

AUDIT COMMITTEE

25 MARCH 2026

Present:

Councillors Morgan (Chair), Jackman, Purser, K Smith and Steemson (Vice-Chair).
Independent Member Paul Dodd.

Members in Attendance:

Councillors Palethorpe and Parrott

Apologies:

Councillors Ryan

Officers in Attendance:

Charlie Fisher, Democratic Services Manager and Monitoring Officer
Sue Heath, Audit and Information Governance Manager
Sarah Knight, Performance and Programme Manager
Richard Rainbow, Climate, Coastal and Drainage Manager
Ellie Willcocks, Director of Corporate Services

67. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Morgan and **SECONDED** by Councillor Jackman and

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the previous meeting on Monday 10th February 2026 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

69. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

None.

70. MEMBERS QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

None.

71. EXTERNAL AUDIT SECTOR UPDATE MARCH 2026

The Chair introduced the item to the Committee.

The Audit and Information Governance Manager highlighted the section within the report regarding the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CaRF).

The Director of Corporate Services referred to the Council's Statement of Accounts and the CIPFA code changes detailed on page 4, namely the indexation of non-investment assets. The Director also highlighted the Local Government Settlement and the Council's revenue budget, highlighting the £1m budget gap currently facing the Council.

The Committee noted the report.

72. STRATEGIC & CORPORATE RISK REPORT

The Committee considered the Strategic and Corporate Risk Report, presented by the Performance and Programme Manager. The Chair introduced the report. The report included the risk register of corporate and strategic risks and an appendix of the mitigations against those risks

The Performance and Programme Manager stated that the report now included the 1-5 matrix scale for risk management.

Member questions and discussion focused on:

- If a future report could detail the direction of travel for risks.
- Terminology within the report regarding "Action ongoing" and "Action completed".
- That the 1-5 matrix scale allowed for more sensitivity and nuances to be presented.
- Discussions around individual risks and mitigations, including those relating to Cyber Security. Officers responded directly to these points.
- That the Senior Management Team had taken part in a Risk Management Workshop, facilitated by the Devon Assurance Partnership.
- That the Committee wishes to continue to receive the report at every meeting, with areas of change highlighted.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Morgan and **SECONDED** by Councillor K Smith and

RESOLVED

To note the actions being taken to reduce risks to the achievement of the Council's objectives.

73. INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE REPORT

The Committee considered the Internal Audit Update Report, presented by the Audit and Information Governance Manager. The report highlighted the progress against the Annual Audit Plan and summary of the internal audit findings and follow up audits completed.

The Audit and Information Governance Manager appraised Members of the report, highlighting that a number of outstanding audits were due to be commissioned to the Devon Assurance Partnership (DAP) for completion.

Councillors highlighted two areas for further discussion: Procurement and Managing Health and Safety within the Council.

The Audit and Information Governance Manager highlighted a written update from the Head of Neighbourhoods on car parks which would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

Councillors requested that future STRATA internal audit reports are reported to the Committee, also include an update on the number of planned and actual days used to complete audit work as per the Audit Plan.

74. FINANCIAL INSTRUCTIONS WAIVERS AND EXEMPTIONS

The Committee considered the Financial Instruction Waivers and Exemptions Report, presented by the Audit and Information Governance Manager. The report contained the agreed waivers since the last meeting of the Committee and included analysis of the instances and spend per Service Area.

The Climate, Coastal and Drainage Manager attended the meeting and commented on the Network Rail Teignmouth Resilience Works Waiver. Network Rail are funding the costs for the Council to progress the works and the Council are acting in terms of procurement and project management for the project.

Councillors and the Climate, Coastal and Drainage Manager, referring to the earlier agenda item on the Strategic and Corporate Risk Report discussed Flood Risk Resilience and working with communities and Town and Parish Councils regarding emergency plans. Discussion centred around flood risk and beach management at Teignmouth, with Members noting the Teignmouth Beach Management Plan is due to come to the Executive on 7th April 2026. Discussion also centred on the wider conversation and communication with communities regarding flooding, resilience and future landscapes.

The Committee noted the report.

75. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered the Audit Committee Annual Report 2025-2026, presented by the Chair.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Morgan and **SECONDED** by Councillor K Jackman and

RESOLVED

The Committee approved the report and recommended to Full Council its adoption.

**76. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 -
EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Morgan and **SECONDED** by Councillor K Smith and

RESOLVED

that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

77. FRAUD RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEW

The Committee considered the Fraud Risk Assessment Review Report, presented by the Audit and Information Governance Manager. The report identified the fraud risks within the Council's functions and appraised Members of the mitigations in place to manage them.

Members discussed fraud risks relating to the Revenue and Benefits services, Housing, Council Tax and instances of internal fraud. Members also referred to the Council's Anti-Fraud Strategy and Debt write offs and requested a further report the latter. Officers responded to any questions raised verbally.

The Committee noted the report.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and finished at 11.25 am.

CLLR SALLY MORGAN
Chairman