

Meeting:	Audit and governance committee
Meeting date:	21 March 2018
Title of report:	Internal audit plan 2018-19
Report by:	Chief finance officer/ Chief internal auditor

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

All wards

Purpose and summary

The committee is responsible for considering a summary of internal audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance should be satisfied with the level of assurance it can give over the council's corporate governance arrangements.

To ensure the council complies with recommended best practice as set out in the PSIAS.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) the proposed internal audit plan 2018-19 at appendix b be considered and the committee determine any recommendations it wishes to make regarding the level and range of activity proposed in order that the work carried out may give a satisfactory level of assurance over the council's corporate governance arrangements.**

Alternative options

1. The alternative option of not considering the plan would mean we are not meeting the requirements of the public sector internal audit standards (PSIAS).
2. The content of the plan may be amended; however, in doing so regard should be had to the overall prioritisation of resources, level of risk and/or evidence of control weakness.

Key considerations

3. The internal audit plan report 2018-19 is set out in appendix A.
4. The internal audit plan 2018-19 is set out in appendix B.
5. The plan sets out the work required for internal audit to give an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's risk management, governance and internal control arrangements.

Community impact

6. In accordance with the council's code of corporate governance the council is committed to implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability. The council must ensure that those making decisions and delivering services are accountable for them. To support effective accountability the council is committed to reporting on actions completed and outcomes achieved, and ensuring stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the council plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner. External and internal audit contribute to effective accountability. The internal audit annual plan provides clarity about where the internal audit resource will focus its attention through the coming year and how this activity will support assurance and improvement to enable the council to achieve its corporate priorities.

Equality duty

7. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
8. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. As this is a decision on back office functions, we do not believe that it will have an impact on our equality duty.

Resource implications

9. There is also a risk that there may be insufficient resources available to deliver the planned programme of audit work. To mitigate this, the plan has been based on an assessment of the resources available from the South West Audit Partnership (SWAP). Regular meetings will be held between the SWAP assistant director and the chief finance officer which allows regular monitoring of resource availability.

Legal implications

10. In accordance with section 5 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, the council must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account the public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.

Risk management

11. There is the risk that the annual internal audit plan does not take into account the key issues and risks facing the council and does not provide adequate coverage of the council's key systems for the head of internal audit to form an opinion on the council's control environment. The process by which the plan has been compiled mitigates this risk.

Consultees

12. The views of the directors, chief finance officer and other key officers have informed development of the proposed internal audit plan.

Appendices

Appendix A – Internal audit plan report 2018-19

Appendix B – Internal audit plan 2018-19

Background papers

None identified.