

Annual Audit Letter 2017/18

At its meeting on 7th September, the Co-ordinating O&S Committee agreed to have a standing item on its agenda to monitor the response of the City Council to the auditor's recommendations. The following table sets out the means by which this will be done:

Recommendation	How this will be monitored
Recommendation 1: <i>Deliver its savings plans in 2018/19, in particular by identifying alternatives where existing plans are not deliverable, to mitigate the impact of the combined savings and budget pressure risks.</i>	<p>The Resources O&S Committee is scrutinising the monthly monitoring report and holding Cabinet Members and Directors to account through a programme of reports to the Committee.</p> <p>All Scrutiny Committees to consider the impact of in-year mitigations on service areas; this will be reported back to the Co-ordinating O&S committee.</p>
Recommendation 2: <i>Develop a realistic medium term financial plan for 2019/20 to 2021/22 which incorporates realistic and detailed savings plans and takes account of key budget and service risks.</i>	<p>The Resources O&S Committee will oversee budget process for next year and will also undertake an inquiry into long term financial planning in the council.</p> <p>If that committee has concerns regarding the delivery of a realistic long term plan then will be reported back to the Co-ordinating O&S committee and to City Council in its inquiry report.</p>
Recommendation 3: <i>Ensure that it maintains an adequate level of reserves to mitigate the impact of budget risks, in particular one-off risks such as the Commonwealth Games and Equal Pay.</i>	<p>The Resources O&S Committee is scrutinising the monthly monitoring reports and will escalate any concerns regarding the use of reserves.</p> <p>The Corporate Director of Finance is asked to inform both committees if further use of reserves is authorised.</p>
Recommendation 4: <i>Ensure that its financial monitoring and budget reports are clear, transparent, and timely particularly in relation to the use of reserves, whether in-year or at year-end.</i>	<p>Again, the Resources O&S Committee is scrutinising the monthly monitoring reports and will monitor the clarity and transparency of the information within the reports.</p> <p>If there are concerns regarding clarity, transparency or other governance concerns, these will be reported back to the Co-ordinating O&S committee.</p>

Recommendation	How this will be monitored
Recommendation 5: <i>Report governance failures and emerging issues promptly and clearly to Members and local citizens.</i>	<p>The Co-ordinating O&S Committee will monitor the Corporate Governance Improvement Plan regularly and will ask for updates on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being done to strengthen processes • A brief on emerging issues <p>The committee will then review progress at end of year (March 2019) to see if this approach has worked effectively.</p>
Recommendation 6: <i>Ensure that appropriate arrangements are implemented in relation to the Council's subsidiary bodies, including regular financial reporting and Council nominees on subsidiary body boards, to ensure that emerging risks are monitored, reported and managed promptly.</i>	<p>A joint piece of work will be undertaken by both Co-ordinating and Resources O&S committees. This will look at the work being done to strengthen governance and representation. A review will be undertaken at the end of the year.</p> <p>(Approach to be agreed at the next Scrutiny Chairs meeting)</p>
Recommendation 7: <i>Ensure that robust management and governance arrangements are put in place within the Place Directorate, particularly to ensure effective oversight of the waste service, to ensure that it delivers its financial and service objectives.</i>	<p>Again, the Co-ordinating O&S Committee will be monitoring issues via the Corporate Governance Plan updates. A report back on changes to governance in that directorate, and impact on issues raised in audit letter, is requested for the November meeting</p> <p>Performance of key services within that directorate (housing and waste) will be scrutinised by the Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S committee.</p>