



**COBRA RESOURCES PLC**

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**AUDIT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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## **1. RESPONSIBILITY**

The audit committee (the "**Committee**") of Cobra Resources plc (the "**Company**" and such term shall, as the context requires, include any group companies) is responsible for the making of recommendations to the Board on the appointment of auditors and the auditor's fee, for ensuring that the financial performance of the Company and its subsidiaries from time to time (the "**Group**") is properly monitored and reported, and for meeting with the auditors. The Committee is responsible for the Group's internal controls and risk management systems, as set out in the Corporate Governance Code (2018 edition) published by the Quoted Companies Alliance (the "**QCA Code**") and the whistle-blowing and employee fraud procedures and internal and external audits of the Group.

## **2. MEMBERSHIP**

2.1 The Committee shall comprise at least two members. Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the board of directors of the Company (the "**Board**"), on the recommendation of the nomination committee or the Board in consultation with the chair of the Committee.

2.2 At least two members of the Committee shall be independent non-executive directors, and at least one member of the Committee shall have recent and relevant financial experience and with competence in accounting and/or auditing.

2.3 Only members of the Committee have the right to attend Committee meetings. However, the head of internal audit or equivalent (to the extent appointed) and external audit lead partner will be invited to attend meetings of the Committee on a regular basis and other non-members, including the finance director or equivalent, may be invited to attend all or part of any meeting as and when appropriate and necessary.

2.4 The Board shall appoint the chair of the Committee. In the absence of the Committee chair and/or an appointed deputy, the remaining members present shall elect one of themselves to chair the meeting.

## **3. SECRETARY**

The company secretary, or their nominee, or another person deemed appropriate by the Committee shall act as the secretary of the Committee and will ensure that the Committee receives information and papers in a timely manner to enable full and proper consideration to be given to issues.

## **4. QUORUM**

The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be two members.

## **5. VOTING**

Subject to these terms of reference:

- (a) a decision is taken at a meeting of the Committee by a majority of the votes of the members of the Committee who are participating in the meeting; and

(b) each member of the Committee participating in the meeting has one vote.

## **6. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

6.1 The Committee shall meet at least twice a year at appropriate intervals in the financial reporting and audit cycle and otherwise as required.

6.2 Outside of the formal meeting programme, the chair of the Committee, and to a lesser extent the other Committee members, will maintain a dialogue with key individuals involved in the Company's governance, including the chair of the Board and the external audit lead partner.

## **7. NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

7.1 Meetings of the Committee shall be convened by the secretary of the Committee at the request of any of its members or at the request of the external audit lead partner or head of internal audit or equivalent (to the extent appointed), if they consider it necessary.

7.2 Unless otherwise agreed by the Committee, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date together with an agenda of items to be discussed, shall be forwarded to each member of the Committee no later than five working days before the date of the meeting. Supporting papers shall be sent to Committee members at the same time.

7.3 Notices, agendas and supporting papers can be sent in electronic form where the recipient has agreed to receive documents in such a way.

## **8. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

8.1 Each member of the Committee must, at or prior to the commencement of each meeting of the Committee, disclose to the Committee any interest that they have in any matter to be considered at the meeting.

8.2 A member of the Committee must not participate in any discussions concerning, and is not entitled to vote in relation to, any matter to be considered at a meeting of the Committee in which they have a direct or indirect interest unless that interest cannot reasonably be regarded as likely to give rise to a conflict of interest.

## **9. MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

9.1 The secretary of the Committee shall minute the proceedings and decisions of all meetings of the Committee, including recording the names of those present and in attendance.

9.2 Draft minutes of Committee meetings shall be agreed with the chair of the Committee and then circulated promptly to all members of the Committee unless it would be inappropriate to do so in the opinion of the chair of the Committee.

## **10. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The chair of the Committee should attend the annual general meeting of the Company to answer shareholder questions.

## **11. DUTIES**

The Committee should have oversight of the group as a whole and, unless required otherwise by regulation, carry out the duties below for the parent company, major subsidiary undertakings and the Group as a whole.

## **12. FINANCIAL REPORTING**

12.1 The Committee shall monitor the integrity of the financial statements of the Group, including its annual and half-yearly reports, interim management statements, preliminary announcements and any other formal statements relating to its financial performance, and review and reporting to the Board on significant financial reporting issues and judgments which those statements contain having regard to matters communicated to it by the auditor.

12.2 In particular, the Committee shall review and challenge where necessary:

- (a) the application of significant accounting policies and any changes to them;
- (b) the methods used to account for significant or unusual transactions where different approaches are possible;
- (c) whether the Group has adopted appropriate accounting policies and made appropriate estimates and judgments, taking into account the external auditor's views on the financial statements;
- (d) all material information presented with the financial statements, including the strategic report and the corporate governance statements relating to the audit and to risk management;
- (e) the payment of any dividend. The Committee should consider the legality of any proposed dividend and the ability to pay such dividend and remain a going concern; and
- (f) whether all other information requirements set out in the QCA Code have been met.

12.3 The Committee shall review any other statement requiring Board approval which contain financial information first, where to carry out a review prior to Board approval would be practicable and consistent with any prompt reporting requirements under any law or regulation, including, but not limited to, the Disclosure Guidance and Transparency Rules (the "DTRs") of the Financial Conduct Authority (the "FCA").

12.4 Where the Committee is not satisfied with any aspect of the proposed financial reporting by the Group, it shall report its views to the Board.

## **13. NARRATIVE REPORTING**

Where requested by the Board, the Committee should review the content of the annual report and accounts and advise the Board on whether, taken as a whole, it is fair, balanced and understandable and provides the information necessary for shareholders to assess the

Group's performance, business model and strategy and whether it informs the Board's statement in the annual report on these matters that is required under the QCA Code.

#### **14. INTERNAL CONTROLS AND RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

The Committee shall

- (a) keep under review the Group's internal financial controls that identify, assess, manage and monitor financial risks, and other internal control and risk management systems;
- (b) provide support and oversight on the effectiveness of the risk management and internal control systems put in place by the Board; and
- (c) review and approve the statements to be included in the annual report concerning internal controls, risk management and the viability statement.

#### **15. COMPLIANCE, WHISTLEBLOWING AND FRAUD**

The Committee shall:

- (a) review the adequacy and security of the Group's arrangements for its employees and contractors to raise concerns, in confidence, about possible wrongdoing in financial reporting or other matters. The Committee shall ensure that these arrangements allow proportionate and independent investigation of such matters and appropriate follow up action;
- (b) review the Group's procedures for detecting fraud;
- (c) review the Group's systems and controls for the prevention of bribery and receive reports on non-compliance; and
- (d) review regular reports from the Compliance Officer and keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of the Group's compliance function.

#### **16. INTERNAL AUDIT**

The Committee shall:

- (a) approve the appointment or termination of appointment of the head of internal audit or equivalent (to the extent appointed);
- (b) review and approve the role and mandate of internal audit, monitor and review the effectiveness of its work, and annually approve the internal audit charter ensuring it is appropriate for the current needs of the organisation;
- (c) review and approve the annual internal audit plan to ensure it is aligned to the key risks of the business, and receive regular reports on work carried out;
- (d) ensure internal audit has unrestricted scope, the necessary resources and access to information to enable it to fulfil its mandate, ensure there is open communication

between different functions and that the internal audit function evaluates the effectiveness of these functions as part of its internal audit plan, and ensure that the internal audit function is equipped to perform in accordance with appropriate professional standards for internal auditors;

- (e) ensure the internal auditor has direct access to the chair of the Board and to the chair of the Committee, providing independence from the executive and accountability to the Committee;
- (f) carry out an annual assessment of the appropriateness of creating an internal audit department; and
- (g) carry out an annual assessment of the effectiveness of the internal audit functions, and as part of this assessment:
  - (i) meet with the head of internal audit or equivalent (to the extent appointed) without the presence of management to discuss the effectiveness of the function;
  - (ii) review and assess the annual internal audit work plan;
  - (iii) receive a report on the results of the work of the head of internal audit or equivalent (to the extent appointed);
  - (iv) determine whether it is satisfied that the quality, experience and expertise of internal audit is appropriate for the business;
  - (v) review the actions taken by management to implement the recommendations of internal audit and to support the effective working of the internal audit function;
  - (vi) monitor and assess the role and effectiveness of the internal audit function in the overall context of the Group's risk management system and the work of compliance, finance and the external auditor; and
  - (vii) consider whether an independent, third party review of processes is appropriate.

## **17. EXTERNAL AUDIT**

The Committee shall:

- (a) consider and make recommendations to the Board, to be put to shareholders for approval at the annual general meeting, in relation to the appointment, re-appointment and removal of the Group's external auditor, and such external auditor's fee;
- (b) develop and oversee the selection procedure for the appointment of the audit firm, ensuring that all tendering firms have access to all necessary information and individuals during the tendering process;

- (c) if an external auditor resigns, investigate the issues leading to this and decide whether any action is required;
- (d) oversee the relationship with the external auditor. In this context the Committee shall:
  - (i) approve their remuneration, including both fees for audit and non-audit services, and ensure that the level of fees is appropriate to enable an effective and high-quality audit to be conducted; and
  - (ii) approve their terms of engagement, including any engagement letter issued at the start of each audit and the scope of the audit;
- (e) assess annually the external auditor's independence and objectivity taking into account applicable laws and regulation, the Financial Reporting Council ("**FRC**") Ethical Standard and other professional requirements and the group's relationship with the auditor as a whole, including any threats to the auditor's independence and the safeguards applied to mitigate those threats including the provision of any non-audit services;
- (f) satisfy itself that there are no relationships between the auditor and the Company (other than in the ordinary course of business) which could adversely affect the auditor's independence and objectivity;
- (g) agree with the Board a policy on the employment of former employees of the Group's auditor, taking into account the FRC Ethical Standard and legal requirements, and monitoring the implementation thereof;
- (h) monitor the auditor's processes for maintaining independence, its compliance with relevant laws and regulation, other professional requirements and the FRC Ethical Standard, including the guidance on the rotation of audit partner and staff;
- (i) monitor the level of fees paid by the Group to the external auditor compared to the overall fee income of the firm, office and partner and assess these in the context of relevant legal, professional and regulatory requirements, guidance and the FRC Ethical Standard;
- (j) assess annually the qualifications, expertise and resources, and independence of the external auditor and the effectiveness of the external audit process, which shall include a report from the external auditor on their own internal quality procedures;
- (k) seek to ensure coordination of the external audit with the activities of the internal audit function;
- (l) evaluate the risks to the quality and effectiveness of the financial reporting process in the light of the external auditor's communications with the Committee;
- (m) develop and recommend to the Board the Group's formal policy on the provision of non-audit services by the auditor, including approval of non-audit services by the Committee and specifying the types of non-audit service to be pre-approved, and

assessment of whether non-audit services have a direct or material effect on the audited financial statements. The policy should include consideration of the following matters:

- (i) threats to the independence and objectivity of the external auditor and any safeguards in place;
  - (ii) the nature of the non-audit services;
  - (iii) whether the external audit firm is the most suitable supplier of the non-audit service;
  - (iv) the fees for the non-audit services, both individually and in aggregate, relative to the audit fee; and
  - (v) the criteria governing compensation;
- (n) meet regularly with the external auditor (including once at the planning stage before the audit and once after the audit at the reporting stage) and, at least once a year, meet with the external auditor without management (including any person(s) discharging executive functions appointed to the Committee from time to time) being present, to discuss the auditor's remit and any issues arising from the audit;
- (o) discuss with the external auditor the factors that could affect audit quality and review and approve the annual audit plan, ensuring it is consistent with the scope of the audit engagement, having regard to the seniority, expertise and experience of the audit team;
- (p) review the findings of the audit with the external auditor. This shall include but not be limited to, the following:
- (i) a discussion of any major issues which arose during the audit;
  - (ii) the auditor's explanation of how the risks to audit quality were addressed;
  - (iii) key accounting and audit judgments;
  - (iv) the auditor's view of their interactions with senior management; and
  - (v) levels of errors identified during the audit;
- (q) review any representation letter(s) requested by the external auditor before they are signed by management;
- (r) review the management letter and management's response to the auditor's findings and recommendations; and
- (s) review the effectiveness of the audit process, including an assessment of the quality of the audit, the handling of key judgments by the auditor, and the auditor's response to questions from the Committee.

## **18. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 18.1 The chair of the Committee shall report formally to the Board on its proceedings after each meeting on all matters within its duties and responsibilities and shall also formally report to the Board on how it has discharged its responsibilities. This report shall include:
- (a) the significant issues that it considered in relation to the financial statements (required under paragraph 12.1) and how these were addressed;
  - (b) its assessment of the effectiveness of the external audit process (required under paragraph 17(j)), the approach taken to the appointment or reappointment of the external auditor, length of tenure of audit firm, when a tender was last conducted and advance notice of any retendering plans; and
  - (c) any other issues on which the Board has requested the Committee's opinion.
- 18.2 The Committee shall make whatever recommendations to the Board it deems appropriate on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed.
- 18.3 The Committee shall compile a report on its activities to be included in the Group's annual report. The report should include an explanation of how the Committee has addressed the effectiveness of the external audit process; the significant issues that the Committee considered in relation to the financial statements and how these issues were addressed, having regard to matters communicated to it by the auditor; and all other information requirements set out in the QCA Code.
- 18.4 In the compiling the reports referred to in paragraphs 18.1 and 18.3, the Committee should exercise judgment in deciding which of the issues it considers in relation to the financial statements are significant, but should include at least those matters that have informed the Board's assessment of whether the Group is a going concern and the inputs to the Board's viability statement. The report to shareholders need not repeat information disclosed elsewhere in the annual report and accounts, but could provide cross-references to that information.

## **19. OTHER MATTERS**

The Committee shall:

- (a) have access to sufficient resources in order to carry out its duties, including access to the company secretary for assistance as required;
- (b) be provided with appropriate and timely training, both in the form of an induction programme for new members and on an ongoing basis for all members;
- (c) give due consideration to laws and regulations, the provisions of the QCA Code and the requirements of the DTRs and the Listing Rules of the FCA and any other applicable rules, as appropriate;
- (d) be responsible for co-ordination of the internal and external auditors;

- (e) oversee any investigation of activities which are within its terms of reference;
- (f) work and liaise as necessary with all other Board committees, taking particular account of the impact of risk management and internal controls being delegated to different committees; and
- (g) arrange for periodic reviews of its own performance and, at least annually, review its constitution and terms of reference to ensure it is operating at maximum effectiveness and recommend any changes it considers necessary to the Board.

## **20. AUTHORITY**

The Committee is authorised to:

- (a) seek any information it requires from any employee of the Company in order to perform its duties;
- (b) obtain, at the Company's expense, independent legal, accounting or other professional advice on any matter it believes it necessary to do so;
- (c) call any employee to be questioned at a meeting of the Committee as and when required; and
- (d) have the right to publish in the Company's annual report, details of any issues that cannot be resolved between the Committee and the Board.

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