
ANNUAL REPORT OF INTERNAL AUDIT FOR 2025/26

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Craig Warhurst
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	James Walton, Director of Finance and s151 officer
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Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	None
Relevant Council Priority	Good Governance & Risk Management underpins all the Strategic Purposes.
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to RESOLVE to confirm that they are assured having considered the report.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations and the Internal Audit Standards (the Standards) require the Head of Internal Audit to provide an annual Internal Audit Opinion and report that can be used by the organisation to inform its Annual Governance Statement. The Standards also specify that the report must contain:

- An internal audit opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk and control framework (i.e. the control environment);
- A summary of the audit work from which the opinion is derived and any work by other assurance providers upon which reliance is placed; and
- A statement on the extent of conformance with the Standards including progress against the improvement plan resulting from any external assessments.

- 2.2 **Appendix 1** to this report provides the Internal Audit Annual Report; this includes the Head of Internal Audit's opinion on the control environment for 2025/26 and the basis for this opinion.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising out of this report.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council is required under the Accounts and Audit Regulations to "maintain in accordance with proper practices an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control".

To aid compliance with the regulation, the Global Internal Audit Standards detail that "internal auditing protects and enhances organisational value by providing objective assurance and advisory services which enhances the effectiveness of the organisation's governance, risk management and control environment".

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES – IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 5.1 Good governance along with risk management underpin all the Corporate strategic purposes. This report provides an independent assurance over certain aspects of the Council's operations.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.1 There are no implications arising out of this report.

Operational Implications

- 6.2 There are no new operational implications arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

This report includes an independent assessment of the Council's framework in place for the management of risk.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix 1 shows the Annual Report of Internal Audit for 2025/26