

AUDIT COMMITTEE

28 SEPTEMBER 2023

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN (Q3-Q4) 2023-24

Report from: James Larkin, Head of Audit & Counter Fraud Shared Service
(Chief Audit Executive)

Summary

This report presents for approval the Internal Audit Plan (Q3-Q4) 2023-24.

1. Recommendation

1.1. The Committee is recommended to approve the Internal Audit Plan (Q3-Q4) 2023-24 presented at Appendix 1.

2. Budget and policy framework

2.1. Council delegates responsibility for the oversight and monitoring of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit & Counter Fraud Shared Service to the Audit Committee.

3. Background

3.1. The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (Standards) require that: The Chief Audit Executive (CAE) must establish risk-based plans to determine the priorities of the internal audit activity, consistent with the organisation's goals. A risk-based plan has been prepared for the authority to meet this requirement. Since 1 March 2016, the council's internal audit activity has been delivered by the Internal Audit & Counter Fraud Shared Service with Gravesham Borough Council.

4. Internal Audit Plan (Q3-Q4) 2023-24

4.1. A provisional plan for 2023-24 was prepared in line with the requirements of the Standards and was based on a risk assessment of all auditable areas within the council that was undertaken in January 2023. Members approved a plan for Q1-Q2 based on that risk assessment, with a commitment that the risk assessment would be updated in July 2023 and the provisional plan refreshed to take account of any changes in the risk landscape to produce a plan for Q3-Q4.

4.2. The projected resource budget has been refreshed to take into account impacts on the level of resource that was originally predicted for 2023-24 and the risk assessment has been updated to take into account any necessary changes. The provisional plan has been amended include the highest scoring areas and ensure that the remaining available Internal Audit resources are directed to the council's highest areas of risk.

4.3. The plan for Q3-Q4 of 2023-24 is presented at Appendix 1.

5. Risk management

5.1. The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require that: The chief audit executive must establish risk-based plans to determine the priorities of the internal audit activity, consistent with the organisation's goals. The Internal Audit Plan is intended to ensure that the work of the team is effectively directed and is in line with the organisation's goals. Member approval of the plan ensures the status of the plan is maintained.

6. Financial implications

6.1. An adequate and effective Internal Audit function provides the council with assurance on the proper, economic, efficient, and effective use of council resources in delivery of services.

7. Legal implications

7.1. The Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 require local authorities 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 Section 151 Officer of a local authority is responsible for establishing the internal audit service. Gravesham Borough Council has delegated this responsibility to the Section 151 Officer of Medway Council to deliver internal audit services through the Shared Service to both authorities.

Lead officer contact

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Internal Audit Plan (Q3-Q4) 2023-24

Background papers

None