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8 April 2025

AUDIT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the **Audit Scrutiny Committee** will be held on **Wednesday, 16th April, 2025** in the **Council Chamber, Forde House, Brunel Road, Newton Abbot, TQ12 4XX** at **10.00 am**

PHIL SHEARS
Managing Director

Membership:

Councillors Morgan (Chair), Steemson (Vice-Chair), Jackman, Nuttall, Purser, Ryan, Thorne and vacancy

Please Note: Filming is permitted during Committee meeting with the exception where there are confidential or exempt items, which may need to be considered in the absence of the press and public. By entering the Council Chamber you are consenting to being filmed.

A G E N D A

Part I

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 3 - 10)
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2025.
3. **Declarations of Interest.**
4. **Public Questions (If any)**
5. **Members Questions (if any)**
Members of the Council may ask questions of the Chair subject to procedural rules.

The deadline for questions is no later than three clear working days before the meeting.

6. **Internal Audit Progress Report** (Pages 11 - 16)
7. **Governance Monitoring Consolidated Action Plan** (Pages 17 - 22)
8. **Global Internal Audit Standards**
Report to follow
9. **Financial Instructions and Contract Rules Waiver** (Pages 23 - 26)
10. **Update on progress with car park PCN debt recovery**
Verbal Update
11. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 -
Exclusion of Press and Public**

It is considered items will not need to be discussed in private session, but should this be necessary the meeting is recommended to consider the following:

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

Part II: Items suggested for discussion with the press and public excluded
NIL

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AUDIT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**13 FEBRUARY 2025****Present:**

Councillors Morgan (Chair), Thorne, Nuttall and Ryan

Members in Attendance:

Councillors Palethorpe, Parrott and Purser

Apologies:

Councillors Jackman

Officers in Attendance:

Martin Flitcroft, Director of Corporate Services

David Eaton, Head of Neighbourhoods

Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

Richard Rainbow, Drainage and Coastal Manager

Rosanna Wilson, Corporate Procurement Officer

Beth Bowers, External Auditor

Barry Morris, External Auditor

Sue Heath, Audit Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that Councillor Jeffries was no longer a member of the Committee. Councillor Ryan took this vacant seat on the Committee as an Independent Group Member.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Nuttall that Councillor Steemson be elected Vice-Chair of the Audit Scrutiny Committee 2024-2025.

A vote was taken. All were in favour.

Resolved

that Councillor Steemson be elected Vice-Chair of the Audit Scrutiny Committee 2024-2025.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Steemson that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

A vote was taken. All were in favour.

Resolved.

that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

None.

6. MEMBERS QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

None.

7. EXTERNAL AUDIT VALUE FOR MONEY REPORT, AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT, AND FINAL AUDIT OPINION UPDATE 2023/24

The External Auditor introduced the item to the Committee.

The Committee discussed the statutory recommendation as published in the Auditors Annual Report. Comments during the discussion included

- The need for sanctions if the recommendations are to be implemented.
- The White Paper on Standards that is to be debated in Parliament.
- The role of Group Leaders in enforcing the principles of good governance and member behaviour within their groups. Group Leaders could also step out of the room with their group to allow for a pause when needed.
- The range of available sanctions outlined in the report such as moving a motion that the offending member no longer be heard or as a last resort to move that they should leave the meeting.
- Consideration of members questions including the option for the answerer to respond in writing
- The role of the Standards Committee.
- The need to address underlying behavioural issues.

The Committee also considered the separate Audit Findings Report and Disclaimer. It was noted that the disclaimer was partly the result of a disagreement between the Council and Grant Thornton on the funding of SANGs through capital or revenue. It was also noted that as a result of an objection by a member of public, there may be a delay in awarding the Audit Certificate.

However, this would not affect the final deadline of the Audit Opinion. The objector had been verified and there was a third party that authorised any extra fees or spending resulting from the objector.

The Audit Manager would consolidate any ongoing action plans into one cohesive plan.

The Committee noted the Audit Findings Report and Audit Opinion Disclaimer.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Nuttall that the Audit Scrutiny Committee recommends the statutory recommendation to Full Council for approval.

A vote was taken. The result was unanimously in favour.

RECOMMENDED

That Full Council approve the statutory recommendation in the Auditor's Annual Report. The statutory recommendation is as follows:

The Council should:

1. Commission a suitably qualified expert to investigate the underlying causes of member behaviours which contravene the standards set out in the Council's constitution under the members' code of conduct and the member/officer protocol; and which have impacted the Council's reputation and working culture. The Council should then develop an action plan to enable members and officers to address those issues.
2. Adopt a consistent zero-tolerance approach to any swearing; lack of respect for other people attending meetings; or other abusive behaviour towards other members or officers in meetings. This should be done by making full use of the procedural rules set out in the Council's constitution by: Immediately adjourning the meeting; moving a motion that the member concerned be not heard; or moving a motion that the member concerned should leave the meeting.
3. Consider amendments to its constitution to extend those procedural rules to all meetings of committees of the Council and amend the Member Code of Conduct to include an obligation for all members to reinforce standards of behaviour and to support the Chair of the Council and chairs of committees of the Council in their use of procedural rules to ensure proper conduct. Group Leaders should model good behaviour and discipline members of their groups whose behaviour breaches the Code of Conduct and the member/officer protocol.
4. Continue to provide information and support to ensure that members and officers who are subjected to aggressive and abusive behaviour from individual members can, if they wish, submit a written complaint to the Monitoring Officer immediately, so that it can be dealt with under the Council's Standards procedures.
5. Ensure that Group Leaders take responsibility for their members working collaboratively with officers and for their members improving behaviours and relationships.

6. Review membership of the Standards Committee, with only members who have an excellent behavioural track record being eligible to join it. Meetings should then resume. A Governance Committee should be introduced to reinforce the work of the Standards Committee. As with the Standards Committee, members on the Governance Committee must have an unblemished behavioural track record.

Securing good standards and behaviour amongst members will help to strengthen corporate governance and working culture. This in turn should help to create a positive environment from which the Council can build better relationships and address the other issues it faces, such as transacting business as usual and maintaining respect and co-operation around decisions once they have been taken.

8. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Audit Manager introduced the item to the Committee. The changes to the Governance Statement had been made in red and italic text. The Leader and the Managing Director as signatories of the Governance Statement had approved the amendments, and it had also been to the Strategic Leadership Team External Auditors for their views.

It was noted that the role of Audit Scrutiny Committee was to ensure that the content of the AGS was in line with their understanding of the annual governance of the Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Thorne that the Annual Governance Statement be approved by the Committee.

A vote was taken. All were in approval.

Resolved

That the Annual Governance Statement be approved by the Committee.

9. FINAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2023/24

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the item to the Committee.

It was noted that there had been only a few minor changes compared to the draft accounts mainly in relation to the notes to the accounts.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Steemson that the Final Statement of Accounts and Letter of Representation be approved.

A vote was taken. All were in favour.

Resolved

That the Final Statement of Accounts and Letter of Representation be approved.

10. REVIEW OF CONTRACT PROCEDURAL RULES

The Executive Member for Corporate Resources was invited to introduce the item to the Committee.

The Corporate Procurement Officer spoke on the key changes as outlined in the report, informing the Committee that the key changes included justifications for waivers exemptions, and that the standstill period has changed from 10 calendar days to 8 working days.

In response to Members' queries, the Corporate Procurement Officer explained that she also provided procurement work for Strata and West Devon/South Hams Councils as alluded to in the key change highlighting the memorandum of understanding, and that the process for finding the balance between price and quality is part of the discussion with the relevant officer and would consider factors such as the level of public use.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Nuttall that the Committee recommends to Full Council that the council approves the revised Contract Procedure Rules 2025 to recognise changes to procurement legislation.

A vote was taken. The result was unanimously in favour.

RECOMMENDED

to Full Council that the council approves the revised Contract Procedure Rules 2025 to recognise changes to procurement legislation.

11. UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM AN INTERNAL AUDIT OF CAR PARKS

The Head of Neighbourhoods gave an update on the implementation of recommendations following from an internal Audit of Car Parks. He informed the Committee that all car parks had a risk assessment but they needed reviewing. A standard risk assessment template has been created and will be used. He also discussed the department's progress with collecting Penalty Charge Notices through the use of bailiffs. It was noted that the Traffic Enforcement Centre provided the warrants needed to enforce the notices. Members asked questions regarding the bailiff process and the overall cost to the authority. The Head of Neighbourhoods advised that this was a corporate service and details could be shared with the committee at their next meeting

There was around £197,000 that was owed to the Council. This was from approximately 2500 debtors. The Council could go back to parking violations that had happened in 2019. The Head of Neighbourhoods was meeting with the Car Parking Manager on a regular basis to ensure that the situation was closely monitored. In addition to the PCNs, he updated the committee on the hiring of a

new parking officer and that the department was in process of mapping its priority procedures.

The Head of Neighbourhoods would attend the next Audit Scrutiny Committee meeting and update the Committee on the progress being made.

The Audit Manager would circulate the original internal audit report which highlighted these issues in 2022.

12. FINANCIAL INSTRUCTIONS AND CONTRACT RULES WAIVERS

The Audit Manager introduced the item to the Committee.

The Committee were informed about the reasons for the waivers as set out in the report. In particular, it was highlighted that the work on the infill of the collapsed tunnel had been priority as the cliffs that it ran under were in the proximity of a publicly used car park. This car park had resultingly been closed and extra parking provision provided elsewhere. It was also noted that a specialist company had been hired to provide the works as the works were complicated, and this would ensure the work could be done with a comprehensive framework.

The Audit Manager would circulate the waiver form for the Senior Housing Officer role mentioned in the report to the Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Thorne that the Financial Instructions and Contract Rules Waivers be noted by the Committee.

A vote was taken. All were in favour.

Resolved

that the Financial Instructions and Contract Rules Waivers be noted by the Committee.

13. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Audit Manager introduced the item to the Committee.

It was noted that that the Waste & Recycling and Emergency Planning Audits had been completed and that the postponed Democratic Services Audit was in progress, alongside others shown in the report.

The Committee suggested that past audits of the relevant areas could be included alongside those undertaken as part of the report in order to show previous assurance.

The Audit Manager would email the Committee to further explain the role of the Housing Health and Safety Compliance Officer.

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Nuttall that the Internal Audit Progress Report be noted by the Committee.

Resolved

that the Internal Audit Progress Report be noted by the Committee.

14. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Nuttall that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting of items 16 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

A vote was taken. All were in favour.

Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting.

15. IPCO (INVESTIGATORY POWERS COMMISSIONER'S OFFICER) INSPECTION REPORT 2025

The Audit Manager introduced the item to the Committee.

It was noted that this item had resulted from an investigation into the use of RIPA at Teignbridge. These powers had not been used for at least 10 years, however the Council needed to remain compliant in the event it used them in future.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and finished at 12.35 pm.

Chair
Cllr Sally Morgan

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Teignbridge District Council

Audit Scrutiny

16 April 2025

Part 1

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Purpose of Report

To advise members of the internal audit work status.

Recommendation(s)

The Audit Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the report.

Financial Implications

None. The internal audit service is within budget.

Legal Implications

None. The Council is meeting its statutory duty to undertake an internal audit in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Risk Assessment

Risks are taken into account when planning internal audit work.

Environmental / Climate Change Implications

None.

Report Author

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Executive Member

Councillor John Parrot – Executive Member for Corporate Resources

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Internal audit provides an independent opinion on the Council's risk management, internal control and governance arrangements. A [plan of audit work](#) was approved by members in August 2024. This report shows progress against that plan. It also summarises the findings of completed audits.

2. AUDIT PLAN PROGRESS 2024-2025

SYSTEM		STATUS	ASSURANCE
<u>Core Financial Systems</u>			
Main Accounting / Budgetary Control	DAP	In progress	-
Creditor Payments	TDC	In progress	-
Debtors	DAP	In progress	-
Payroll	TDC	In progress	-
<u>Other Systems / Projects</u>			
Housing Temporary Accommodation	DAP	June 2025* see below	-
Housing Finance	DAP	June 2025* see below	-
Housing Household Support Fund	TDC	Completed	Excellent
Procurement	DAP	Draft report issued	-
Ombudsman Complaint Code	TDC	Deferred* see below	-
Democratic Services Review	DAP	Draft report issued	-
Data Protection	(TBC)	TBC	-
Climate Change	DAP	In progress	-
Business Continuity Management	TDC	Completed	Fair
Emergency Planning	TDC	Completed	Good
Purchasing Cards (new system)	TDC	Completed	Good
Partnerships & Funding Arrangements	TDC	Completed	Good
Communications – Social Media	TDC	Starting 23 April 25	-
Waste and Recycling	DAP	Completed	Good
Risk Management	TDC	Draft Report Issued	-
National Fraud Initiative	TDC	Ongoing	-
Fraud Risk Analysis	TDC	Ongoing	-
Governance	TDC	Ongoing	-

2.2 The two housing audits of temporary accommodation and finance planned for June 2025, have been requested to be postponed, due to implementation of a new housing system. These will therefore be carried forward to next year's plan. The Ombudsman Complaint Code self-assessment is pending confirmation from the service that this can go ahead which is dependent on them going live with an overarching policy, but is also likely to be later in the year. The Data Protection should be audited independently and is pending sourcing of this also when resources permit.

2.3 An additional requested audit of the Transparency Code is currently in progress aimed at ensuring the Council is compliant with the Code's requirements. We have also supported completion of returns to Department for Business and Trade (DBT) and provision of referral evidence for outstanding debt cases from Covid business support grant schemes.

2.4 The Assurance Opinion descriptions for the work listed above are as follows:

Key to Assurance Opinions:		
Excellent	★★★★	The areas reviewed were found to be well controlled, internal controls are in place and operating effectively. Risks against achieving objectives are well managed.
Good	★★★	Most of the areas reviewed were found to be adequately controlled. Generally risks are well managed but some areas for improvement have been identified.
Fair	★★	Basic control framework in place, but most of the areas reviewed were not found to be adequately controlled. Generally risks are not well managed and require controls to be strengthened to achieve system objectives.
Poor	★	Controls are seriously lacking or ineffective in their operation. No assurance can be given that the system's objectives will be achieved.

2.5 Follow up checks are undertaken to review progress with action plans agreed during audits. These are included in the summary below. A new Corporate Governance Group has been introduced in the Council, comprising Strategic Leadership Team members, the Monitoring Officer and

Audit Manager. Outstanding audit actions are also a standing item on the agenda of this group.

3. CONCLUSION

Internal Audit work is ongoing, and with the exception of those areas mentioned above, remaining work is expected to be completed in time to inform the annual assurance opinion. A further update will be given at the meeting when two of the above draft reports should be finalised, allowing opinions to be disclosed.

Internal Audit Findings – Overview 16 April 2025

PROJECT TITLE	SUMMARY
<p>Business Continuity</p> <p>Audit Opinion: Fair ☆☆</p>	<p>The Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Officer is currently working with the Heads of Service to complete their service level business continuity plans with a target for completion of 31 March 2025, including the identification of key suppliers. The new draft Corporate Business Continuity Plan includes the council's critical business operations and recovery time objective, i.e. 24 hour or less recovery time as identified by the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Officer and Service Leads on reviewing the existing pre-identified prioritised services. Also, whilst working with Strata, Exeter, and East Devon partner councils to inform the priority service areas for the draft Strata IT Disaster Recovery Response Plan.</p> <p>A new comprehensive draft Strata IT Disaster Recovery Response Plan has been produced which was last updated on 20 November 2024 after a plan walkthrough on 4 November 2024 with the Strata management team and systems specialists. A tabletop test was planned for February 2025 to further develop the plan and follow up the actions identified from the walkthrough; however, the Strata Head of Security and Compliance has confirmed that this will now be after April 2025 due to resources.</p> <p>In addition, there is a draft Strata Cyber Incident Response Plan, last updated April 2024. A cyber event was held in January 2025 with the three councils and Strata, facilitated by the Devon Assurance Partnership, working through a ransomware scenario and how the parties would respond to this. A report is to be provided to the council leadership teams, which will include a comment on whether cyber resilience is adequately covered in the business continuity plans.</p> <p>However, until the council's service level business continuity plans have been completed and tested through exercising in conjunction with the Strata IT Disaster Recovery Response Plan and the Strata Cyber Incident Response Plan, there is no assurance that they are valid and work in practice.</p> <p>Other recommendations include gaining assurance that business continuity arrangements are in place with key suppliers including digital and communications so that acceptable standards of delivery of services can continue in a disruptive event, to educate and embed business continuity across the council ensuring that key officers are fully trained and aware of their responsibilities. Also, staff awareness of the incident response protocol.</p>

PROJECT TITLE	SUMMARY
Follow Up Audits The effectiveness of audits is increased if agreed actions are implemented. The audit cycle allows for a follow up check to be made on any important recommendations at an agreed time after each review. Details of recently completed follow ups are shown below:	
Car Park Follow Up Audit Opinion: Good ☆☆☆	Original audit: February 2024 Followed up: November 2024 and January 2025. 2 of the 10 recommendations actioned and implemented. The responsible officer will be attending the meeting to provide an update.
Partnership and Funding Arrangements Audit Opinion: Good ☆☆☆	Original audit: May 2024 Followed up: August 2024 and November 2024, and January 2025. 3 of the 7 recommendations actioned and implemented. The responsibility of the partnership register is now under the Head of Strategy and Partnerships who has confirmed that arrangements will be made to update and maintain this register.

Teignbridge District Council
Audit Scrutiny
16 April 2025
Part 1

GOVERNANCE – IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING

Purpose of Report

- To give members of the Audit Scrutiny Committee an overview of progress against the Governance Improvement Plan.

Recommendation(s)

The Audit Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the report.

Financial Implications

As set out in the [report to full Council 29 October 2024 para. 3.1.1 and 3.1.2.](#)

Legal Implications

As set out in the [report to full Council 29 October 2024 para. 3.1.2.](#)

Risk Assessment

As set out in the [report to full Council 29 October 2024 paras 3.3.1 and 3.3.2.](#)

Environmental / Climate Change Implications

No direct implications.

Report Author

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Executive Member

Cllr Richard Keeling – Leader of the Council

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A [Corporate Peer Review](#) was undertaken by the Local Government Association in January 2024. Recommendations made by the Peers have been set out in an Action Plan which was [approved by Council](#) on 29 October 2024 and reviewed by the Peers during a follow up visit to the Council in February 2025.
- 1.2 In addition to the Peer Review, the Council's governance has been further scrutinised externally by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) and the Council's external auditor, Grant Thornton. The external audit resulted in 6 statutory recommendations as [approved by the Audit Scrutiny Committee](#) on 13 February 2025 and full Council 25 February 2025.
- 1.3 Improvement actions relating to member and officer roles and relations were also recorded in the Council's [Annual Governance Statement 2023-2024](#)
- 1.4 The Governance Improvement Plan is appended below with notes in **red text** and *italic* where actions are due.
- 1.5 The Governance Improvement Plan is targeted and focused on actions to address the Peers' observations, however these governance themes are common within the other reviews noted above. A mapping exercise has therefore been undertaken to group all recommendations under the common themes which will be presented at the meeting.

2. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to note the report.

3. GROUPS CONSULTED

Not applicable.

4. DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION (CONFIRMATION OF DECISION SUBJECT TO CALL-IN)

Not applicable.

Governance Improvement Plan – Audit Scrutiny update – 15th April 2025

Theme: Relationships			
Action	Measure	Lead officer / member	Timescale
Senior Officer Availability for Group Meetings	Senior Leadership and Senior Management Team officers will be available to attend meetings with the Council's various political groups to discuss and advise on relevant topics on council agendas, questions and topic areas identified in advance.	Senior Leadership Team, Group Leaders	On request

Theme: Constitution			
Action	Measure	Lead officer / member	Timescale
19 Defining strategic roles and responsibilities	<p>Develop an Executive Members / Strategic Leadership Team charter that clarifies respective roles, responsibilities and commitments and embeds this into the Council's constitution. Establish role profiles for Executive Members, clarifying their duties and accountability, including communicating relevant information throughout the Council.</p> <p><i>Update April 2025: This is being addressed through the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny Working Group. Amendments to the constitution were postponed from the February 2025 Full Council to be added to the agenda for the Annual Council meeting in May 2025.</i></p>	Managing Director / Leader	December 2024
Governance and Constitution Review	<p>Having completed the first stage review with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, a task and finish group has been created to review and recommend to Full Council, amendments and changes to the constitution.</p> <p><i>Update April 2025: Amendments to the constitution were postponed from the February 2025 Full Council to be added to the agenda for the Annual Council meeting in May 2025.</i></p>	Monitoring Officer / Leader	July 2025
Decision making flow-chart	<p>Linked to the constitution review, update website with a simple explanation on how council decisions are made. This information should be accessible to councillors, officers, stakeholders, businesses and residents and act as an index that also leads to more detailed information (e.g. links to constitution sections).</p> <p><i>Update April 2025: This task will be allocated to the recently appointed Democratic Services Team Leader and Monitoring Officer.</i></p>	Democratic Service Team Leader	March 2025

Theme: Council Strategy and Partnerships			
Action	Measure	Lead officer / member	Timescale
Adopt and implement a new 'One Teignbridge' Council Strategy	<p>Following engagement with the community and partners in shaping the Council Strategy, the Council will adopt the strategy and accompanying action plan that sets out priorities and key actions over the life of the Strategy.</p> <p>Update April 2025: The One Teignbridge Council Strategy was formally adopted on the 14th Jan 2025. Working groups are now meeting based around the five themes to develop the Action Plan.</p>	Director of Place / Head of Partnerships and Strategy	January 2025
Refresh Council Strategy Performance and Risk Monitoring Framework	<p>Overhaul existing Council Strategy monitoring processes and systems to streamline reporting of key progress indicators and ensure that budget considerations are at the forefront of planning and implementation. Our monitoring framework will also monitor ongoing customer needs and community feedback, so that it can be used to help inform Partnership Board recommendations and Council Strategy Action Plan decisions.</p> <p>Update April 2025: The One Teignbridge Council Strategy Action Plan will define new performance indicators and involve the creation of an easily accessible monitoring system through PowerBI.</p>	Director of Place / Head of Partnerships and Strategy	July 2025
Ongoing engagement with Town and Parish Councils	<p>An ongoing programme of communication involving detailed workshops on key issues like town planning to build trust, cooperation, and community involvement. This work will involve understanding one another's priorities and potentially co-creating a charter for mutually beneficial working relationships.</p> <p>Update April 2025: Development of this charter has been delayed by staff absence within DALC, but work is ongoing to develop this charter by bringing together a working group of representative Town and Parish councils. Representative Town and Parish Councils have been invited to join the One Teignbridge Council Strategy Action Group, and the Head of Development Management has organized a series of Planning Workshops for Town and Parish Councils.</p>	Director of Place / Head of Partnerships and Strategy	On-going

Theme: Functioning authority			
Action	Measure	Lead officer / member	Timescale
Appoint Opposition Overview and Scrutiny Chairs	Appoint a chair and vice-chair from opposition political parties to Overview and Scrutiny Committee to foster greater transparency and fairness.	Leader	May 2025

Routine briefings ahead of complex decisions	Continue specialist officer briefings for councillors ahead of all complex (determined by the relevant Executive Member/s) committee decisions and provide updates and (ordinarily) annual refresher sessions throughout long-term project implementation (like Modern 25) or decision-making phases, including reminders about previous council decisions.	Lead officers will vary per theme	Ad hoc
Centralised Record of Council Decisions	Enhance or replace existing systems into a centralised and searchable repository of all council decisions and subsequent progress with projects. This will ensure transparency, accountability and easy access to up to date information for councillors, officers and members of the public. <i>Update April 2025: This task will be allocated to the recently appointed Democratic Services Team Leader and Monitoring Officer.</i>	Democratic Service Team Leader	April 2025
Essential Officer Training	Implement and maintain an ongoing programme of officer training centred on the council constitution; officer/member protocol; and ensuring timely and effective communication with councillors, town and parish councillors and other key partners. <i>Update April 2025: A training session run by DALC on working with Town and Parish Councils has been arranged for officers in April 2025.</i>	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	April 2025
Establish an Invest to Save Budget	Bring forward a medium-term financial plan and annual budget with an 'Invest to Save' provision that grows to at least £500,000, enabling us to allocate resources to delivering long-term efficiencies. <i>Update April 2025: This was agreed at the 2025 budget meeting: £400,000 was already identified at 31 March 2024, planned to increase again to £500,000 at 31 March 2025.</i>	Director of Corporate	February 2025
Introduce a new modern finance system	Retain sufficient staff resources to ensure delivery of the project, with dedicated project managers at both Teignbridge District Council and Strata. <i>Update April 2025: Additional Project Management resource has been approved and hiring processes are being completed with expected start dates in May 2025.</i>	Director of Corporate	May 2026

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Teignbridge District Council
Audit Scrutiny
16 April 2025
Part 1

FINANCIAL INSTRUCTIONS and CONTRACT RULES WAIVERS

Purpose of Report

To inform Members of the number of times the Financial Instructions and Contract Procedure Rules have been waived and the reasons for this.

Recommendation(s)

The Audit Scrutiny Committee resolves to note the report.

Financial Implications

None - advisory report only.

Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report. The reporting of Waivers to the Audit Scrutiny Committee is a requirement of the Financial Instructions and Contract Procedure Rules within the Constitution.

Risk Assessment

Risks are evaluated when individual waiver approval is sought. Waivers would not be approved if they presented unacceptable risk.

Environmental / Climate Change Implications

None.

Report Author

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Executive Member

Councillor John Parrott – Executive Member for Corporate Resources

Appendices/Background Papers

None.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Members of the number of times the Financial Instructions and Contract Procedure Rules have been waived and the reasons for this.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Financial Instructions and Contract Procedure Rules provide the framework for managing the Council's financial affairs. They apply to every member and officer of the Council and anyone acting on its behalf. Sometimes there are instances where the rules cannot be followed and requests are made to waive them. One of the following criteria must be met:

1	LIFE OR DEATH There is significant chance that the life or health of officers, members, or the public will be put at real risk.
2	INCREASED COST / LOSS OF INCOME The Council will incur significant avoidable costs or lose significant income.
3	LIMITED MARKETS The Council would be wasting its time tendering as supply of the product or service is demonstrably restricted to one or few businesses.
4	URGENT ACTION REQUIRED The Council would be criticised for failing to act promptly.

3 WAIVERS

- 3.1 The following waivers have been processed since the 13 February 2025 monitoring report:

Proposing Officer	Proposal / Reason	Approval
Economic Development Officer Town Centres	Green Business Grant Phase 3 Contractor services to continue final stage of delivery for Green Business Grant Phase 3 (GBG3) as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF).	Director of Place

	<p>Value: £25,000 (£20,000 direct award basis, max £5,000 to complete project)</p> <p>Reason: Limited market due to the need for continuity of service by the same contractor and needed urgently to meet short deadline to use these funds by the end of March 2025.</p>	
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4. IMPLICATIONS, RISK MANAGEMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

4.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications as this is an advisory report only. The financial impacts of the spending covered by the waivers were assessed at the time these procurements were carried out.

4.2 Legal

The reporting of Waivers to the Audit Scrutiny Committee is a requirement of the Financial Instructions and Contract Procedure Rules within the Constitution.

4.3 Risks

Risks are evaluated when individual waiver approval is sought. Waivers would not be approved if they presented unacceptable risk.

5. CONCLUSION

That the report be noted.

6. GROUPS CONSULTED

Not applicable.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

Not applicable.

8. DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION (CONFIRMATION OF DECISION SUBJECT TO CALL-IN)

Not applicable.