

Internal Audit Progress Report (February 2024)

Audit & Scrutiny Committee – Thursday 11 April 2024

Report of: Neil Pitman – Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership
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Purpose: For information

Publication status: Unrestricted

Wards affected: All

Executive summary:

This report provides an overview of internal audit activity against assurance work completed in accordance with the approved audit plan for 2023-24 and to provide an overview of the outstanding management actions.

This report supports the Council's priority of: Building a better Council

Contact officer Mark Hak-Sanders – Director of Resources (Section 151)
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Recommendation to Committee:

That the Committee notes the Internal Audit Progress Report – February 2024

Reason for recommendation:

In accordance with proper internal audit practices (Public Sector Internal Audit Standards), the Chief Internal Auditor is required to provide a written status report to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee.

Introduction and background

- 1 Under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, the Council is responsible for:
 - ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of functions and includes arrangements for the management of risk; and
 - undertaking an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards and guidance.

- 2 In accordance with proper internal audit practices (Public Sector Internal Audit Standards), the Chief Internal Auditor is required to provide a written status report to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee, summarising:
 - The status of 'live' internal audit reports (outstanding management actions);
 - an update on progress against the annual audit plan;
 - a summary of internal audit performance, planning and resourcing issues; and a summary of significant issues that may impact on the Chief Internal Auditor's annual opinion.

- 3 Appendix A summarises the activities of internal audit for the period up to the end of February 2024.

- 4 The progress report provides a clear and transparent articulation of internal audit activity, performance, and outcomes during the period up to the end of February 2024.

Key implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

The Progress Report on Internal Audit provides the Council an important insight into areas of risk for the Council where its key processes are not functioning effectively, and their improvement must be prioritised. There are however no direct financial implications of this report.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 came into effect on 1 April 2015 and require councils to undertake an effective Internal Audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards or guidance.

The Progress Report on Internal Audit is intended to ensure that effective systems of internal control are in place. This protects the Council and its Officers and provides an assurance to stakeholders and residents regarding the security of the Council's operations.

Equality

There are no equality implications associated within this report.

Climate change

There are no environmental / sustainability implications associated with this report.

Appendices

Appendix 'A' – Internal Audit Progress Report – February 2024

Background papers

None.