

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

25 JUNE 2025 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr DS Cope - Chair
Cllr R Webber-Jones – Vice-Chair
Cllr CM Allen, Cllr REH Flemming, Cllr E Hollick, Cllr C Lambert,
Cllr A Pendlebury, Cllr MJ Surtees, Cllr P Williams and Cllr RG Allen

Also in attendance:

Officers in attendance: Julie Kenny, Sarah Knowles (Mazars), John Palmer,
Rebecca Valentine-Wilkinson and Ashley Wilson

63. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Sutton and S Gibbens with the following substitutions authorised in accordance with procedure rule 10:

Councillor R Allen for Councillor Sutton.

64. Minutes of previous meeting

It was moved by Councillor Pendlebury, seconded by Councillor Flemming and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 5 March be confirmed as a correct record.

65. Declarations of interest

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

66. External Audit Plan 2024/25

Members were presented with the External Audit plan for the year ending 31 March 2025 that set out the strategy for the external audit of HBBC for 2024/25. This included the approach to building back assurance following the disclaimed audit opinions issued in 2020/21, 2021/22 , 2022/23 and 2023/24.

The report highlighted that External Audit would not be able to build back all the missing assurances from previous years during 2024/25 and therefore there remained an ongoing risk that the audit opinion would need to be disclaimed. The plan proposed how assurance would be built back by our external auditors over the new few years.

In response to a question regarding the Local Government Re-organisation and how this may impact this timetable, it was confirmed that the 2027/28 audit opinion would move forward as part of this transfer of the opening balances to the new Authority. Therefore it was hoped to return to an un-modified opinion for that year.

In response to additional questions from members, officers confirmed that:

- External funding (£20k) had been received to support the fee costs for this work;
- The VFM work hadn't been completed yet, so there wouldn't be any results available;
- Internal audit looked at some of the risk work on a sample basis, so assurance was there that the necessary controls and procedures were in place;
- There was a possibility that the External Auditors might be able to give a modified opinion on the accounts for 2026/27 if the build back work went as anticipated, which would be an improvement on disclaimed opinions.

It was proposed by Councillor Webber-Jones, seconded by Councillor Williams and

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

67. Leisure Centre - Internal Audit final report

Members received the final Internal Audit report for the Leisure Centre for 2024/25 that provided assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the key controls in place.

One medium priority recommendation had been found due to a lack of verification of the finance data reported by Places Leisure. Officers confirmed that the leisure centre performance was reviewed regularly, and this was felt to be a one-off error and there was no financial impact on the Council as the same management fee would be received from the operator. In addition it was confirmed that the data had since been rectified.

It was proposed by Councillor Webber-Jones, seconded by Councillor Flemming and

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

68. IT Asset Management Leicestershire ICT Partnership 23/24 - Internal Audit final report

Members were presented with the final internal audit report for IT Asset Management for the Leicestershire ICT Partnership for 2023/24.

The Internal Auditor confirmed that this report finalised in March was last year's audit opinion with two recommendations.

Members confirmed it was a challenging report and asked how these actions were monitored.

Officers confirmed that the ICT Partnership Strategy Group, along with the Steering Group that included three Directors from each of the Partnership

Authorities managed any outstanding actions from internal audits as a standing item on the agenda and challenges were made by the group on a regular basis.

In response to questions from members, officers confirmed that:

- The main risk was the management of assets, as currently they had several lists in place, but a more holistic view needed to be in place so the data was all kept together;
- The physical security controls were all in place, but internal audit had picked up that another level of security was required so there was some finalisation work required on this piece of work with regards to access and egress controls that needed further reconfiguration.
- The actions required were all listed on page 57 of the report.
- Blaby District Council leaving the Partnership left no significant impact on the report.
- Cyber risk remained high because of the significant risk corporately.

Members highlighted the high priorities within this report and Internal Audit confirmed that a report would come back to this committee in October of this year with all the follow up recommendations.

It was proposed by Councillor Williams, seconded by Councillor Hollick and

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

69. Waste Management 2024/25 - Internal Audit final report

Members were presented with the Waste Management final internal audit report for 2024/25.

Although the Auditors highlighted inconsistencies in evidence around documenting procedures, members confirmed they felt happy that the assurances were in place.

It was proposed by Councillor Flemming, seconded by Councillor Pendlebury and

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

70. Internal Audit Progress report

Members were presented with an update on the current position of the delivery of the 2024/25 Internal Audit plan.

It was proposed by Councillor Allen, seconded by Councillor Flemming and

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

71. Audit Committee Self-Assessment Action Plan - update

Members were presented with the progress and support for actions required on the Action Plan.

In response to questions from members, it was confirmed that:

- Additional informal training sessions would be organised around members' needs;
- The decision to have an independent person as part of the committee would be reviewed at a later date in agreement with members' views;
- An informal session would be organised to discuss the final accounts to support members feeling comfortable with their responsibilities.

It was proposed by Councillor Webber-Jones, seconded by Councillor C Allen and

RESOLVED –

- (i) that members noted the report and considered any actions needed; and
- (ii) re-assessed the scores given as part of an updated self-assessment to be reported at the next meeting.

72. **Audit Committee forward plan**

Members were presented with a forward plan programme of work for 2025/26 that covered the key aspects of the committee's terms of reference outlined in the constitution.

Members agreed this would manage the work of this committee in an effective way.

It was moved by Councillor Webber-Jones, seconded by Councillor C Allen and

RESOLVED – the forward plan be approved as a working document.

73. **Items to be referred to council**

There were no items to be referred to Council.

(The Meeting closed at 8.00 pm)

CHAIR