

10. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE AUDIT & GOVERNANCE BOARD

Efficiency and Improvement

1. To draw up an Efficiency Programme for the Authority ensuring that it meets its statutory requirements for securing Best Value and complies with the requirements placed upon it in relation to reporting efficiency gains.
2. To draw up and oversee a programme of reviews aimed at securing continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of Council services.
3. To promote partnership working and collaboration with other public and private bodies where that supports the Council's Efficiency Programme.
4. To monitor the Council's performance against the Efficiency Programme, particularly in relation to the identification and realisation of efficiency gains.
5. To ensure the Council has processes in place to benchmark its activities and to learn from best practice to ensure continuous improvement in its performance.
6. To monitor and review the Council's procurement arrangements.
7. To oversee the Council's preparations for any organisational assessment process.

Audit

8. To approve, but not direct, internal audit's strategy, plan and monitor performance.
9. To review summary internal audit reports and the main issues arising, and seek assurance that action has been taken where necessary.
10. To consider the annual report of the Divisional Manager – Audit and Operational Finance.
11. To consider the external auditor's annual letter and relevant reports.
12. To ensure that there are effective relationships between external and internal audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted.

Accounts

13. To review and approve the annual statement of accounts.
14. To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

Governance

15. To consider the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and agree necessary actions to ensure compliance with best practice.
16. To be satisfied that the authority's assurance statements, including the Annual Governance Statement, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it.
17. To review and approve the Annual Governance Statement.
18. To ensure that the Council has effective processes in place to obtain value for money from its contractual arrangements with third parties.

Risk Management

19. To review the adequacy of arrangements for identifying and managing the Council's business risks, including the Council's Risk Management Policy and its implementation.
20. To review the robustness of the Corporate Risk Register and the adequacy of the associated risk management arrangements.
21. To receive and consider regular reports on the risk environment and associated management action.

Anti-Fraud and Corruption arrangements

22. To monitor and review the adequacy of the Council's anti-fraud and corruption **policies and arrangements.**

Standards

23. To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members and co-opted members of the authority.

24. To assist members and co-opted members of the authority to observe the authority's Code of Conduct.
25. To advise the authority on the adoption or revision of the Code of Conduct.
26. To monitor the operation of the authority's Code of Conduct.
27. To advise, train or arrange to train members of the authority on matters relating to the authority's Code of Conduct.
28. To maintain a Hearings Panel (comprised of 3 members of the Board drawn from 2 political groups if possible) to hear allegations made against an Elected Member or a Parish Councillor within the Borough Council's area.
29. To investigate or arrange investigation of any complaints made by Members, Officers or members of the public in relation to the authority's Code of Conduct.
30. To decide disciplinary matters within the competence of the Committee.
31. To consider applications from local authority employees for exemption from political restriction in respect of their posts.
32. Where appropriate, to issue directions requiring a local authority to include a post in the list of politically restricted posts it maintains.
33. To give general advice, following consultation with appropriate parties, on the application of criteria for designation of a politically restricted post.
34. To consider applications for dispensations from Members where appropriate.