

Audit & Governance Committee – Recommendations Tracker

11 September 2024

Number	Meeting Date	Item	Recommendation / Action	Action by whom	Action update	Target date for Completion
2023						
A8/23	12 July 2023	Counter Fraud Annual Report 2022/23	The Audit Manager – Counter Fraud will find out whether a check had been undertaken across all schools in Surrey to make sure that all the business managers were on the right salary level.	Audit Manager – Counter Fraud	<p>Update provided by the Audit Manager (Counter Fraud) on 22 August 2024:</p> <p>The reports have now been built in Unit4 to allow us to extract data for this check. They will shortly be deployed in Production so we should be ok to start the analysis in September. All being well on track for completion by November.</p> <p>Update provided by the Audit Manager (Counter Fraud) on 20 June 2024:</p> <p>The action is ongoing, it is hoped that work would be underway over summer once officers get access to Unit4.</p> <p>Update provided by the Audit Manager (Counter Fraud) on 22 January 2024:</p> <p>We will update the Committee at the November meeting of the results of the data matching on school business managers grades. We plan to complete this exercise in Unit4 in September.</p> <p>(Update provided by the Audit Manager (Counter Fraud) on 2 January 2024:</p> <p>Supporting papers for school staff are held locally, confirmation of SBM paypoints would</p>	November 2024

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					not be possible without writing out to all schools; the team did perform analysis on payroll records for schools. This included stratified sampling and review of high earners to identify anomalies. The team did not detect any oddities. Further work in this area will be picked up once Unit4 has bedded down and BAU has returned to school payroll.)	
2024						
Page 16	A10/24 13 March 2024	Ethical Standards Annual Review 2023-24	The Committee will receive the report on gifts and hospitality, interests and whistleblowing at a senior officer level alongside the annual report on Members.	Interim Director - Law and Governance, and Monitoring Officer / Head of Insights, Systems and Governance	<p>The Committee received an item on July's agenda concerning officers' gifts and hospitality: Officers and Employees Annual Gifts and Hospitality Report 2023/24.</p> <p>The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance has noted on 28 August 2024 that: we will be tracking the Declaration of Interests for officers this year and will produce an annual report in April/May time for scrutiny.</p> <p>Extract from draft minutes, 10 July 2024:</p> <p><i>A Committee member referred to A10/24 asking when there would be an update regarding officers' Declaration of Interests as that was noted as to be confirmed (TBC).</i></p> <p>The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance has noted that the Declaration of Interests report will follow later once the reporting on Unit4 functions to a satisfactory level. The developer team in IT & Digital are supporting with it.</p>	<p>(completed = July 2024 - officers' gifts and hospitality)</p> <p>June 2025 - officers' Declaration of Interests</p>

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A20/24	10 July 2024	Draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24	The Interim Executive Director - Finance and Corporate Services, and Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate) will follow up the request for a Member Development Session on SEND/Safety Valve Agreement; and for the Committee to receive an update from the service in terms of meeting the Council's requirements regarding the capital side of the Safety Valve Agreement.	Interim Executive Director - Finance and Corporate Services / Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate)	Update provided by the Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate) on 21 August 2024: It has been requested that members of the A&G Committee are invited to join Members of the CFLL Select Committee to receive an update on the SEND Programme and Safety Valve Agreement. 22 August 2024 update: Officers are in the process of setting up a Member Development Session.	September - November 2024
A27/24	10 July 2024	Officers and Employees Annual Gifts and Hospitality Report 2023/24	<p>The Director of People and Change, Interim Head of Paid Service, and Monitoring Officer will consider the comments made regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a threshold to be set over which officers and employees must declare gifts and hospitality. b) to review the guidelines to be clearer about what is really a gift or hospitality offer, focusing on where a gift or hospitality offer is perceived by a member of the public to skew an officer's opinion about the way they were performing their work. c) benchmarking to be undertaken with other organisations. d) Members' not having to declare gifts and hospitality offers on the register under the £50 threshold. e) removing some of the bureaucracy, considering the timing of the gift and amount. f) keeping the officer and employees' policy separate to Members' policy or combining the two; to review the 	Director of People and Change / Interim Head of Paid Service / Monitoring Officer	30 August 2024 update: Officers are considering the comments made by the Committee, the policy is being reviewed.	November 2024

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			implications and any regulations that apply to Members as opposed to officers.			
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COMPLETED RECOMMENDATIONS/REFERRALS/ACTIONS – TO BE DELETED

2023

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<p>A7/23</p>	<p>5 June 2023</p>	<p>Annual Complaints Performance Report</p>	<p>The Customer Relations Manager, the Head of Customer Engagement and System Development and the Director of Law and Governance will take Committee member’s comments and suggestions away and will report back at November’s meeting where the LGSC Annual Letter and Complaints Update, and Council Complaints – Half Yearly Update items are scheduled; areas to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) comparative complaints figures with other local authorities. b) whether a similar internal investigator appointment will be beneficial for ASC and having more internal investigator roles in Education Services. c) consider whether the Corporate category can be renamed to ‘Other’ and explore whether it can be broken down by the services they related to as soon as possible; to liaise with Committee members on the services to be listed. d) consider how non-formal complaints information such as around highways 	<p>Customer Relations Manager / Head of Customer Engagement and System Development / Director of Law and Governance</p>	<p><u>September 2024 update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman provides comparative data each year as part of the published Annual Letter. The agenda item (item 8) provides an analysis and comment on this year’s Annual Letter. Due to the differences in how complaints and contacts are recorded it is not possible to draw conclusive insight by local comparisons at the early or local stages of the complaint process. Please also find attached Appendix 1 entitled CFLL Benchmarking (regarding action A12/24), from the Head of Customer Engagement and System Development that includes comment on benchmarking with other Local Authorities. b) There are many reasons that Adults have not implemented an independent investigator into Customer Relations, mainly because the legislation that governs the statutory adults’ complaints process and the councils’ own policies do not stipulate that complaints must be investigated by an independent investigator. Our Locality managers take ownership of complaints and lead on the investigation, response and delivery of any corrective actions. This is in line with the published guidance on how we handle complaints where our website reads “Complaints are first responded to by the responsible service as we want to resolve complaints quickly and close to the point of service”.
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			<p>that residents direct to Members, can be incorporated in future reports or provided to the Committee in another form.</p> <p>e) explore the suggestion with database providers of a response box being added to formal complaints indicating the residents' borough or district.</p> <p>f) provide a report on the customer services steering group, identifying the problems, where those were occurring and what was being done.</p> <p>g) provide an update on the Customer and Communities Directorate's mapping exercise of the Council's communication touch points and whether those were user friendly.</p> <p>h) consider a similar approach of having a central email address for residents when communicating with the Council around reporting a defect or complaint and issues to be allocated to the relevant officers for a response within an agreed timeline.</p>		<p>The adult's process is a single tier complaints process, and anyone dissatisfied can escalate their concern to the Ombudsman as an Independent Regulator. There is also the Care Quality Commission that is a pathway to ensure that fairness and transparency is applied to complaints that the Council receive about social care.</p> <p>Adults take complaints as an opportunity to learn. We believe that by managers responding from each service means we can spotlight on themes, trends are continually highlighted and that team managers can use the intelligence from complaints data to prevent similar complaints.</p> <p>There is no evidence that the process followed by adults does not work, we have a low level of complaints escalating to the Ombudsman which indicates that we are resolving matters at the initial stage. Therefore, in terms of creating a business case for adults to have a new role for an Independent Investigator would be difficult at a time we are under pressure to deliver efficiencies. However, we would consider commissioning an independent complaint investigator for any particular complaints where we feel it would be appropriate.</p> <p>c) Completed – see below previous updates.</p> <p>d) This is being explored as part of the ongoing transformation programme with a view to providing consistent reporting that captures the subtle differences between recording within the three customer relations teams.</p>
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			<p>i) provide an update on dovetailing residents’ formal complaints with concerns raised to Members if they were about the same issue, as well as where concerns should be referred to the formal complaints process.</p>	<p>e) Completed – see below previous updates.</p> <p>f) The steering group has now expanded to include a wide range of partners across the Additional Needs & Disabilities system. It is now called the Relationships, Communication and Collaboration Delivery Group and oversees a clear set of actions as part of the Ofsted improvement plan: https://www.surreylocaloffer.org.uk/news/SEND-improvement-plan</p> <p>In addition to sharing key themes in the delivery group above, the CFLL Customer Relations team have initiated a more in-depth quarterly ‘learning from complaints’ report for Education services, as well as a learning log for Social Care services, attending Practice Leadership team meetings on a quarterly basis to present on these.</p> <p>g) and h) Complete as organisational structure is a barrier as described above. Will be considered further as part of the ongoing transformation programme.</p> <p>i) The dedicated mailbox for Councillors has been working well. A letter has now also been sent out to MPs to ensure the same practice for all Members.</p> <p>There are now two members of staff in the CFLL Customer Relations team who collate information and write responses to MP/Cllr enquiries on behalf of operational services. This saves time for service staff as well as</p>
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					<p>providing updates on existing complaints if relevant. Wherever possible, Members are encouraged to signpost constituents directly to the CR team.</p> <p>Extract from draft minutes, 10 July 2024:</p> <p><i>The Chairman noted that the Committee raised several issues on the Annual Complaints Performance Report item and it had been agreed that the update on the action be provided at September's Committee meeting with officers attending.</i></p> <p>Extract from minutes, 5 June 2024: <i>the Customer Relations Manager will provide definitive responses for the September Committee.</i></p> <p>The Customer Relations Team Manager on 15 May 2024 has noted that questions b), c), e), f), i) were answered as part of the previous update on 3 November 2023 in the Recommendations Tracker or are included in the Annual Complaints Performance Report – June 2024.</p> <p>Questions a), d), g), h) were responded to as part of the previous update on 3 November 2023, and are referred to in the briefing document (A33/23 - Appendix 1 in June's agenda) that provides the update on the Complaints Task and Finish Group:</p> <p><i>The recommendations and questions put forward by Audit & Governance Committee Members (as detailed below - Action A7/23), will be included in the forward work plan for the Senior Complaints Practice Lead, and have been shared with the Customer Transformation Programme for</i></p>
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					<p><i>consideration as part of their work to streamline processes, make better use of technology and improve the information we provide.</i></p> <p>As of 14 February 2024, the Customer Relations Team Manager and the team provided the following update:</p> <p>The ongoing Customer Service Transformation Programme has remained the focus for the Service. Officers remain committed to addressing the questions from the Committee; at this time the update is such that a significant amount of the focus on Customer Service Transformation includes the areas highlighted by committee and as such they remain a work in progress.</p> <p>Update provided by the Customer Relations Manager on 3 November 2023:</p> <p>a) Comparative complaints figures with other local authorities.</p> <p>We are continuing to gather data from comparable authorities. Challenges include that data captured is different and does not lend itself to direct comparisons. So far only three authorities have responded to the data sharing request.</p> <p>b) Whether a similar internal investigator appointment will be beneficial for ASC and having more internal investigator roles in Education Services.</p> <p>The ASC complaint procedure is a single tier process. The expectation is that the service complained about is best placed to respond in</p>
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					<p>detail; essentially taking forward their own investigation. Complaints are responded to by Managers / Senior Managers who have a background in Social Work and therefore completely understand the complexity of the complaint and if the Council have adhered to its duties under the Care Act 2014.</p> <p>Staffing resources in Customer Relations for Education Services have increased to allow better triaging and quality assurance of complaints as well as enquiry handling. 4 complaint leads have also been appointed within the SEND Service who are working closely with the Customer Relations Team to improve the quality and timeliness of initial responses which in turn will decrease the volumes of complaints escalating through the process.</p> <p>c) Consider whether the Corporate category can be renamed to ‘Other’ and explore whether it can be broken down by the services they related to as soon as possible; to liaise with Committee members on the services to be listed.</p> <p>The update report recognises the request and refers Services other than social care and education rather than Corporate Services. The weekly complaint snapshot reports shared with the CEO and Leader of the Council provide the Service breakdown suggested. Proposal that A&G Committee Chair and Vice Chair are included in the circulation of the weekly reports going forward.</p>
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					<p>d) Consider how non-formal complaints information such as around highways that residents direct to Members, can be incorporated in future reports or provided to the Committee in another form.</p> <p>This proposal continues to be considered; challenges include that the way these enquiries are captured and recorded is not currently uniform within the three Customer Relations Teams.</p> <p>e) Explore the suggestion with database providers of a response box being added to formal complaints indicating the residents’ borough or district.</p> <p>The request has been shared with the provider who are exploring the most appropriate way to take this forward. Challenges include restrictions due to GDPR which means that providing the information cannot be compulsory and therefore the data may not be complete.</p> <p>f) Provide a report on the customer services steering group, identifying the problems, where those were occurring and what was being done.</p> <p>In Education Services the steering group continues to focus on improving the quality and timeliness of responses whilst identifying the root causes of complaints. Perceived poor standards of communication and delays in the Education Health Care Plan process continue to be the primary cause of complaints. Education Services continue to work to address this given the</p>
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					<p>acknowledged national challenges in securing assessments and outcome reports by Education Psychologists.</p> <p>g) Provide an update on the Customer and Communities Directorate’s mapping exercise of the Council’s communication touch points and whether those were user friendly.</p> <p>h) Consider a similar approach of having a central email address for residents when communicating with the Council around reporting a defect or complaint and issues to be allocated to the relevant officers for a response within an agreed timeline.</p> <p>The above (g and h) continue to be explored as challenges include the fact that the timescales for responses for two of the complaint procedures (Adults and Childrens Services) are governed by statutory legislation and cannot be deviated upon. The introduction of the online self service complaint portal addresses the central point to register a complaint. As the three customer relations teams are located separately within the Council a central or single email address at present needs to be explored in more detail due to the administrative element of recognising the specific nature of the complaint and which service is best able to respond.</p> <p>i) Provide an update on dovetailing residents’ formal complaints with concerns raised to Members if they were about the same issue, as well as</p>
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					<p>where concerns should be referred to the formal complaints process.</p> <p>The CFLL Customer Relations Team has recruited an officer to a new role that focuses on building relationships with members and services. The role remit includes working with the services and members to decrease the volume of duplicated effort in providing both a response for the Member to share with the family or their representative MP and a formal stage 1 complaint response direct to the family.</p>
A10/23	12 July 2023	Update on the Surrey Forum and the Four Associated Strategic Partnership Boards	The Director – Corporate Strategy and Policy will liaise with the chairs of the Surrey Forum and the non-statutory boards: One Surrey Growth Board, Greener Futures Board, and Thriving Communities Board, asking whether the agendas, minutes and membership lists could be made available to all Members.	Director – Corporate Strategy and Policy	<p>Following the publication of the June Cabinet report that provided an update on the strategic partnerships landscape, the SharePoint site has been updated to reflect the changes to the combined meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board and Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care Partnership. Members can access the SharePoint site here: Strategic Partnership Landscape (sharepoint.com).</p> <p>The Committee Manager shared the SharePoint site link with Committee members on 22 March 2024.</p>

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A16/23	12 July 2023	External Audit Plan 2022/23	The Grant Thornton representative will confirm whether PSAA has approved the proposed audit fee for 2022/23.	Grant Thornton representative	<p>The Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate) received confirmation on 25 July 2024 from the PSAA that they have agreed to the fee variation proposed by Grant Thornton in relation to the 2022/23 Accounts of the Council.</p> <p>Extract from draft minutes, 10 July 2024:</p> <p><i>The Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate) noted that she continued to chase PSAA for a response on the sign-off.</i></p> <p>As of 18 June 2024, the Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate) has chased PSAA once again on the matter.</p> <p>Extract from draft minutes, 5 June 2024: <i>the Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate) would follow up an update for the July Committee.</i></p> <p>As of 23 May 2024, there is no further update, PSAA are yet to sign off the final amount.</p> <p>Extract from minutes of March's (2024) Committee meeting (minute item 15/24, key point 2):</p> <p>The Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate) explained that Grant Thornton had responded that Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) had approved a series of 'bake in' variations which had been included on the audit plan for 2022/23, they do not however approve any additional variations on top of that until after the accounts are signed. The Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate) noted that they were close to signing off the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts. Final checks were underway, and it was</p>
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					hoped that it would be signed by early next week; once signed off the fee variation would be formally approved.)
A17/23	12 July 2023	Whistleblowing Annual Report	<p>The two recommendations for improvement made by the Committee will be incorporated into next year’s Whistleblowing Annual Report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That existing employees alongside new employees would be asked to sign the Code of Conduct too. • That the headcount figures regarding the whistleblowing cases be updated to include other employees such as those in schools and contractors. 	Head of Insight, Programmes and Governance	<p>Update provided by the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance on 20 August 2024: The training course and communications on the Code of Conduct went live in the week commencing 12 August 2024.</p> <p>Update provided by the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance on 20 June 2024: the training course and communications on the Code of Conduct will go live shortly. She noted that the schools figures are now shown in the <u>Annual Whistleblowing Report 2023/24</u> in the July 2024 Committee agenda.</p> <p>Update provided by the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance on 10 May 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Governance training course is being produced on ‘Olive’, the Council’s Learning Management System. This will include the Code of Conduct and a short ‘test’ will need to be completed by new and existing employees. This will then sit on the employee record. Go Live is estimated to be in July 2024. • We are hoping to be able to show Schools WB figures separately. Contractors would come through the Corporate reporting, but due to the confidential nature of the recording via Navex Global, these would not be identifiable at recording stage.

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A35/23	22 November 2023	LGSCO Annual Letter and Complaints Handling Update	The Committee Manager will add an item to the work plan for the next Committee meeting in January where officers will present the results of the Task and Finish Group.	Committee Manager	<p><u>September 2024 update:</u></p> <p>The LGSCO annual letter full report is included as an item on September’s A&G Committee agenda, including the high-level recommendations of the operational review.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The Customer Relations Team Manager has requested that the item be further deferred from June (had been deferred from January and March), to November’s 2024 Committee meeting.</p> <p>The briefing document (A33/23 - Appendix 1 in June’s agenda) in June’s agenda provided the update on the Complaints Task and Finish Group, setting out the key elements. Once the outcome report has been to CLT, a more detailed update can be provided to the Committee.</p>
2024					

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A6/24	13 March 2024	Recommendations Tracker and Work Plan	The Committee will receive the report from the Resources and Performance Select Committee’s DB&I Task and Finish Group, for it to review alongside the later report from Internal Audit; ensuring that the Committee member gets an up-to-date response as to how all the complaints around late payments concerning the new Unit4/MySurrey system were being progressed.	Chair of the DB&I Task and Finish Group / Audit Manager	<p>The Committee Manager circulated the report to Committee members on 16 July 2024 after it was published in July’s Cabinet agenda.</p> <p>The summary of completed audit - Accounts Payable is included in September 2024 - Quarter 1 - Internal Audit’s report.</p> <p>Extract from draft minutes, 5 June 2024: <i>[The Chairman] noting that the 10 June Resources and Performance Select Committee private online meeting to confirm the Digital Business & Insights (DB&I) report would be pushed back to late June or early July, as the final report was being delayed to July’s Cabinet.</i></p> <p>Update from Scrutiny Business Manager on 10 May 2024:</p> <p>The Chair of the Digital Business & Insights (DB&I) Task and Finish Group is working to a revised DB&I report timeline. The report is due to be signed off at a private Resources & Performance Select Committee meeting on 10 June prior to submission to June’s Cabinet meeting.</p> <p>Update provided by the Audit Manager on 10 May 2024:</p> <p>Internal Audit’s Accounts Payable draft report is currently being finalised with management and should hopefully be published as a final report w/c 13 May. It will, therefore, be part of Internal Audit’s summary of completed audits for Q1 as expected, which will come to the Committee in September. The opinion on the report is Partial Assurance, so the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of</p>
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					Audit & Governance Committee will be getting Internal Audit's standard briefing note for a lower assurance audit before the end of May.
A12/24	5 June 2024	Annual Complaints Performance Report	The Assistant Director - Quality Relationships will provide the information benchmarked from other local authorities regarding the complaints in Children's Services, as gathered from their annual complaints report.	Assistant Director - Quality Relationships	<p><u>September 2024 update:</u></p> <p>Please find attached Appendix 1 entitled CFLL Benchmarking, from the Head of Customer Engagement and System Development that includes comment on benchmarking with other Local Authorities.</p>
A13/24	5 June 2024	Annual Complaints Performance Report	The Customer Relations Manager will provide the information requested regarding the number of contacts received via non-electronic methods.	Customer Relations Manager	<p><u>September 2024 update:</u></p> <p>Total contacts received across all three of the customer relations team for 2023-2024 was 3922.</p> <p>This figure includes requests for service(enquiries) and formal complaints.</p> <p>61% of contacts were received via the online portal</p> <p>36% of contacts were received by email</p> <p>2% of contacts were made by telephone</p> <p>1% of contacts were received by printed letter</p> <p>In practical terms, 97% of contacts are made via electronic means and 3% by other means.</p>

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A14/24	5 June 2024	Annual Complaints Performance Report	The Assistant Director - Inclusion and Additional Needs will liaise with the relevant assistant director to provide the recommendations on the programme of work around children missing education.	Assistant Director - Inclusion and Additional Needs	<p><u>September 2024 update:</u></p> <p>Surrey has a small number of children who are Children Missing Education (CME) (87) and a further 205 who are being tracked and parents supported to ensure they do not become CME:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse reasons Children become CME 2. Continue to raise awareness of CME and those who are not in school for other reasons 3. Monitor how long CME pupils are not receiving education <p>For clarity, most complaints about missed education are not related to CME (i.e. those who are not enrolled at a school), but rather from those who are enrolled at a school but not currently attending for emotional, health or other reasons which may or may not be connected to additional needs. The Council undertook a review in 2023 with recommendations for a new policy and training for staff, to ensure that staff recognise that the Local Authority has overall responsibility for providing suitable education. This is detailed in Section 19 of the Education Act, and we refer to these complaints as being related to Section 19 duties.</p> <p>Please find attached Appendix 2, a full report on the internal review and work underway.</p>
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A18/24	10 July 2024	Surrey Pension Fund External Audit Plan 2023/24	The Partner - EY will provide the Committee with the fee range by the end of the week to review.	Partner - EY (in charge of the Surrey Pension Fund external audit)	The Committee Manager circulated the fee range to the Committee via email on 12 July 2024. On 19 July 2024, the Committee Manager emailed EY noting that: <i>Following the Committee's receipt of the updated plan including the fees (Appendix B – page 32 of the PDF), I confirm that there were no comments from Committee members against the proposed fees and following consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the proposed fees have now been approved.</i>
A19/24	10 July 2024	Draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24	Following completion of the validation checks, an updated draft will be issued to EY with minor changes to the numbers and to correct some typos, to be flagged with the Committee.	Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate)	The Draft Accounts are available on the Council's website . Final Audited accounts are due to be brought back to the Committee in November.
A21/24	10 July 2024	Draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24	The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources will liaise with the Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate) about the opportunity in the budget consultation process to include information that explains some of the challenges faced by the Council.	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources / Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate)	Update provided by the Strategic Finance Business Partner (Corporate) on 21 August 2024: Phase 1: August-September 2024 of the resident engagement plans for the budget will include some of the challenges faced. This will be further reinforced in Phase 2: December 2024.

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<p>A22/24</p>	<p>10 July 2024</p>	<p>Annual Whistleblowing Report 2023/24</p>	<p>The Director of People and Change will investigate why Hampshire County Council’s number of whistleblowing cases is so low compared to Surrey’s.</p>	<p>Director of People and Change</p>	<p>Update provided by the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance, sent to the Committee on 20 August 2024 by the Committee Manager:</p> <p>In terms of the benchmarking, I have been in contact with Hampshire County Council, who declared 1 Whistleblowing Case for 23/24, which I believe was queried at Committee at the July meeting. Hampshire County Council are very strict in terms of what they deem to be a whistleblowing case and have two criteria which have to be met in order for a case to be covered by the Whistleblowing Policy. In addition, they triage cases themselves between their HR service and their Internal Audit function. This means that they can manage the cases in a different way to how Surrey County Council manage the cases, which is via a third-party provider.</p> <p>By having an external organisation manage the whistleblowing cases, this means that total anonymity of the Whistleblower is maintained, plus it gives confidence to the Whistleblower that their case will be independently managed. Each case is investigated by a People Consultant and/or Internal Audit and either upheld or not, depending on the circumstances. Where a Whistleblowing case is deemed a ‘grievance’ then this will be dealt with via the appropriate HR process and covered by the appropriate policy.</p> <p>In summary, Hampshire County Council apply a much stricter definition of whistleblowing and only report on these cases, whereas we report on everything which comes in to the Council through our whistleblowing channels, both through our third-party supplier and through internal audit channels.</p>
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A23/24	10 July 2024	Annual Whistleblowing Report 2023/24	Going forward, the Director of People and Change will ensure that the date the Whistleblowing Policy is reviewed will be included on its front cover.	Director of People and Change	Update provided by the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance on 20 August 2024: As part of next year's Annual Whistleblowing Report 2024/25, the date of review of the Whistleblowing Policy will be included on the Policy's front cover.
A24/24	10 July 2024	Annual Whistleblowing Report 2023/24	The Director of People and Change will liaise with the Monitoring Officer about the Committee receiving a Part 2 update on the reasons for confidentiality regarding findings from whistleblowing cases at the September or November Committee meeting.	Director of People and Change / Monitoring Officer	Part 2 report(s) provided by the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance, sent to the Committee on 20 August 2024 by the Committee Manager: The Committee has been sent an updated A&G Committee report which includes a column for the outcome of the whistleblowing cases, as requested. The Committee has also been sent a redacted more detailed report of the whistleblowing cases, restricted to the membership, as although the information is redacted, it is still of a sensitive nature.
A25/24	10 July 2024	Annual Whistleblowing Report 2023/24	The Director of People and Change will add in an additional column into the 'Closed Cases' table indicating whether the whistleblowing case was found in favour or against.	Director of People and Change	Part 2 report(s) provided by the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance, sent to the Committee on 20 August 2024 by the Committee Manager: An 'Upheld or not upheld' column has been added in.
A26/24	10 July 2024	Annual Whistleblowing Report 2023/24	The Director of People and Change will provide a written response explaining the reasons for the outcomes listed as to be confirmed or the date closed as to be confirmed in the 'Closed Cases' table.	Director of People and Change	Part 2 report(s) provided by the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance, sent to the Committee on 20 August 2024 by the Committee Manager: The redacted report includes an explanation of what happened.

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A28/24	10 July 2024	Officers and Employees Annual Gifts and Hospitality Report 2023/24	The Director of People and Change will for future reports consider the suggestion that 'Issues for Consideration', are more like factors to consider rather than issues.	Director of People and Change	Update provided by the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance on 20 August 2024: The wording will be updated for next year's Officers and Employees Annual Gifts and Hospitality Report 2024/25.
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