

## Appendix A

### **Audit and Governance Committee working practices**

- 1 This paper sets out a number of matters of operational practice in relation to the operation of Lancashire County Council's Audit and Governance Committee. It supplements the Committee's terms of reference but does not supersede them.

#### **Access to the external and internal auditors by members of the Committee in private**

- 2 At least once per year, the members of the Committee will have the opportunity, in addition to a formal Committee meeting, to meet informally with the external audit partner (or their representative) and the Chief Internal Auditor without any other officers or members of the Council present.

#### **External and internal auditor's attendance at Audit and Governance Committee's meetings**

- 3 It is expected that each meeting will be attended by the Chief Internal Auditor, or exceptionally their representative, and by the external audit partner (or their representative).
- 4 It is accepted that it will not always be appropriate for the external audit partner to attend each Committee meeting and that a representative is acceptable. However the Chief Internal Auditor should usually be expected to attend, only exceptionally sending a representative.

#### **The delegation of attendance at meetings by members to substitutes**

- 5 Although the Council's Constitution allows the substitution of members at Committee meetings where a Committee member is unable to attend, this is not deemed generally acceptable for members of the Audit and Governance Committee. Where a member is substituted, the substitute member should have received appropriate training on the Committee.

#### **The quorum of the meeting**

- 6 The Constitution requires a quarter of the membership to be present for a meeting to be quorate. Under the current terms of reference, three members must therefore be present. However in the case of the Audit and Governance Committee, whose members have received additional specialist training in their roles, this quorum should be achieved by the Committee's designated members and any substitutes who have received appropriate training..

#### **Access by the Committee to independent professional advice at the organisation's expense where this is considered necessary**

- 7 Exceptionally, and subject to the agreement of the County Treasurer the Committee may procure additional specialist professional advice at the Council's expense. Such advisors may attend Committee meetings as necessary.
- 8 This option is not one that the Committee will normally expect to exercise, but it needs to have confidence that it will be able to draw on

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expertise as appropriate to fulfil its responsibilities to the Council effectively.

### **Self assessment by the Committee of its effectiveness within the Council's corporate governance framework**

- 9 It is good practice for any organisation occasionally to consider its own effectiveness, and this is now widely accepted in governance guidance applicable beyond that relating only to audit committees or only to the public sector.
- 10 The Audit and Governance Committee will therefore ensure that arrangements are in place for it periodically to assess its effectiveness. The exact process followed may change as the Committee itself evolves and it is likely to involve input from officers within the Council, including specifically the Chief Internal Auditor.