

CITY COUNCIL

16 APRIL, 2024

**AMENDMENTS TO
MOTIONS IN THE
COUNCIL AGENDA
RECEIVED IN ADVANCE
OF THE MEETING**



1 to 13

AMENDMENT TO MOTION

CITY COUNCIL
16 April 2024

Delete point 1 and replace with:

“Receives and considers the report written about the Audit Committee, noting that this report has not been to a properly constituted meeting of the Audit Committee for discussion and approval, and whilst an email was circulated asking for comments, only minor changes to details about independent members were made to that draft and other comments have been omitted. As such, Council notes that this is not a report *of* the audit committee but a report *about* the audit committee and should be read as such.”

Add to end:

Council notes that the CIPFA position statement on Audit Committees (2022) requires Audit Committees to ‘Report regularly on their work, and at least annually report an assessment of their performance.’ Whilst the guidance is not prescriptive on how this report is compiled, it is clear that the process of completing the report, including the opportunity for self-reflection by members of the committee is an essential component to how the report adds value. As such Council does not believe the process followed in completing this year’s report, complies with the intentions set out by CIPFA and followed by other local authorities, whereby the audit committee itself collaborates on the contents and reports the results of that to Full Council for wider debate. The cancellation of the March Audit Committee by the Chair denied a key opportunity for deliberation on the report.

Council further believes that the report as presented to Council, lacks sufficient introspection as to the failings of Audit Committee over the reporting period and in prior years, and the contribution that this has made to overall governance failings of the council which has led to the current financial crisis. In particular:

- The report fails to reflect concerns about the effectiveness of committee time, with more than half of the published agenda time within the reporting period given over to 'portfolio assurance sessions' which have had limited impact and are not even mentioned within the report. More efficient use of agenda time would have allowed for greater scrutiny of key issues.
- The report fails to reflect, up until May 2023 the Chair of the Committee was also the Labour Chief Whip. The opposition group have previously expressed concerns about a chief whip being chair of audit.
- The report fails to reflect the failure of the Executive to escalate known issues about equal pay to the Audit Committee. It is now known that the Leader, the Cabinet Member for Finance, and the former Leader all knew there was a liability of up to £800m from at least 3 February 2024. They had a duty to share this information with the Audit Committee, and their failure to do so is indicative of a dysfunctional relationship between the Executive and Audit Committee.
- The draft report says that the Committee found deficiencies with the risk register with major risks (Equal Pay and Oracle) not being added until the "risks" had become "issues." However, it should reflect the fact that these risks were previously removed from the risk register by agreement of the committee. The report needs to reflect that Audit Committee should have been more cautious in accepting the Executive view that these risks could be removed from the register. There also needs to be consideration as to why neither the Executive nor the Chair asked Audit Committee to focus on these particular risks given the concerns being raised about them by the opposition in other Council meetings, forums and press.

PROPOSED BY:



Councillor Meirion Jenkins

SECONDED BY:



Councillor Robert Alden

Received on

at hours