



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **AUDIT COMMITTEE** will be held in David Hicks 1 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **WEDNESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.00 PM**

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive

Published on 19 September 2023

Note: Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting or participate in the meeting virtually, in accordance with the Council's Constitution. If you wish to participate either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams, please contact Democratic Services: Democratic.services@wokingham.gov.uk

The meeting can also be watched live using the following link:
<https://youtube.com/live/lsbMnMgXngY?feature=share>

This meeting may be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website. Please note that other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting. The use of these images or recordings is not under the Council's control.

Our Vision
<i>A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business</i>
Enriching Lives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion excellent education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background. • Support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to enable healthy choices for everyone. • Engage and empower our communities through arts and culture and create a sense of identity for the Borough which people feel part of. • Support growth in our local economy and help to build business.
Providing Safe and Strong Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people. • Offer quality care and support, at the right time, to reduce the need for long term care. • Nurture our communities: enabling them to thrive and families to flourish. • Ensure our Borough and communities remain safe for all.
Enjoying a Clean and Green Borough
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play as full a role as possible to achieve a carbon neutral Borough, sustainable for the future. • Protect our Borough, keep it clean and enhance our green areas for people to enjoy. • Reduce our waste, promote re-use, increase recycling and improve biodiversity. • Connect our parks and open spaces with green cycleways.
Delivering the Right Homes in the Right Places
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer quality, affordable, sustainable homes fit for the future. • Ensure the right infrastructure is in place, early, to support and enable our Borough to grow. • Protect our unique places and preserve our natural environment. • Help with your housing needs and support people, where it is needed most, to live independently in their own homes.
Keeping the Borough Moving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and improve our roads, footpaths and cycleways. • Tackle traffic congestion and minimise delays and disruptions. • Enable safe and sustainable travel around the Borough with good transport infrastructure. • Promote healthy alternative travel options and support our partners in offering affordable, accessible public transport with good transport links.
Changing the Way We Work for You
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be relentlessly customer focussed. • Work with our partners to provide efficient, effective, joined up services which are focussed around our customers. • Communicate better with customers, owning issues, updating on progress and responding appropriately as well as promoting what is happening in our Borough. • Drive innovative, digital ways of working that will connect our communities, businesses and customers to our services in a way that suits their needs.
Be the Best We Can Be
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an organisation that values and invests in all our colleagues and is seen as an employer of choice. • Embed a culture that supports ambition, promotes empowerment and develops new ways of working. • Use our governance and scrutiny structures to support a learning and continuous improvement approach to the way we do business. • Be a commercial council that is innovative, whilst being inclusive, in its approach with a clear focus on being financially resilient. • Maximise opportunities to secure funding and investment for the Borough. • Establish a renewed vision for the Borough with clear aspirations.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

Councillors

Rachel Burgess (Chair)
David Davies
Jordan Montgomery

Mike Smith (Vice-Chair)
Peter Harper

Sam Akhtar
Stephen Newton

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
23.		<p>APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence</p>	
24.		<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 July 2023.</p>	7 - 18
25.		<p>DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest</p>	
26.		<p>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions</p> <p>A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.</p> <p>The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this committee.</p> <p>Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</p>	
27.		<p>MEMBER QUESTION TIME To answer any member questions</p>	
27..1	None Specific	<p>Gary Cowan has asked the Chairman of the Audit Committee the following question:</p> <p>Question: With more councils going bankrupt the Local Government Association and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy have serious concerns on the management of Councils' finances point out that:</p> <p>They note that the skills and professional capabilities of officers must also include the skills of elected</p>	

members.

They add that internal audit requires good financial management reinforced by a culture that encourages responsibility and transparency.

Examples that might cause concern are the Council spending of £1.14 Million on one project at Toutley and current consultants staff increased costs. No doubt there are others.

My question is, in these very difficult times what urgent transparent actions has the Audit Committee added so as to guard against increased risks to Wokingham Borough Council going bankrupt?

28.	None Specific	EY 2020/21 AUDITORS ANNUAL REPORT To receive the EY 2020/21 Auditors Annual Report.	19 - 46
29.	None Specific	EY - PROGRESS REPORT ON 2021/22 AUDIT To receive the EY - Progress Report on the 2021/22 Audit.	47 - 54
30.	None Specific	2023/24 INTERNAL AUDIT AND INVESTIGATION QUARTER 1 PROGRESS REPORT To consider the 2023/24 Internal Audit and Investigation Quarter 1 Progress Report.	55 - 76
31.	None Specific	2023/24 EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF CONFORMANCE TO THE PUBLIC SECTOR INTERNAL AUDIT STANDARDS To consider the 2023/24 External Quality Assessment of Conformance to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.	77 - 96
32.	None Specific	CORPORATE RISK REGISTER To consider the Corporate Risk Register.	97 - 124
33.	None Specific	ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022/23 - UPDATE ON ACTIONS To receive the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 - Update on Actions.	125 - 130
34.	None Specific	FORWARD PROGRAMME To consider the forward programme for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year.	131 - 132

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading

CONTACT OFFICER

Madeleine Shopland
Tel
Email
Postal Address

Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist
0118 237 9560
madeleine.shopland@wokingham.gov.uk
Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN.