

<b>Report title: Annual Report of the Audit Governance and Standards Committee</b>	
<b>Report to:</b> Audit Governance and Standards Committee	
<b>Report author:</b> Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance	
<b>Date:</b> 28 June 2021	<b>For:</b> Approval
<b>Enquiries to:</b> Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance, <a href="mailto:paul.turner@essex.gov.uk">paul.turner@essex.gov.uk</a> or Paula Clowes, Head of Assurance, <a href="mailto:paula.clowes@essex.gov.uk">paula.clowes@essex.gov.uk</a>	
<b>County Divisions affected:</b> All Essex	

## 1. Purpose of Report

This report asks the Audit Governance and Standards committee to review and approve the Annual Report of the Audit Governance and Standards Committee, attached at appendix 1, prior to it being presented to Full Council in July 2021.

## 2. Recommendation

That the Audit Governance and Standards committee review and approve the Annual Report of the Audit Governance and Standards Committee, prior to it being presented to Full Council in July 2021.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 In order to effectively discharge its responsibilities the Audit Governance and Standards Committee should report annually on its work to those charged with governance. As such, an annual report is presented to Full Council outlining the committee's purpose and role as well as the activities that it has undertaken throughout the preceding financial year to support good governance and strong public financial management.
- 3.3 The 2020/21 report has been drafted on behalf of the Committee and the draft is attached at appendix 1 for the committee's consideration and approval.

## 4. Summary

- 4.1 The report provides Full Council with the following:
  - Committee Membership
  - Terms of Reference and Purpose of the Committee
  - Details of the Committee's work during the financial year ending 31 March 2021.
  - An update on the Effectiveness Review Action Plan.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 The Audit Governance and Standards Committee is a key way in which the Council provides assurance that it is providing value for money and has proper systems of control. Without effective assurance Councillors will not know that the Council is effectively carrying out its statutory duties. Whilst the production of an annual report is not a legal requirement it is considered best practice and provides assurance that the Committee is fulfilling its function effectively.

## **7. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 7.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when ECC makes decisions it must have regard to the need to: (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 7.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. Equality and diversity matters have been considered in the production of the progress report.

## **8. List of Appendices**

Appendix 1: Draft Annual Report of the Audit Governance and Standards Committee

## **9. List of Background Papers**

- CIPFA's Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cipfa.org/services/support-for-audit-committees>