

Audit and Governance Committee

Chair's Annual Statement

2025/26

The past year's business for the Audit and Governance Committee has served to reinforce the importance of the audit function in maintaining good governance and proper democratic oversight of the key issues affecting the Council at the moment.

As part of its 'ordinary' work programme, the Committee has continued to receive regular updates on the Council's day-to-day activities, such as: the monitoring of Key Corporate Risks, with 'deep dives' to consider the details of individual KCRs; the Council's Treasury Management activities, through monitor reports and the Treasury Management Strategy; the Council's broader finance function, through the accounts approval process, culminating in the completion of the 2024/25 external audit of the Council's accounts; and both counter fraud and internal audit work, through regular progress reports for each. Throughout these, the Committee members have exercised unfailing challenge and independence, fulfilling their role in providing democratic oversight of the Council's operations.

Beyond this, however, the Committee has devoted substantial time, across three meetings, considering the challenges and issues arising from the internal audit report into major projects. The Committee sought reassurance on future arrangements for the monitoring and delivery of major Council projects, given the issues identified.

The Committee has also considered a number of changes to the Constitution, both those requiring full Council approval and those with delegated approval. Most notable have been: the wholesale revision of the Joint Standards Committee Procedures, approved by the Joint Standards Committee itself; and the revision of operating arrangements for Planning Committee at York, with the deletion of Planning Committee B and the clarification of call-in arrangements for planning applications, both of which were considered by Audit and Governance Committee before final approval by Council.

Once again, the committee has contributed to the Council's continuing drive for good governance, and continues to provide robust, appropriate challenge where it believes such challenge is necessary.