

Council

18 July 2013

Agenda Item 23

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: **Audit & Standards Committee Annual Report 2012/13**

Date of Meeting: **18 July 2013**

25 June 2013 – Audit & Standards Committee

Report of: **Executive Director of Finance & Resources**

Contact Officer:: Name: **Ian Withers, Head of Audit & Business Risk** **Tel 29-1323**

E-mail: ian.withers@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This draft report attached at Appendix 1 provides a summary of the Audit & Standards Committee's performance and achievements during 2012/13. It has been prepared on behalf of the Audit & Standards Committee members.
- 1.2 The preparation of an annual report is recognised as best practice for Audit Committees by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) in providing assurance to the Council over its role in governance.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Audit & Standards Committee:

- 2.1 Consider the draft report at Appendix 1 and make any amendments and additions it deems necessary.
- 2.2 Refer the report (incorporating any amendments and additions) to Full Council for information.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The previous Audit Committee was established in May 2008, and merged with the Standards Committee in June 2012 to become the Audit & Standards Committee. Its purpose for the 2012/13 municipal year is contained in the Terms of Reference, Appendix A to the Annual Report.
- 3.2 Whilst there is no statutory requirement for a local authority to establish an Audit Committee, its existence is implied by the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 and recognised across both the private and public sectors as a key component of corporate governance.

3.3 The key benefits of an effective Audit & Standards Committee are:

- Raising greater awareness of the effectiveness and continued development of the council's governance arrangements;
- Increasing public confidence in the objectivity and fairness of financial and other reporting; and
- Reinforcing the importance and independence of internal and external audit.

4. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

4.1 Financial Implications:

4.1.1 The Audit & Standards Committee is an essential element of good financial governance, the costs its work programme including officer support and training is met from existing budgetary provision.

Finance Officer consulted: James Hengeveld 11/06/13

4.2 Legal Implications:

4.2.1 The report is made under the Committee's power to consider and make recommendations to Full Council on matters relating to or affecting the Committee's functions.

Lawyer consulted: Oliver Dixon 11/05/13

4.3 Equalities Implications:

4.3.1 There are no equalities implications arising.

4.4 Sustainability Implications:

4.4.1 There are no sustainability implications arising.

4.5 Crime & Disorder Implications:

4.5.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising.

4.6 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

4.6.1 There are no direct risk and opportunity management implications arising.

4.7 Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 4.7.1 Robust corporate governance arrangements are essential to the sound management of the City Council and the achievement of its objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Audit & Standards Committee Annual Report 2012/13

Background Documents

1. Reports to the Audit & Standards Committee May 2012 – April 2013