

Notice of Audit and Governance Committee



Date: Thursday, 7 September 2023 at 6.00 pm

Venue: Committee Room, First Floor, BCP Civic Centre Annex, St Stephen's Rd, Bournemouth BH2 6LL

Membership:

Chairman:

Cllr M Andrews

Vice Chairman:

Cllr E Connolly

Cllr J Beesley
Cllr B Castle
Cllr A Chapmanlaw

Cllr R Herrett
Cllr M Phipps
Cllr J Salmon

Cllr C Weight

All Members of the Audit and Governance Committee are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

The press and public are welcome to view the live stream of this meeting at the following link:

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=5593>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Democratic Services on 01202 096660 or email democratic.services@bcpCouncil.gov.uk

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office: Tel: 01202 118686 or email press.office@bcpCouncil.gov.uk

This notice and all the papers mentioned within it are available at democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk

GRAHAM FARRANT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

30 August 2023

**DEBATE
NOT HATE**



Available online and
on the Mod.gov app



Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

Declaring interests at meetings

Familiarise yourself with the Councillor Code of Conduct which can be found in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

Before the meeting, read the agenda and reports to see if the matters to be discussed at the meeting concern your interests



What are the principles of bias and pre-determination and how do they affect my participation in the meeting?

Bias and predetermination are common law concepts. If they affect you, your participation in the meeting may call into question the decision arrived at on the item.

Bias Test

In all the circumstances, would it lead a fair minded and informed observer to conclude that there was a real possibility or a real danger that the decision maker was biased?

Predetermination Test

At the time of making the decision, did the decision maker have a closed mind?

If a councillor appears to be biased or to have predetermined their decision, they must NOT participate in the meeting.

For more information or advice please contact the Monitoring Officer
(susan.zeiss@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Selflessness

Councillors should act solely in terms of the public interest

Integrity

Councillors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships

Objectivity

Councillors must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

Accountability

Councillors are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

Openness

Councillors should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing

Honesty & Integrity

Councillors should act with honesty and integrity and should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned

Leadership

Councillors should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

AGENDA

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence from Councillors.

2. Substitute Members

To receive information on any changes in the membership of the Committee.

Note – When a member of a Committee is unable to attend a meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee, the relevant Political Group Leader (or their nominated representative) may, by notice to the Monitoring Officer (or their nominated representative) prior to the meeting, appoint a substitute member from within the same Political Group. The contact details on the front of this agenda should be used for notifications.

3. Declarations of Interests

Councillors are requested to declare any interests on items included in this agenda. Please refer to the workflow on the preceding page for guidance.

Declarations received will be reported at the meeting.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 27 July 2023.

5 - 18

5. Public Issues

To receive any public questions, statements or petitions submitted in accordance with the Constitution. Further information on the requirements for submitting these is available to view at the following link:-

<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeID=151&Info=1&bcr=1>

The deadline for the submission of public questions is 3 clear working days before the meeting.

The deadline for the submission of a statement is midday the working day before the meeting.

The deadline for the submission of a petition is 10 working days before the meeting.

6. External Audit - Auditor's Annual Report 2021/22 & 2022/23 (Value for money arrangements report)

19 - 78

The External Auditor, Grant Thornton for BCP Council, is required to consider whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness its use of resources.

Auditors are required to report their commentary under specific criteria, namely financial sustainability, governance and improving economy,

efficiency and effectiveness. They are required to report on any significant weaknesses they identify.

The External Auditor has produced a 2021/22 and 2022/23 Annual Report which has identified the following weaknesses:

Criteria	Risk assessment
Financial sustainability	Risks identified relate in the main due to uncertainties in relation to the Councils Medium Term Financial Plans and associated transformation programme and delivery of savings.
Governance	Significant risks identified in Governance in relation to leadership, partnerships and the Transformation programme
Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness	Risk identified because of the inadequate rating issued by Ofsted in respect of children in care

Five significant weaknesses have been identified and have resulted in 5 key recommendations being made.

A further 13 improvement recommendations have been made. The Council has provided the External Auditor with management responses to all the recommendations.

The External Auditor has made a contextual comment that the May 2023 election has resulted in a change of political administration and an apparent change in financial strategy which will set a new tone from the top and will be an opportunity to address some of the issue raised in their report.

7. Review of the Council's Constitution - Recommendations of the Constitution Review Working Group

79 - 114

The report summarises the issues considered by the Constitution Review Working Group and sets out a series of recommendations arising from the Working Group for consideration by the Committee including proposed changes to the overview and scrutiny arrangements.

Any recommendations arising from the Committee shall be referred to full Council for adoption.

No other items of business can be considered unless the Chairman decides the matter is urgent for reasons that must be specified and recorded in the Minutes.