

Rob Winter ARGC Ltd.

Proposal for the review of the Spelthorne Borough Council Audit Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a proposal to undertake a review of the effectiveness of the Council's Audit Committee.

Objectives of the review

The objectives of the review will be to:

- Help the Committee members and those working with the Committee to establish a shared understanding of the role of the Committee and where it can have maximum impact and influence.
- Address the recommendations from the Best Value Inspection and those by the External Auditor Grant Thornton: The Council should review the structure and reporting processes of its Audit Committee. This could include recruiting a second independent member who acts as chair, in line with CIPFA guidance, and ensuring annual reports to Council.
- Review the operation of the Committee, including its terms of reference, how it has fulfilled those terms of reference, demonstrated the impact of its work and suggest changes.
- Consider any areas where the scope and impact of the Committee's work could be strengthened to increase its impact and influence.
- Identify areas for improvement and support to develop an improvement plan for the Committee and where further training or support to the Audit Committee members is recommended and the value of another independent committee member
- Share knowledge and experience of working with other audit committees in local government.

My Approach

I will work closely with the officers at the Council and Commissioners to plan the timing of the review and any subsequent support to ensure it meets your needs. I will need a key contact at the Council through which I can make the necessary arrangements for interviews and attendance at meetings.

The following outline provides some details of the proposed areas of work:

- Conduct a review of the effectiveness of the Committee including the terms of reference, agendas and minutes, and observation of committee meetings from the webcasts and in person.
- I will need to meet with the Chair of the Audit Committee, other members of the Committee, the key officers who attend and support the Committee including the s151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, Internal Audit, the External Auditors Grant Thornton and the Lead and Finance Commissioners, to obtain their feedback on its operation and impact. It is anticipated that most of such meetings will be conducted remotely.
- I will utilise the CIPFA guidance on audit committees and my experience of working with numerous audit committees to review how effectively the Committee has been operating.
- Produce a report and recommendations for discussion with the Committee, Council Officers and Commissioners.

Whilst most of the meetings with Committee members and officers will take place remotely, it is anticipated that the feedback to the Committee will take place face to face.

Any further support for the Committee such as the delivery of training or other follow-up will be discussed and agreed separately.