

AC11. How Councils Work – Safeguarding Money

The audit committee considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer presenting the key messages from the Accounts Commission's "Safeguarding public money: are you getting it right?" report published in April 2019.

The report reinforced the importance of having effective internal controls. The complex and challenging financial environment meant that difficult decisions were required to allocate resources. The report emphasised that understanding the impact of these decisions "requires an organisational culture that is open to candid discussions about risks and recognises the importance of scrutinising decisions".

The report covered three sections:-

Part 1 – Internal controls help councils to manage risk

Part 2 – Weak controls can have serious consequences

Part 3 – Officers and councillors both have important roles

Checklists to help board members think about the control areas highlighted in the report, for example Audit Committee and Internal Audit were included as an appendix to the report.

Decision

The committee noted the report.