

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
AUDIT, STANDARDS & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

4.00pm 23 SEPTEMBER 2025

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor West (Chair) Loughran (Deputy Chair), Baghoth, Guilmant, Helliwell, Meadows, and Robinson

Other Members present: Councillors Taylor and Williams

PART ONE

16 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

16a Declarations of substitutes

16.1 Councillor Robinson was present as a substitute for Councillor Hewitt.

16b Declarations of interests

16.2 Councillor Robinson declared a non-pecuniary interest as a governor for St Andrew's C of E Primary School.

16c Exclusion of the press and public

16.3 In accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the Act"), the Committee considered whether the public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any item of business on the grounds that it is likely in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during it, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act.

16.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public are not excluded from the meeting.

17 MINUTES

17.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 June 2025 be approved and signed as the correct record.

18 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

18.1 The Chair provided the following communications:

I'm pleased to say that we have Councillor Williams with us here today who will be able to help inform our discussion of the annual housing complaints report and self-assessment. Councillor Williams has another meeting to attend later on and has requested that we move this item up to be our first item, which I've happily agreed to. Obviously, you're very very busy and we understand that so that's appreciated. Also, Councillor Taylor is going to attend as well to help inform our discussion of the progress report on budget setting. Councillor Taylor has work commitments and will be joining us virtually. To help Councillor Taylor manage his time as well, I've decided to move the budget report up to be the second item. So that's both of those reports first.

Just to say that earlier this month I was invited to attend a meeting of the Regional Audit Committee Forum, which is basically an exchange meeting for Audit and Standard chairs in the South East. The main topic of discussion was on the changes to internal audit standards, which there was a presentation by Diana Melville of CIPFA and Diana author's guidance so she's very authoritative on this matter. It was very helpful to hear that presentation and I think very timely for, certainly for myself, and for the consideration today of the new global internal audit standards which is on our agenda. The chief point that I took away from that presentation, just to share with members because you weren't able to benefit directly from that presentation, was that the global internal audit standards is the responsibility of audit and standards committee and not just the chief auditor. So, I hope we've all absorbed the report and that we take our responsibility seriously on this and that we don't just find ourselves being led by the chief auditor on all of these matters.

19 CALL OVER

- 19.1 The Democratic Services Officer called the agenda items to the committee. All items were reserved for discussion.

20 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- 20.1 No public representations were received.

21 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

- 21.1 No member representations were received.

22 INTERNAL AUDIT AND COUNTER FRAUD QUARTER 1 PROGRESS REPORT 2025/26

- 22.1 The committee considered the Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Quarter 1 Progress Report 2025/26 which provided Members with an update on all internal audit and counter fraud activity completed during quarter 1 (2025/26), including a summary of all key audit findings. The report also included an update on the performance of the Internal Audit Service during the period.
- 22.2 Councillors Baghoth, Helliwell, Meadows, Robinson, and West asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

22.3 RESOLVED –

That the Audit, Standards, and General Purposes note the report.

23 GLOBAL INTERNAL AUDIT STANDARDS SELF- ASSESSMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

23.1 The committee considered Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) Self- Assessment and Quality Assurance and Improvement Plan (QAIP) which set out the results of the Internal Audit Service's self-assessment against the new Global Internal Audit Standards along with details of any actions arising, as set out with the Service's ongoing Quality Assurance and Improvement Plan. The Internal Audit Charter has been updated in response to the new Standards and is attached to this report as Appendix 3 for approval.

23.2 Councillors Loughran and West asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

23.3 RESOLVED –

That the Audit, Standards, and General Purposes Committee:

- 1) Note the self-assessment against the new GIAS and the resulting QAIP.
- 2) Approve the updated Internal Audit Charter.

24 ANNUAL HOUSING COMPLAINTS REPORT AND SELF ASSESSMENT

24.1 The committee considered the Annual Housing Complaints Report and Self-Assessment in alignment with the Council Plan priority, Homes for Everyone, to ensure that the Council complies with new social housing regulations. Also, the Council Plan priority, to be a responsive council with well-run services.

24.2 Councillors Baghoth, Loughran, Meadows, Robinson, and West asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

24.3 RESOLVED –

That the Audit, Standards, and General Purposes Committee having reviewed the report provide comment on the Annual Housing Complaints Report and Self-Assessment.

25 PROGRESS REPORT ON BUDGET SETTING

25.1 The committee considered the Progress report on Budget Setting to update the Committee on the Council's financial position, and consider progress being made setting the budget for 2026 onwards.

25.2 Councillors Guilment, Meadows, and West asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

25.3 RESOLVED –

That the Audit, Standards, and General Purposes Committee note the contents of this report and the appendix.

26 WHISTLEBLOWING - INTERIM UPDATE

26.1 The committee considered the Interim update on the Council's Whistleblowing Arrangements report to note the Whistleblowing referrals and outcomes received in since the Council's updated Whistleblowing Policy was approved by Committee in April 2025.

26.2 Councillors Guilmant, Helliwell, Meadows, and West asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

26.3 RESOLVED –

That the Audit, Standards, and General Purposes Committee note the report, including the whistleblowing referrals and outcomes.

27 STANDARDS UPDATE

27.1 The committee considered the Standards Update report which provides a quarterly update on complaints received in alleging that Members have breached the Council's Code of Conduct for Members and on related matters.

27.2 Councillors Helliwell, Loughran, Meadows, and West asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

27.3 RESOLVED –

That the Audit, Standards, and General Purposes Committee note this report.

28 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

28.1 No items were referred to Full Council for information.

29 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

29.1 The committee requested that a draft report of the 2026/27 budget come to the 27 January 2026 Audit, Standards, and General Purposes committee meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.15pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

