

AUDIT RESPONSE

To consider the Town Clerk’s proposals to address recent audit issues		
Recommendation		
1. Council is recommended to adopt the solutions outlined in the attached schedule which have not already been actioned, and to delegate authority to the Budget and Administration Committee to authorize the spending recommended.		
	Yes	No
Does the decision involve new expenditure?	Yes	
Is there an existing budget for the proposed expenditure (insert code)	N/A	
What procurement level is required?	N/A	
Are there equalities impacts / an equalities assessment required?		No
Does this require a full council decision? (Reports for full council decision should still be sent to the relevant committee where possible.)	Yes	
Is there a background paper or papers? (provide links below).	Yes	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A robust and well managed audit process is part of the structure of controls that council relies upon to ensure that it is a responsible steward of the public finances it controls. 2. Council is required to have an internal auditor, although the process is not well defined in either statute or guidance. Steps are in place from the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG) and the Society of Local Council Clerks to seek to formalize best practice and to provide better guidance to councils as to how the process of internal audit should be conducted. There is currently no requirement for internal auditors to hold specific qualifications. 3. External auditors are appointed via a statutory process, and change on a regular basis. 2022-23 was the first year council was audited by Mazars. 2023-24 will be the first year council’s internal audit is conducted by Account-Ant, an accountancy practice with significant experience of Parish and Town Councils. Their interim audit report for the first half of 2023-24 is circulated as a background paper to this report. 4. The issues that arose in 2022-23, identified by the internal and external audit reports are itemized in the attached schedule, and council is recommended to adopt the solutions which have not already been actioned, and to delegate authority to the Budget and Administration Committee to authorize the spending recommended. 		
Issues arising from proposal		
None.		
Rationale for recommendation.		
Not applicable.		