

Areas where the Audit Committee can add value by supporting improvement	Examples of how the audit committee can add value and provide evidence of effectiveness	Self-evaluation, examples, areas of strength and weakness	Overall assessment 5-1 See key below
1. Promoting the principles of good governance and their application to decision making	Providing robust review of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and the assurances underpinning it. Working with key members/governors to improve their understanding of the AGS and their contribution to it. Supporting reviews/audits of governance arrangements. Participating in self-assessments of governance arrangements. Working with partner audit committees to review governance arrangements in partnerships.	Committee scrutinised the AGS including assurances and the improvement actions. Chair met with Chief Executive regularly. Committee supports the role of audit in improving internal control and governance. Committee participated in annual self-assessment and considered Audit Scotland toolkits for Councillors. Opportunity to liaise with other Audit Committees to share practice.	3
2. Contributing to the development of an effective control environment.	Monitoring the implementation of recommendations from auditors. Encouraging ownership of the internal control framework by appropriate managers. Raising significant concerns over controls with appropriate senior managers.	Committee received periodic progress reports from Auditors e.g. follow-up activity. Directors attended Committee meetings to discuss progress with improvement actions. Audit Committee action tracker would be helpful to hold Management to account.	3
3. Supporting the establishment of arrangements for the governance of risk and for effective arrangements to manage risks.	Reviewing risk management arrangements and their effectiveness, e.g. risk management benchmarking. Monitoring improvements. Holding risk owners to account for major/strategic risks.	Committee received periodic reports from Risk Manager on corporate risks and mitigations.	3
4. Advising on the adequacy of the assurance framework and considering whether assurance is deployed efficiently and effectively.	Specifying its assurance needs, identifying gaps or overlaps in assurance. Seeking to streamline assurance gathering and reporting. Reviewing the effectiveness of assurance providers, e.g. internal audit, risk management, external audit.	Annual Strategies and Plans and periodic progress Reports received from Auditors. Induction programme outlined Governance and Assurance Framework and Audit Cycle. Reliance on other Committees fulfilling their remits; need to understand effectiveness.	3

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5. Supporting the quality of the internal audit activity, particularly by underpinning its organisational independence.	Reviewing the audit charter and functional reporting arrangements. Assessing the effectiveness of internal audit arrangements and supporting improvements.	Committee approved the Internal Audit Charter, Strategy and Plan, and received assessment against Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and quality improvement plan (QAIP).	4
6. Aiding the achievement of the authority's goals and objectives through helping to ensure appropriate governance, risk, control and assurance arrangements	Reviewing major projects and programmes to ensure that governance and assurance arrangements are in place. Reviewing the effectiveness of performance management arrangements.	Committee received National Reports from Audit Scotland including lessons learned and sharing best practice. Reliance on other Committees fulfilling their remits; need to understand effectiveness.	3
7. Supporting the development of robust arrangements for ensuring value for money.	Ensuring that assurance on value for money arrangements is included in the assurances received by the audit committee. Considering how performance in value for money is evaluated as part of the AGS.	Auditors provided assurance on value for money arrangements e.g. transformation, sustainability, and performance management. AGS sets out the Governance Framework including arrangements for best value.	3
8. Helping the authority to implement the values of good governance, including effective arrangements for countering fraud and corruption risks.	Reviewing arrangements against the standards set out in CIPFA's <i>Managing the Risk of Fraud</i> (Red Book 2). Reviewing fraud risks and the effectiveness of the organisation's strategy to address those risks. Assessing the effectiveness of ethical governance arrangements for both staff and governors.	Committee received annual counter fraud report and report on National Fraud Initiative on update and outcomes. Auditors provided assurance on fraud risks and counter fraud controls.	3
9. Promoting effective public reporting to the authority's stakeholders and local community and measures to improve transparency and accountability.	Improving how the authority discharges its responsibilities for public reporting; for example, better targeting at the audience, plain English. Reviewing whether decision making through partnership organisations remains transparent and publicly accessible and encouraging transparency.	Committee scrutinised annual accounts prior to publication and audit (improve format / content for users); did not scrutinise Treasury Management reports prior to full Council. Briefings / Seminars on Statutory Accounts and on Treasury Management would help.	2

Assessment key	
5	Clear evidence is available from a number of sources that the committee is actively supporting improvements across all aspects of this area. The improvements made are clearly identifiable.
4	Clear evidence from some sources that the committee is actively and effectively supporting improvement across some aspects of this area.
3	The committee has had mixed experience in supporting improvement in this area. There is some evidence that demonstrates their impact but there are also significant gaps.
2	There is some evidence that the committee has supported improvements, but the impact of this support is limited.
1	No evidence can be found that the audit committee has supported improvements in this area.