

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Audit Committee outline Terms of Reference

The Audit Committee meets four times each year. Political balance rules and regulations apply.

The Audit Committee is a key component of the Authority's governance framework. The Audit Committee's purpose is to provide those responsible for governance with independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, annual governance processes and the internal control environment.

The core functions are to:

- Consider the effectiveness of the Authority's risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements;
- Seek assurances that action is being taken on risk related issues identified by auditors and inspectors;
- Be satisfied that the Authority's assurances statements properly reflect the risk environment and identify the proportionate actions required to improve it;
- Approve (but not direct) internal audit's strategy plan;
- Approve the Annual Accounts (noting that the Resources Committee will also monitor the financial position throughout each financial year, including the year-end out-turn position);
- Monitor progress against the Internal Audit Plan;
- Receive the annual report of the Head of Internal Audit;
- Consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies;
- Approve amendments to;
 - Standing Orders;
 - Financial Regulations;
 - The Scheme of Delegation.
- Review assimilation and response to appropriate Government Consultation documents on behalf of the Authority affecting fire and rescue authorities generally, from Central Government, LGA, NFCC or any other source.

The Committee will have decision making powers in relation to the above areas. In exceptional circumstances the Committee may refer issues to the Authority for a decision.

- Any items referred to the Committee by the Authority or Strategy Group who will indicate if a decision or recommendation is required, including any transitional matter referred to it for a decision.

It is also recommended that members of the Committee attend appropriate training where possible.

The Audit Committee will only be quorate and therefore constitutionally able to conduct business and make decisions if there are at least 3 members present. Should the Committee be inquorate it shall stand temporarily adjourned for 30 minutes and if, thereafter, there is still not a quorum the meeting shall stand finally adjourned. At the point of adjournment, or subsequently, the Chair may agree arrangements for the meeting to be reconvened.