	Full Council 16 November 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources

Audit and Standards Advisory Committee – Vice Chair's Report

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

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 update provided to Full Council in September 2026.

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 Since the previous update to Full Council, the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee has met once, on 23 September 2026. A summary of the substantive items considered at that meeting is set out below.

3.2.2 Audit and Standards Advisory Committee – 23 September 2026

a. Performance and Management of i4B Holdings Ltd and First Wave Housing Ltd

The Committee received assurance on the governance and oversight arrangements for the Council's housing companies, including performance, risk, financial sustainability and compliance. Members also considered progress against matters raised at the Committee's previous review, including smoke and carbon monoxide detector compliance, reporting from Shareholder and Guarantor meetings and improvements to the presentation of risk registers.

b. Update on the Response to Housing Regulator Findings

The Committee reviewed progress following the Council's self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing and the continuing C3 judgement. The report highlighted the rebuild of compliance data, progress in closing fire-risk actions and increasing stock-condition survey coverage, while recognising that significant work remained to demonstrate sustained compliance, complete legacy actions and secure independent assurance over the improved arrangements.

c. Strategic Risk Report

The Committee considered the updated Strategic Risk Register. The update reflected a heightened overall risk environment, including an increase in cyber risk, reductions in the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block and artificial intelligence risk scores, and the addition of business continuity as a new strategic risk. Members also considered the continuing high risks relating to affordable accommodation and statutory housing compliance.

d. Statement of Accounts 2025–26 and External Audit Findings

The Committee received the draft Audit Findings Reports for the Council and Pension Fund, together with the Auditor's Annual Report. The external auditor anticipated unmodified opinions, subject to completion of outstanding work. The Committee considered audit adjustments, control recommendations and additional audit fees, and made the necessary recommendations to the Audit and Standards Committee regarding the letters of representation and delegated sign-off of the final accounts.

e. Forward Plan and Work Programme 2026–27

The Committee reviewed its work programme for the remainder of the 2026–27 municipal year and noted the planned schedule of audit, finance, governance, risk and standards items.

3.2.3 Forward Plan Items

The next meeting of the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee is scheduled for 30 November 2026. Based on the 2026–27 Forward Plan and Work Programme, the following items are currently scheduled for consideration:

- Internal Audit Plan Progress Update
- External Audit Progress Report
- Auditor's Annual Report
- Treasury Management Mid-Year Report
- Standards Report, including Gifts and Hospitality

Treasury Management training will take place on 30 November 2026, before the next Audit and Standards Advisory Committee meeting. The Committee continues to review its training and development needs and will undertake a maturity assessment to identify areas for improvement.

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 Equity, 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