



**Full Council**  
18 November 2024

**Report from the Corporate Director  
of Finance and Resources**

**Audit and Standards Advisory Committee – Vice Chair’s  
Report**

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Council
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources Tel: 020 8937 4043 Email: <a href="mailto:minesh.patel@brent.gov.uk">minesh.patel@brent.gov.uk</a>

**1.0 Executive Summary**

1.1. This report provides a summary of the activities carried out by the Council’s Audit and Standards Advisory Committee and the Audit and Standards Committee since the last updated provided on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

**2.0 Recommendation(s)**

2.1 Council is asked to note the contents of the report.

**3.0 Detail**

**3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context**

3.1.1 The Council’s Audit and Standards Advisory Committee (ASAC) and the Audit and Standards Committee (ASC) play an important role in ensuring the good governance of the Council. The committees are a key component of the Council’s governance framework. They contribute to the overall success of the Council by providing an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk and control arrangements to provide assurance and confidence to those charged with governance.

3.1.2 The ASAC is responsible for considering and advising the relevant council bodies on various governance matters relating to audit activity, the council's regulatory framework, and members' standards of conduct. The ASC is responsible for various governance matters including reviewing and approving the Annual Statement of Accounts, adopting the council's Annual Governance Statement and promoting high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members.

## **3.2 Background**

3.2.1 The ASAC has met twice since the last update, and the ASC has not met. A summary of the items discussed and considered at the two ASAC meetings is set out below.

### **3.2.2 Audit and Standards Advisory Committee – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

a. **Report on i4B Holdings Ltd and First Wave Housing Ltd**

This report provided the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee with an update on the work of the Housing Companies, i4B Holdings Ltd (i4B) and First Wave Housing (FWH) to deliver against their business plans for 2024-25, which were agreed by the Council as Shareholder of i4B and Guarantor of FWH.

b. **Emergency Planning and Resilience Update**

This report continued the cycle of regular updates that the Emergency Planning team provide for the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee. The report provided the Committee with an update on the work and priorities of the team since the last update in February 2024.

c. **Standards Report (including Q1 update on gifts and hospitality)**

The purpose of this report was to update the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee on (a) gifts and hospitality registered by Members (b) member training, and (c) a recent complaint concerning breaches of the Member's Code of Conduct which had been upheld against a councillor.

d. **Internal Audit Activity Update for Quarters 1 and 2 2024-25**

This report provided an update on the activity of Internal Audit for Quarters 1 & 2 2024-25. In addition, the report also indicated work that was planned for Quarter 3 & 4.

e. **Brent Council & Pension Fund Audit Progress and Sector Update**

This report provided the Committee with progress update from Grant Thornton on the delivery and responsibilities they are conducting as the

Council's external auditors. The report also provided sector updates and further details on matters relating to audit progress.

### 3.2.3 Audit and Standards Advisory Committee – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024

#### a. Statement of Accounts – Interim External Audit Findings Report

This report provided an update on the progress and findings regarding the external audit being carried out by Grant Thornton for the year ending 31 March 2024 in relation to (a) the council's statement of accounts and (b) the council's pension fund.

#### b. Strategic Risk Register Update

The Committee received a report providing an update on the position of the Council's strategic risks as of September 2024.

### 3.2.4 Forward Plan Items

The following items are due to be presented to the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee at its next meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024:

- Standards Update (including Gifts and Hospitality)
- Interim Counter Fraud Report
- Interim Internal Audit Report
- Annual Auditors Report
- Treasury Management Mid-year Report
- Treasury Management Strategy

## **4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

4.1 None.

## **5.0 Financial Considerations**

5.1 The report is for noting and so there are no direct financial implications.

## **6.0 Legal Considerations**

6.1 The report is for noting and there are no direct legal implications.

## **7.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

7.1 None.

## **8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

8.1 None

## **9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

9.1 None

## **10.0 Communication Considerations**

10.1 None

**Report sign off:**

***Minesh Patel***

Corporate Director of Finance and Resources