

October 24th, 2024

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend a Meeting of the

Mid and East Antrim Audit & Scrutiny Committee

to be held on **Tuesday, 29th October 2024 at 6:30 pm** in **Council Chamber,
The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena** and **via remote access.**

Yours sincerely



Valerie Watts
Interim Chief Executive, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Agenda

1 NOTICE OF MEETING

2 APOLOGIES

3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

4 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION

4.1 Corporate Risk Register Briefing Report - circulated

[Corporate Risk Register Briefing Report.pdf](#)

Page 1

4.2 Update on Scrutiny Review on Sickness Absence - circulated

[AS - Scrutiny Review Update V0.1.pdf](#)

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5 ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

6 TABLED QUESTIONS

Closed Committee - In accordance with Council policy, representatives of the Press will not be in attendance for this section of the Meeting.

7 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION - CLOSED COMMITTEE

7.1 Corporate Risk Register - circulated

[Corporate Risk Register 23.10.2024.pdf](#)

Not included

7.2 Report to Those Charged with Governance - circulated

[RTTCWG.pdf](#)

Not included

[MEA RttcwG 2023-24 - Final Copy.pdf](#)

Not included

7.3 Debt Write Off Report - circulated

[Debt Write Off Report.pdf](#)

Not included

[Appendix 1 - Bad Debt Write offs.pdf](#)

Not included

8 ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL - CLOSED COMMITTEE

9 TABLED QUESTIONS – CLOSED COMMITTEE

Open Committee

10 FORWARD PLAN FOR AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - circulated

 *A&S Forward Plan.pdf*

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Council/Committee:	Audit and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	29 Oct 24
Report Title:	Corporate Risk Register Briefing Report
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate Services
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Audit and Scrutiny Committee Members with the Corporate Risk Register. Under Section 7 of Council's Risk Management Policy Elected Members are asked to review the Corporate Risk Register.

2. Background

- 2.1. Under Section 7 of Council's Risk Management Policy the Audit and Scrutiny Committee must undertake at least an annual review of the Corporate Risk Register. Audit and Scrutiny are provided with a minimum of 3 updates per year
- 2.2. In August 2024 a report was brought to Committee setting out the new corporate risks as agreed by the Senior Management Team. These risk titles were approved by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.3. Since then, the corporate risk register has again been considered by SMT in line with the forward plan and it is now time for the Committee to consider and review.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1. Later at Agenda Item 7.1 under closed business Officers will present the Corporate Risk Register. There are now five risks in total. Each risk has been assigned a risk category, scored, and has had any required new controls and actions added. They were updated most recently on 23.10.24 where the scoring and mitigation has been reviewed.
- 3.2. Of the five risks agreed and approved, all are a continuation of previously agreed risks that are regularly reviewed and updated. These include:
 - Challenge of Successfully delivering the City Deal investment to Mid and East Antrim, and

- Inadequate Long Term Waste Disposal Strategy
- Maintaining robust budgetary and financial planning and management
- Attract and retain talent and people management capacity and competence
- Resistance to transformational change, lack of coherence and investment in embedding change.

3.3. One risk has now been removed in light of progress

- Capability and Capacity to deliver the Capital Plan

3.4. SMT continue to have in place key actions for each of the risk areas and work has continued to strengthen the mitigations around these areas, providing additional assurance to Members.

3.5. Members are asked to note actions in the report titled 'Corporate Risk Register Part II'.

3.6. Members are asked to note that any actions in the report titled 'Corporate Risk Register Part II' that are highlighted blue have been completed and are being considered as potential controls. These will be updated by the responsible officers following Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

4. Further work needed

- 4.1. Whilst the risk register is maintained and reviewed regularly it is good practice to review the approach to risk and the risk policy. Identification of risk and the monitoring and mitigation of risk should be an active management tool that is prevalent at all levels of management in the organisation with relevant training and skills development in place. We are about to begin an audit of the management of risk, undertaken by Deloitte and this will be reported to committee in the usual way.

5. General Considerations / Implications

5.1. Financial implications

There are a number of financial implications for the successfully delivery and management of the Corporate Risk Register, given the significant strategic importance of the areas identified such as City Deal. The controls associated with these risk areas includes robust budgetary planning and appropriate approvals and governance to ensure there would be minimal financial implications due to good planning. There are also potential financial risk with the disposal of waste which is still under review in NI.

5.2. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan

Each risk was linked on the risk system to objectives directly related to the Corporate Plan's delivery. This will allow SMT to see clearly when they review the progress of any risk, the performance of the objectives directly linked to it, and the Corporate Plan. This will in turn inform decisions on how the risk is managed and reviewed, creating a joined-up approach to corporate risks being directly connected to the key performance indicators and the successful delivery of the Corporate Plan.

6. Proposed Way Forward

- 6.1. As per Section 7 of the Risk Management Strategy and Framework (agreed in August 2024, the current risk register is brought to Members for consideration and approval.
- 6.2. Continued discussion with Deloitte's, our internal audit partner regarding the scope and fieldwork for the review of risk management and the outcome will be shared with the Committee in the coming months.

7. Recommendation or Decision

- 7.1. Elected Members are asked to note this briefing report on the Corporate Risk Register.

8. Appendices / Links

Agenda Item 7.1 Corporate Risk Register

Council/Committee:	Audit & Scrutiny Committee
Date:	29 October 2024
Report Title:	Update on Scrutiny Review into Sickness Absence
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Sarah Williams, Assistant Director – Business Support
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to give a brief update on the progress of the scrutiny review into the issue of Sickness Absence.

2. Background

- 2.1. Further to a report in August, Members will be aware that a Scrutiny Review is being undertaken into the issue of Sickness Absence in the Council.
- 2.2. Members will also be aware that this example is being used as a process so that learning and improvement can be enhanced through members' involvement as a critical friend. It will form the basis of a Standard Operating Model for Scrutiny for the Council.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1. A meeting was held on 19 September and officers are currently carrying out field work to bring back to a meeting of the Scrutiny Panel which will be held in November.
- 3.2. A final report will be presented by the Chair of the Panel to Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 10 December. This work is being carried out by officers in the HR&OD team who are also leading on corporate priority work therefore the original timeline set out for members has been amended.
- 3.3. An updated timeline is set out below:



Action	Detail	Timeline
Step 1: Agreement of the membership of the Scrutiny Review Panel	Reconfirmed at the A&S meeting on 27 August 2024	Complete
Step 2: Hold an initial scoping meeting	Officers will present a draft Terms of Reference and general approach.	Meeting held 19 September
Step 3: Fieldwork (3-4 weeks)	Following this initial meeting officers will carry out fieldwork as agreed within the terms of reference	Currently being carried out
Step 4: Review meeting	Members will be presented with the results of the fieldwork and draft recommendations. Members will be able to discuss, question and review this information. Any emerging recommendations report are agreed at this meeting and/or further fieldwork is carried out with a follow up meeting set.	Date to be confirmed
Step 5: Audit & Scrutiny Committee	If fieldwork is complete and recommendations are agreed in time, the Scrutiny Review Panel Chair will present the report to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee.	10 December

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial implications: there are no financial implications
- 4.2. Human Resources: this work will be led by the Assistant Director – Business Support with the relevant officers from HR&OD.
- 4.3. Equality Screening: any equality implications will be identified and addressed
- 4.4. Assets: N/A
- 4.5. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan:
- 4.6. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact: there are no rural or environmental impacts



**Mid & East
Antrim**
Borough Council

5. Recommendation or Decision

4.1 Elected Members are asked to note the update on the Scrutiny Review.

6. Appendices / Links

Forward plan – Audit and scrutiny

1. Planned Agenda Items Next meeting (10 December 2024)

Items	Purpose	Report By:
Internal Audit Progress Report	Report for noting	TBC
Internal Audit – Policing and Community Safety Report	Report for noting	TBC
Procurement – DAC Update	Report for noting	Michelle
Annual Audit letter	Report for noting	Michelle
Scrutiny Review – Final report	Report for approval	Sarah

2. Future Meetings

Meeting Date	Item	Purpose
21 Jan 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Audit letter Corporate Risk Register NFI update 	Report for noting Report for noting Report of noting
4 Mar 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Audit Progress Report Internal Audit – Recruitment & Selection Report Internal Audit – Budgetary Control Internal Audit – Follow Ups MEA Internal Annual Plan for next FY Internal Audit Charter Procurement – DAC Update Quarterly Scrutiny review update 	Report for noting Report for noting Report for noting Report for noting Report for approval Report for approval Report for noting Report for noting
15 April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIAO External Audit Strategy Internal audit annual assurance report Corporate Risk Register Audit Committee Self-Assessment 	Report for noting Report for noting Report for noting Report for completion/approval
28 May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Governance Statement Debt Write Off Report Annual Chair of Audit and Scrutiny Committee Report Procurement – DAC Update Quarterly Scrutiny Review Update 	Report for approval Report for noting Report for noting Report for noting Report for noting
August 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Management Framework and Strategy Corporate Risk Register Going Concern Statement Annual Insurance Report Scrutiny Review Report – Sickness Absence 	Report for approval Report for noting Report for noting Report for noting Report for approval
September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of accounts 2023-24 – sign off RTTCWG Internal Audit Progress Report Internal Audit – Labour Market Partnership Report Procurement – DAC Update Quarterly Scrutiny Review Update 	Report for approval Report for noting Report for noting Report for noting Report for noting Report for approval
October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RTTCWG – Management Response Corporate Risk Register Debt Write Off report (6 monthly update) 	Report for approval Report for noting Report for approval

3. Items to be programmed

Item	Purpose