

Internal Audit Annual Report & Opinion 2020-21

Audit & Scrutiny Committee – Thursday 30 September 2021

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:

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Audit & Scrutiny Committee with the Chief Internal Auditors opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of risk management, internal control and governance for the financial year 2020/21.

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

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Recommendation to Committee:

That the Committee notes the Internal Audit Annual Report & Opinion 2020/21

Reason for recommendation:

In accordance with proper internal audit practices, the Chief Internal Auditor is required to provide a written report reviewing the effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk and control and to assist in producing the Annual Governance Statement.

Introduction and background

- 1 The Annual Report for 2020/21 (attached at Appendix 1) provides the Chief Internal Auditor's opinion on the effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk and control and summarises audit work from which that opinion is derived for the year 2020/21.
- 2 The Audit & Scrutiny Committee's attention is drawn to the following points:
 - Internal audit was compliant with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards during 2020/21;
 - The internal audit plan for 2020/21 has been substantially delivered; and
 - The Council's framework of governance, risk management and management control are considered to be 'Limited'.
- 3 Where internal audit work identified areas where management controls could be improved or where systems and laid down procedures were not fully followed, corrective actions and a timescale for improvement were agreed with the responsible managers.

Key implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

The Annual Report & Opinion 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.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

There are no direct legal implications of the report. The Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015 require that the findings of the audit review be considered by Council or one of its committees. The Audit and Scrutiny Committee is the designated committee for this purpose.

The Council has set out in the annual governance statement how it plans to address any areas for improvement.

Equality

In consideration of impacts under the Public-Sector Equality Duty the proposal within this report do not have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups on the community.

Climate change

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

Appendices

Appendix 'A' – Internal Audit Annual Report & Opinion 2020/21

Background papers

None.