

CIPFA Better Governance Forum

Introduction to the Knowledge and Skills of the Audit Committee

Webinar, 10:00 – 16:00

Dates: 26 September 2024

Purpose

This course is intended for audit committee members and officers who work closely with the committee. It covers key areas of responsibility and briefs committee members on topical issues. It will help you to make a more effective contribution to your audit committee and support your committee to improve its overall impact.

During the webinar we will encourage discussion, questions and sharing of experiences with audit committees. Delegates are welcome to contact the organiser in advance to highlight specific areas.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you will:

- Understand the wider roles and responsibilities of the audit committee and the importance of gaining assurance
- Know how current developments will impact on the work of your committee and shape its agenda.
- Be better placed to work with your internal auditors, including understanding the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards
- Appreciate how the audit committee should work with others to improve the management of its organisation's risk
- Have improved the practical skills required of committee members
- Have developed an appreciation of where an audit committee can add value and how to demonstrate its effectiveness.

Who Will Benefit

This course is designed for audit committee members in the public sector, both elected and independents. Officers who support audit committees will find this course a useful opportunity to gain an unfettered view of what members really expect of them. CIPFA run a separate, but similar, event for Police Joint Audit Committees.

Programme

09:45 – 10:00

Join the webinar

Please remember to check your audio settings before the start

10:00 – 10:10

Introductions and welcome

10:10 – 10:40

Thinking about assurance and the role of the committee

- The scope of audit committee terms of reference
 - Key areas of responsibility
 - The importance of assurance
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10:40 – 11:20

CIPFA Position Statement on Audit Committees 2022

CIPFA has updated its Position Statement outlining the key requirements of an audit committee in local government. This session will highlight the main changes and where audit committee members need to focus.

11:20 – 11:35

Break

11:35 – 12:30

Internal audit and the audit committee

- An overview of the professional standards for internal audit (the *Public Sector Internal Audit Standards*), with a particular focus on the role of the audit committee
 - Developing effective working relations with the head of internal audit
 - Getting the best out of internal audit
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12:30 – 13:30

Lunch

13:30 – 14:15

Risk management and the audit committee

- The audit committee's role in risk management
- Strengths and weaknesses in an organisation's approach to risk management – what the audit committee should look for

Supporting better management of risk and understanding the organisation's risk appetite. How the audit committee can help

14:15 – 14:45

Planning assurance

- Different sources and types of assurance
 - How to assess the value of assurance
- Assurance planning, including the three lines model
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14:45 – 15:00

Break

15:00 – 15:30

Developing your skills and improving effectiveness

- This session will consider any problems that can disrupt the effective working of an audit committee, highlighted either during the webinar or in advance, and give practical hints and tips to address them.

The factors that contribute to the effectiveness of the committee and the importance of regular review and evaluation, including some tools to do this

15:30 – 16:00

Summary and opportunity for questions and discussion

16:00

Close of webinar

The facilitator for the event will be Diana Melville.

Diana Melville

Diana is the lead advisor for the CIPFA Better Governance Forum a CIPFA’s representative on the Internal Audit Standards Advisory Board. She is a CIPFA-qualified accountant and is also a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Prior to joining CIPFA in 2008, she was head of internal audit at Salisbury Council and held other audit roles in local government and at the National Audit Office.

She authored the 2022 and 2018 editions of Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police.

Elizabeth Humphrey

Elizabeth trained with District Audit and was an audit manager and the head of audit at the London Borough of Ealing. She completed her local government career by being the Finance Director at two district councils. She has, therefore, undertaken both internal and external audit and had audit functions report to her, seeing audit from all perspectives. Elizabeth has been a CIPFA associate for more than ten years, specialising in providing training in governance areas, including risk and audit. She regularly works with audit committees to help them be more effective.

We reserve the right to alter the timing or content of sessions where circumstances require.



CIPFA Sustainability Policy

CIPFA is delivering all of our training courses, workshops and seminars in accordance with our sustainability strategy. We do not provide hardcopy course materials to delegates and these are now distributed by email in advance of the event. We are striving to reduce our carbon footprint in every way that we can, and we hope that we can count on your support.