in the Local Code of Corporate Governance and the Annual Governance Statement will allow the Council to move ahead with its corporate planning processes confident that it can address the issues of governance and risk.

Recommendations: **Members are asked to review and approve the Annual Governance Statement along with the updated Local Code of Corporate Governance.**

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
All	All

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Duncan Ellis, 01263 516330, Duncan.ellis@north-norfolk.gov.uk

12. MONITORING OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021 235 - 248

To receive and note the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report 2020/2021.

13. GRAC ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020 & 2020-2021

249 - 254

Summary: This report aims to provide the Council with an outline of the role, purpose and background of the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee, as well as a summary of the work undertaken throughout both the 2019-20 and 2020-21 municipal years, as a result of reporting delays caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Conclusions: Despite significant delays caused to the accounts sign-off and external audit process by issues beyond the Council's control, the Committee continued to meet its obligation to provide oversight of the Council's governance procedures, corporate risk and internal/external audits.

Recommendations: **It is recommended that Council notes the report, affirms the work of the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee, and considers any concerns raised within the report.**

Reasons for Recommendations: To inform Council of the work of the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Cabinet member(s): Ward(s) affected:
All All

Contact Officer, Matt Stembrowicz, Democratic Services &
telephone number, Governance Officer, 01263 516047,
and e-mail: Matthew.Stembrowicz@north-norfolk.gov.uk

14. LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN: ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER 2021 255 - 260

To receive and note the LGO Annual Review Letter.

Summary: The Council's Procurement Strategy has been updated in light of the Covid19 pandemic and to reflect the Council's Corporate priorities. It outlines how the procurement function will support delivery of these objectives, as well as supporting delivery of the Council's budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The updated Strategy also emphasises the increasing importance of using procurement to support wider social, economic and environmental objectives, in ways that offer real long term benefits.

Options considered: The Council could continue to operate under the current Procurement Strategy but this does not take account of any impact of Covid19 or the current Corporate Priorities.

Conclusions: The Strategy document provides the framework which governs the Council's corporate aims and objectives in relation to procurement. It also provides the structure for the effective management and monitoring of procurement activity. It has been updated in light of the Covid19 pandemic and to reflect the Council's Corporate Priorities and emphasises the increasing importance of using procurement to support wider social, economic and environmental objectives.

Recommendations: **That the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee (GRAC) recommend approval of the draft strategy to Cabinet.**

Reasons for Recommendations: To agree the updated Procurement Strategy.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Cabinet Member(s) - Cllr Eric Seward

Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Duncan Ellis, 01263 516330, Duncan.ellis@north-norfolk.gov.uk

16. PROCUREMENT EXEMPTIONS REGISTER 1ST APRIL 2021 - 31ST AUGUST 2021 273 - 274

To review and note the Procurement Exemptions Register.

17. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER 275 - 308

To review and note the Corporate Risk Register.

18. ASSET REGISTER REVIEW 309 - 320

Summary: This report provides a review of the Council's asset register, as requested by the Committee. This report provides the basis for the regular review of assets by the Committee, and as such is a work in progress which will be expanded upon over time as new information becomes available.

Options considered: No actions are requested as a direct consequence of this report, but in the future the detail within may be used to help inform decision making processes around the retention of the Council's assets.

Conclusions: The Council's assets should be regularly reviewed to ensure they generate a service or other benefit to the District, and that they are financially sustainable.

Recommendations: **That the Committee note the contents of the report and appendices.**

Reasons for Recommendations: To enable more effective Member scrutiny of the Council's assets

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
Eric Seward	All

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Lucy Hume (Chief Technical Accountant) lucy.hume@north-norfolk.gov.uk 01263 516246

19. GOVERNANCE, RISK AND AUDIT COMMITTEE UPDATE AND ACTION LIST 321 - 322

To monitor progress on items requiring action from the previous meeting, including progress on implementation of audit recommendations.

20. GOVERNANCE, RISK AND AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 323 - 324

To review the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee Work Programme.

21. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To pass the following resolution, if necessary:

“That under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in part 1 of schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”