



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 9 APRIL 2026
Subject	EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2025/2026
Wards affected	None
Accountable member	Patrick Coleman, Cabinet Member for Finance Email: patrick.coleman@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer Email: david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant and Deputy S151 Officer Email: michelle.burge@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To receive the 2025/2026 Audit Plan from Bishop Fleming, the Council's external auditors.
Annexes	Annex A – 2025/26 External Audit Plan
Recommendation(s)	That Audit and Governance Committee resolves to: 1. Consider and note the 2025/2026 External Audit Plan.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivering Good Services
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Deputy Chief Executive and S.151 Officer



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** Each year, external audit are required to provide the Audit and Governance Committee with an:
- overview of the nature and scope of the audit; and
 - bring to their attention the key aspects of the audit.
- 1.2** The scope of the work is set in accordance with the National Audit Office's Code of Audit Practice (the Code) and International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK). External audit are required to provide an independent opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council at the year end and of its expenditure and income for the year. Their opinion also confirms whether the accounts have been properly prepared in line with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025/26 and in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.
- 1.3** Bishop Fleming is also required to satisfy themselves that the Council has made proper arrangement for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources and report on the arrangements in place in respect of financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1** The annex to the report contains the External Audit Plan for the year ended 31 March 2025.
- 2.2** The plan outlines the key financial risks that could potentially result in a material misstatement within the draft statement of accounts and highlights the external auditor's assessment of materiality.
- 2.3** Materiality for the 2025/2026 statements has been set at £1.075m. Misstatement either individually or in aggregate above the materiality level could reasonably be expected to influence the users understanding of the financial statement and/or decisions taken based on them. The materiality level applies to both monetary and disclosure requirements and adherence to acceptable accounting practice and applicable law.
- 2.4** Planning work on the Council's value-for-money arrangements has identified a significant risk relating to the Council's procurement processes, as previously



reported in the 2024/2025 Auditor's Annual Report. Bishop Fleming will undertake follow-up work to assess the Council's progress in implementing the recommendations arising from this previously reported weakness.

- 2.5** A representative from Bishop Fleming will be attending the meeting to present the plan and answer any questions.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1** None.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** The audit fee for 2024/25 is £155,563 and will be met from the 2025/26 budget provision.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** None directly arising from this report.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1** The audit plan states that the audit fee is 'based on the expectation that complete and materially accurate financial statements, with supporting working papers, will be available within agreed timeframes and the audit reflects as far as possible the previous assessment of audit risk and complexity. The Deputy Chief Executive has requested that Bishop Fleming provide advanced notice of any work which is likely to incur additional audit fees.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 7.1** None directly arising from this report.

8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** None directly arising from this report.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1** None

(END)