

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS</b> All
<b>REPORT TITLE</b> Annual Review of the Committee's Effectiveness	
<b>REPORT OF</b> Executive Director Corporate Services	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b> Audit and Corporate Governance Committee	<b>DATE</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2025
<b>Summary of Report</b>  The report provides an outcome of an annual review of the Committee's effectiveness in 2024-25.  <b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</b>  No documents that require listing were used in the production of this report.  <b>Contact Officer</b>  Daniel Omisore Director of Finance 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG Telephone: 020 7974 5199 Email: <a href="mailto:Daniel.Omisore@camden.gov.uk">Daniel.Omisore@camden.gov.uk</a>	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>  The Committee is asked to consider and approve the report.	

Signed:        Signed by the Director of Finance

Date:         23 June 2025

## **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1. This report provides a review of the Committee's effectiveness and underlines the Committee's key role in supporting the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities by seeking assurance that risk management, internal control and governance arrangements are operating effectively.
- 1.2. This report fulfils responsibilities under the Committee's Terms of Reference i.e.
  - To undertake an annual review of the effectiveness and the work of the Committee.

## **2. Review of effectiveness**

- 2.1. Local government bodies are expected to meet high standards of governance and accountability. An audit committee provides a forum to support and monitor the authority in the areas of governance, risk management, external audit, internal audit, financial reporting, and other related areas. There are a number of statutory duties, regulations, and standards relating to financial reporting, governance, and audit that the authority must comply with, and an audit committee is best placed to oversee these
- 2.2. The audit committee should support the authority in establishing, maintaining, and improving effective governance, risk management, and internal control arrangements. These arrangements enable the authority to deliver against its objectives and improve its performance. The audit committee therefore helps the authority to fulfil its responsibilities for accountability to the local community, and meet the expectations of partners, regulators, and other stakeholders
- 2.3. CIPFA's recommended practice is for audit committees to review and assess themselves annually or to seek an external review.
- 2.4. The effectiveness review for the previous year i.e. 2023-24 involved a comprehensive self-assessment session in the form of a workshop, which was facilitated by a representative from CIPFA in April 2024. During this session, the Committee was asked to evaluate its performance across nine key areas, using CIPFA's checklist to assess the impact and effectiveness of the audit committee. As a result of the self-assessment exercise, a number of recommendations were made. An update on the implementation of recommendations is included at **Appendix A**.
- 2.5. Given the recent nature of the comprehensive self-assessment in April 2024, a more streamlined approach was undertaken for 2024-25. This entailed a short survey which asked members to evaluate the Committee's effectiveness in May 2025. The survey entailed three questions as follows:
  - 1) Was the Committee effective in discharging its responsibilities in 2024-25;
  - 2) Are there areas worked particularly well in 2024-25;

- 3) Are there areas where the effectiveness of the Committee could be enhanced in the coming year.

2.6 Five responses were received. Key themes are detailed below:

- i) Four out of five respondents stated the Committee was effective in discharging its responsibilities during the 2024-25 year. One response offered praise for the Committee's comprehensive agenda, thorough principal risk review, and financial oversight in relation to the annual accounts.
- ii) One response noted that, while the Committee was generally effective, some meeting agendas were overloaded, limiting the ability to scrutinise sufficiently.
- iii) Respondents highlighted several areas that worked particularly well in 2024-25. These included effective scrutiny through risk deep dives, internal audit findings, and external audit arrangements. Training sessions before meetings were seen as especially valuable, serving as both a refresher for returning members and a helpful introduction for new members. Additionally, the Committee's focus on supporting the clearing of the backlog of the accounts was noted as a success.
- iv) Some respondents shared observations on potentially enhancing the Committee's effectiveness in the coming year. A common theme was to give consideration to the volume of items on the agendas and documentation. One respondent suggested seeking greater input from non-committee councillors, particularly Scrutiny Chairs, to broaden perspectives on key issues. Officers will give consideration to these observations in 2025-26.

2.7 Overall the survey indicated a general view from the Committee that it is discharging its mandate consistent with its Terms of Reference as well as the CIPFA publication: Audit Committees, Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (2022 edition).

### **3. Finance comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services**

3.1 The Executive Director Corporate Services has been consulted and comments are incorporated within the body of the report.

### **4. Legal comments of the Borough Solicitor**

4.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and comments are incorporated within the body of the report.

### **5. Environmental implications**

5.1 There are no known environmental implications arising from this report.

## **6. Appendices**

**Appendix A** Update on actions arising from the review of effectiveness.

**End**