

**Wednesday, 26 June 2024**

**Report of the Audit Manager**

**Internal Audit Annual Report and Quarterly Update for 2023/24**

**Exempt Information**

None.

**Purpose**

This report comprises Internal Audit's Annual Report (**Appendix 1**), which includes results for Quarter 4 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

**Recommendations**

**It is recommended that the Committee endorse the Internal Audit's Annual Report (Appendix 1), which includes the results for the Quarter 4 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.**

**Executive Summary**

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require councils to undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of their risk management, control and governance process, taking into account both Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards or guidance.

This opinion forms part of the framework of assurances that is received by the Council and should be used to help inform the annual governance statement. Internal Audit also has an independent and objective consultancy role to help managers improve risk management, governance and control.

In giving the annual audit opinion 2023/24, it should be noted that assurance can never be absolute. The most that the internal audit service can provide the council is a reasonable assurance that there are no major weaknesses in risk management, governance and control processes.

Despite resourcing issues during the year, the section delivered 86% of the audit plan for 2023/24 by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. A number of performance indicators were missed during the year and these are outlined in **Appendix 1** of this report, together with further detail of the work undertaken by the section.

Annual Internal Audit Opinion

On the basis of audit work completed, Internal Audit's opinion on the council's framework of governance, risk management and internal control is reasonable in its overall design and effectiveness. Certain weaknesses and exceptions were highlighted by audit work. These matters have been discussed with management, to whom recommendations have been made. All these have been, or are in the process of being addressed.

Specific Issues

No specific issues have been highlighted through work undertaken by internal audit during the year.

### **Options Considered**

None.

### **Resource Implications**

None.

### **Legal/Risk Implications Background**

Failure to report would lead to non-compliance with the requirements of the Annual Governance Statement and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

### **Equalities Implications**

None.

### **Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)**

None.

### **Background Information**

None.

### **Report Author**

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### **List of Background Papers**

### **Appendices**

**Appendix 1 – Internal Audit Annual Report (including Quarter 4 2023/24 Progress Results)**