



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Held: Wednesday, 17 September 2025 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

	<u>Councillor Kaur Saini (Chair)</u>	
	<u>Councillor Russell (Vice-Chair)</u>	
<u>Councillor Bajaj</u>		<u>Councillor Kitterick</u>
<u>Councillor Joel</u>		<u>Councillor Rae Bhatia</u>
	<u>Councillor Singh Patel</u>	

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1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor Dr Moore.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED

The Chair noted to Councillor Singh-Patel's omission on the attendance for correction.

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2025 and 14 July 2025 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

4 Procurement Annual Report 2024/25

The Director of Finance submitted a report to the Governance and Audit Committee which presented the Procurement Annual Report 2024/25.

The Head of Procurement, Izabela Skowronek, presented the report which included information on procurement compliance for contracts of varying sizes and complexities.

Members of the Committee discussed the report, and the following points were highlighted:

- Members raised concerns about a Adult Social Care procurement waiver, and if the reason for delay was due to management not starting the procurement in sufficient time. Assurance was provided to the committee that the procurement started promptly, and an issue was identified during the procurement process that led to the delays. The waiver was therefore required to ensure the continuity of service for the users. The committee were updated that procurement was going well, however a higher number of tenders caused longer assessment times.
- A member also referred to concerns of a previous Council Officer's employment by a supplier which had been reported to the Monitoring Officer. The Director of Finance advised that specific concerns should be referred to the Monitoring Officer.
- A member queried the increase in waiver numbers. The Head of Procurement explained that this was primarily due to increased financial controls that had been put in place, which identified spend without contracts.
- The Director of Finance confirmed there is no statutory requirement to publish waiver details, but the Council does so voluntarily for transparency.
- In response to questions, the Director of Finance confirmed that the increase in waivers had no direct budgetary impact. The issue primarily related to process compliance rather than cost or service delivery.
- A member sought clarification on passenger transport procurement. The Head of Procurement confirmed that all passenger transport activity is managed under a single Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) contract, the total value of which is included within the headline figures.
- A report covering process, resourcing and lessons learned is scheduled for the 26 January 2025 meeting.

Actions Agreed

1. Commission Internal Audit to review the largest waiver in each service / directorate area and the report to be presented to the Committee and Directors for areas to attend.
2. For future reports to consider if possible, to provide analysis on repeated waivers.

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the contents of this report and provided comments to the Director of Finance.

5 Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Complaints & Corporate Complaints 2024/25

The Director of Housing submitted a report to the Governance and Audit Committee which presents the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Complaints & Corporate Complaints 2024/25.

The Head of Service, Charlotte McGraw, presented the Ombudsman and Complaints report for 2024/25, providing details on performance and planned improvements.

During the discussion, Members raised the following points:

- A member queried why housing and corporate complaints were managed and reported together. The Head of Service explained that housing represents most cases and the management of complaints within housing was not unusual.

- Members discussed complaint reporting sources, noting that some complaints arise through the customer service centre while others go directly to officers and the difficulty of ensuring all capturing all complaints. The Head of Service confirmed that all Ombudsman cases are captured but acknowledged that reporting systems could be streamlined.
- Members requested clearer distinction between complaint stages and clearer visibility on improvements required. Officers advised that system upgrades should support this within the next six months.
- A member asked about the progress on the new complaints management system. Officers confirmed that implementation is underway as part of a wider integration project.
- Members requested that the report on customer experiences strategy be shared with the Governance and Audit Committee, after being reported to the Overview Select Committee (OSC).
- Members noted that the report provided strong process detail but limited high-level insight into lessons learned from the Ombudsman cases. Officers agreed to include a one-page summary of upheld Ombudsman cases in future reports.
- Members commented that the Equalities Implications section appeared too generic and should better reflect the real-world impact of complaints.
- The Head of Service acknowledged the need for improved equalities data to track trends and improve outcomes.
- The Head of Finance confirmed that the Equalities Impact Assessments are undertaken as part of decision-making and future reports will make this clearer.

Actions

- To improve the reporting of the different types of complaints between ombudsman and look to improve the recording of complaints.
- In future reports to include additional information on what went wrong with ombudsman reports.

RESOLVED

The Committee reviewed the report and provided any comments for consideration.

6 Internal Audit Plan Update 2025/26

The Head of Internal Audit submitted a report to the Governance and Audit Committee which presented the Internal Audit Plan Report 2025-26.

The Head of Internal Audit provided an update on actions arising where thirteen actions were followed up, twelve satisfactory implemented and one action revised.

RESOLVED

The Committee is recommended to note the progress made in delivering the 2025/26 internal audit work programme, and plans for delivery over the remainder of the year.

7 Action Tracker

RESOLVED

The Action Tracker was noted.

8 Any Other Urgent Business

As there were no other urgent business, the meeting closed at 18.37pm.