INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2024/25

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor S. Colella
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Peter Carpenter, S151 Officer
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Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	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**

1.1 **The Audit, Standards and Governance Committee notes the report.**

2. **BACKGROUND**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update of Internal Audit's progress towards meeting its objectives in the audit plan for 2024/25 as approved by the Audit Standards and Governance Committee on 23rd May 2024.

2.2 The Council has a legal duty to maintain an adequate and effective Internal Audit service. The primary role of Internal Audit is to provide independent assurance that the Council has put in place appropriately designed internal controls to ensure that:

   • The Council's assets and interests are safeguarded;

   • Reliable records are maintained;

   • Council policies, procedures and directives are adhered to; and

   • Services are delivered in an efficient, effective and economic manner

2.3   The Internal Audit plan for 2024/25 was approved by the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee on 23rd May 2024. Progress against delivery of that plan is set out at Appendix A. The plan is on track to be delivered.

2.4   The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require that any significant changes to the internal audit plan must be approved by the Audit Committee. It is also good practice to continually review the audit plan in light of emerging issues, to ensure that the work of internal audit adds maximum value by proactively responding to and aligning its work with the most significant risks facing the organisation. There are no proposed amendments to the internal audit plan at this time.

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 Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2018 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 Institute of Internal Auditors Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (as amended) details that "Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes".

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**

The main risks associated with the details included in this report are to:

- Insufficiently complete the planned programme of audit work within the financial year leading to an inability to produce an annual opinion; and,
- Continuous provision of an internal audit service is not maintained.

8. **APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1 ~ Internal Audit Progress Report
Appendix 2 – Internal Audit Report Procurement & Contract Management