



<b>Subject:</b>	Report of the Audit & Risk Panel to Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Date:</b>	24 March 2017
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources and Deputy Chief Executive,
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Andrew Harrison, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS)

<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The Audit and Risk Panel is constituted as a working group of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. The purpose of the Panel is to provide an independent assurance on the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework and associated control environment. The Panel also oversees the Council's financial reporting process.
1.2	The purpose of this report is to provide a brief summary to Committee of the key issues that have been considered and discussed by the Panel at its March 2017 meeting and present the detailed minutes (Appendix 1) for approval.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approve the minutes of the Audit &amp; Risk Panel meeting of 7 March 2017 and note the key issues arising from the meeting.</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<b>Pre-meet &amp; Panel Governance</b> In line with good practice the Panel held a private pre-meet with the Head of AGRS. The Panel has also decided, in future, to meet c 15 minutes before each future Panel meeting

to consider the key issues that they will need to consider at the meeting. The Panel also welcomed Councillor Craig to the Panel. Minor changes to the Panel's terms of reference were agreed to reflect its oversight role in relation to the performance improvement framework.

3.2 **Procurement**

Following recent audit work in this area, the Panel received a report and presentation with the Director of Property & Projects and Head of Contracts regarding the recent changes that have been implemented to improve both the commercial focus of Council activities and compliance with procurement rules and regulations. This includes a new process of Legal review of all single tender actions and proposed quarterly reporting to Committee on the application of delegated authority regarding procurement.

3.3 **Waste Management**

Following consideration of an audit report on this area at its last meeting, the Panel received and considered a report from the Director of City & Neighbourhood Services and Head of Waste Management regarding the actions that were being taken to prepare a 10 year waste plan / 'Agenda' and address issues regarding the review of waste contracts. It was noted that this continues to be a challenging issue for the Council given the current uncertainty regarding the outcome of the arc21 planning appeal (residual waste treatment project) and other issues. A plan to address the issues arising from the audit was presented and noted by the Panel.

3.4 **Internal Audit & Risk Management**

The Panel received and considered the quarterly progress and risk report which includes information regarding the outcome of recent audits of payroll, ERDF projects (post-construction arrangements to comply with funding conditions) and the management of corporate risks, including asset management, change management and city centre management. The Head of AGRS also presented the internal audit plan for 2017/18 which was discussed and approved by the Panel. He also explained that AGRS itself would be subject to an independent review during 2017.

3.5	<p><b>External Audit</b></p> <p>The NIAO presented their Annual Audit Strategy and Plan for the audit of the 2016/17 accounts and this was agreed with the Panel. The NIAO also provided their final report on the Council's performance improvement arrangements, which gave an unqualified (positive) opinion.</p>
3.6	<p><b>Other</b></p> <p>The Panel also received updates on health and safety and absence management performance.</p>
4.0	<p><b>Appendices</b></p>
	<p>Appendix 1 – Minutes of Audit and Risk Panel, 7 March 2017</p>