

**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 10 JUNE 2026**



<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>2025/26 ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN</b>	
<b>Presented by</b>	Anna Crouch Head of Finance	
<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Audit and Governance Committee – 4 June 2025</b> <a href="#">External Audit Plan 2024/25</a>	<b>Public Report:</b> Yes
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There are no financial implications to be considered.	
	<b>Signed off by the Acting Section 151 Officer:</b> yes	
<b>Legal Implications</b>	There are no legal implications to be considered.	
	<b>Signed off by the Interim Monitoring Officer:</b> yes	
<b>Staffing and Corporate Implications</b>	There are no staffing and corporate implications to be considered.	
	<b>Signed off by the Head of Paid Service:</b> yes	
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	<p>The Committee’s Terms of Reference, as set out in Section D7 of the Council’s Constitution, describe how the Committee should consider relevant reports of the external auditor, in particular on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.</p> <p>The report provides details of the external auditors, Azets, audit planning report for the financial year 2025/26.</p>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>THAT THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE NOTES THE DETAILS OF THE EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2025/26.</b>	

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The External Audit Plan highlights the key elements of the proposed strategy and provides an overview of the planned scope and timing of the statutory external audit of the Council for the year ended 31 March 2026.
- 1.2 The work will include an audit of the 2025/26 Statement of Accounts as well as an assessment of value for money.
- 1.3 One of the key objectives of the External Audit Plan (Appendix A) is for Azets to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements are as a whole free from material misstatement and prepared in all material respects within the CIPFA Accounting Code of Practice.

1.4 Representatives from Azets will be presenting the Plan at this meeting.

<b>Policies and other considerations, as appropriate</b>	
Council Priorities:	A Well-Run Council
Policy Considerations:	None
Safeguarding:	None
Equalities/Diversity:	None
Customer Impact:	None
Economic and Social Impact:	None
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon	None
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	None
Risks:	<p>Without an external audit plan, there is a higher risk of financial mismanagement. External audits provide an independent review of financial statements, ensuring accuracy and compliance with regulations. Without this oversight, errors or fraudulent activities may go undetected, leading to significant financial losses.</p> <p>External audits help maintain transparency and accountability in the management of public funds. External audits ensure that a local authority complies with relevant laws and regulations. Without an audit plan, there is a risk of non-compliance, which can lead to legal penalties, fines, and other regulatory actions. This can further strain the authority's resources and reputation.</p> <p>External audits contribute to good governance by evaluating internal controls and risk management processes. Without an audit plan, there may be weaknesses in governance structures, leading to ineffective management and decision-making. This can hinder the authority's ability to achieve its objectives and deliver services effectively.</p>
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