

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

DATE	25/07/2024
REPORT OF	Head of Audit and Assurance
SUBJECT	Internal Audit Plan 2024/25
STATUS	Open

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIM

An effective Internal Audit service contributes to the achievement of the Council's strategic objectives by assessing, providing comment and, if relevant, recommending improvement to the Council's assurance and control frameworks. The Internal Audit plan has also been designed to provide assurances on strategic risks and the supporting governance framework.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2024 the Audit and Governance Committee received the outline Internal Audit Plan 2024/25. This report provides the Audit and Governance Committee with an update on, including greater detail of the audits expected to be carried out.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To note and provide comment on the content of the Internal Audit Plan.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The Committee's responsibilities include reviewing Internal Audit's plan of work the work, including seek assurances on its compilation and the resources required. deliver it.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 17 April 2024 the Head of Audit and Assurance presented the outline Internal Audit Plan 2024/25. The report provided a summary of the audit priorities and activities for 2024/25, how it will be delivered and resourced, a commentary on the methodology for its compilation, and assurance on compliance with auditing standards.

[Internal Audit Plan 2024.25 April 2024](#)

- 1.2 As previously reported the section relating to strategic risks/ operational risks/ governance was subject to final discussion with senior management as well as further development so any risks raised through the completion of the Annual Governance Statement can be factored into the Plan. It was reported that an updated detailed plan will be shared with the Audit and Governance Committee later in the year.
- 1.3 The updated Audit Plan 2024/25 is attached (appendix 1). This includes a breakdown of the planned audits relating to strategic risks/ operational risks/ governance and their links to Council Plan Outcomes. In most cases the plan includes those audits which were deferred from 2023/24.

1.4 A summary of the audit plan, including changes in planned days since March 2024, is shown in the table below:

Area	Planned days		Comments
	April 2024	July 2024	
Strategic Outcomes and Governance	350	319	Confirmed following completion of the audit planning review
Financial systems	120	100	
ICT	35	35	
Procurement and contract management	25	25	
Probity and Counter Fraud	50	50	
Grant Certification	40	30	Amended estimate of time grants certification based on known certification requirements
Advisory	60	50	
Follow up	30	30	Estimate based on limited assurance audits which will require follow up
Management time	75	75	
Work ongoing as of 30 June 2024 to be reported in 2024/25		37	Time required to complete 2023/24 audits.
Contingency	65	74	
Total	850	825	Estimate of time required to provide a risk-based, standards compliant audit opinion by 31 May 2025.

1.5 The plan has been designed to be completed by 31 May 2025 Although it is below the ideal level of resource if completed there will be sufficient coverage to deliver a risk-based, standards compliant audit opinion. However, as the Committee will be aware there have been resource difficulties in 2023/24 which will make delivery challenging and delivery remains a risk. The mitigation in place intended to overcome these challenges, include:

- the planned recruitment of 3.5 staff across the shared service, plus the additional appointment of a graduate trainee from September 2024;
- the provision of additional support from third party audit providers- additional resource has been secured from May to September, and we have had approval for further support from October 2024 funded out of vacancies if required;

- additional contingency built into the plan to more easily absorb unanticipated changes such as unavoidable increases in resources required to complete audits or emerging risks and issues;
- work with services to improve the scheduling of audit work; and
- an ongoing review of internal audit's processes to allow resource to be used more efficiently and effectively and reduce the potential for overspends.

1.6 The delivery of the audit programme will be subject to continuous review, and we will provide regular update reports to this Committee. Any significant changes to the plan will be presented to future meetings, and particularly when the Interim Audit Report is presented January 2025

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

As highlighted in section 1 there are significant risks relating to the delivery of the audit plan. It will be dependent on successfully completing recruitment plans, to secure third party support if required, the continued engagement with services, and closely managing the time required to complete audits.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not applicable - the Audit and Governance Committee is required to regularly receive updates and receive assurances on the production and delivery of the internal audit plan.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

Reputational risk is one of the issues considered when scoring strategic risks. Where applicable controls and actions are in place to mitigate any relevant reputational risks identified as part of the overall risk.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Financial risk is one of the issues considered when scoring strategic risks. Where applicable controls and actions are in place to mitigate any relevant financial risks identified as part of the overall risk.

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

The plan includes a programme of work designed to assess the design and operation of governance and internal control in relation to Children's Services.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental issues are considered as part of the compilation of the audit plan and in carrying out in audit assignments. We will not be carrying a specific audit of the Council's arrangements for delivering its environmental outcomes as this was

carried out in 2023/24 and were identified.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications arising from the content of this report.

11. WARD IMPLICATIONS

Applicable to all wards.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Outline Audit Plan 2024/25 (April 2024)

13. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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Telephone: 01472 323799

Peter Hanmer
Head of Audit and Assurance

NELC Audit Plan 20224/25 at 20 June 2024

	Brief outline	Leadership Team Member	AD	Original days
Delivery of strategic outcomes and good governance	A risk based programme of audit reviews to provide assurance on the governance arrangements in place to deliver key strategic and service outcomes efficiently and effectively and ensure compliance with laws and regulations			319
Care Assessments and Reviews B/F	Assurance that individuals with a care need are subject to asset based assessment that results in a care plan, which is subject to review at appropriate intervals	Adults	Paul Bassett Adults	
Role of key officers- DAS	Assurance that the DAS has sufficient line of sight over statutory functions delegated via the S75 agreement	Adults	n/a	
Role of key officers- Principal Social Worker - Adults B/F	Assurance that the role of the Principal Social Worker is being effectively delivered across all settings and 9in accordance with best practice	Adults	John Allen , Principal Social Worker	
ASC data Quality and performance b/f	Assurance that data is effectively collected for all data returns required and to provide the DAS with performance information	Adults	Paul Bassett, Adults	
Adults debt management	Assurance that all debt owed is being effectively managed to payment received	Adults	Paul Bassett, Adults	
Single point of access and hospital team B/F	Assurance on the triage process for assessing care needs promptly particularly in relation to hospital discharge	Adults	Paul Bassett, Adults	
Council/ ICB Place Based Governance Arraignments	Assurance on the design and operation of the governance arrangements with Integrated Care Board	Adults	Paul Bassett, Adults	
Quality and contractual oversight of the commissioned market	Assurance the contract and quality management of the commissioned market effective as set out in contractual arrangements and policy	Adults	Paul Bassett, Adults	

	Brief outline	Leadership Team Member	AD	Original days
Transitions BF	Assurance on the effectiveness of partnership arrangements in place relating to the seamless transition of young persons from children's social care to adults social care	Adults and Children	Jenni Steel, Education and Inclusion	
Child Exploitation Risks outside the home B/F	Assurance that children are safeguarded from all risks of exploitation including those outside of the home	Children	Charlene Sykes, Safeguarding and Early Help	
Fostering and special guardianships B/F	Assurance on systems for recruitment and retention of foster carers, and that where placements are required procedures exist to identify special guardians and or potential fostering arrangements promptly	Children	Paul Cowling, Regulated Provision	
Front Door	Assurance that first contact with the council and triage process is working effectively to deliver services in accordance with revised thresholds	children	Charlene Sykes, Safeguarding and Early Help	
High Needs Block	Assurance on how demand and cost pressures on High Needs Expenditure are being managed	Children	Jenni Steel. Education and Inclusion	
Public Law Outline	Assurance that mechanisms are in place to ensure compliance with the Public Law outline between legal and children's services when working in the court process	Children	Charlene Sykes, Safeguarding and Early Help	
Supported families B/F	Assurance that all work with families is captured and there is an effective link to being able to claim payment by results for supporting families outcomes realised	Children	Charlene Sykes, Safeguarding and Early Help	

	Brief outline	Leadership Team Member	AD	Original days
Border Post	Provide assurance on the implementation of the new customs arrangements introduced in April 2024	Environment, Economy & Infrastructure	Kath Jickells, Environment	
Disabled Facilities Grants	Provide assurance on the systems in place to deal with applications for grant funded disabled adaptation works in line with legislation and the process for awarding contracts	Environment, Economy & Infrastructure	Paul Evans, Infrastructure	
EQUANS- transition arrangements	Provide assurance on the governance arrangements in place for the transfer of services provided by EQUANS to the council by July 2025	Environment, Economy & Infrastructure	Paul Evans, Infrastructure	
Grounds Maintenance	Provide assurance on the delivery of contracts the Council's Grounds Maintenance team provide to third parties	Environment, Economy & Infrastructure	Kath Jickells, Environment	
Regeneration projects and funding	Provide assurance on the delivery of grant funded regeneration projects, including assuring that expenditure in line with grant determinations	Environment, Economy & Infrastructure	Damien Jaines-White, Regeneration	
Tourism	Provide assurance on the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements to promote tourism	Environment, Economy & Infrastructure	Damien- Jaines White, Regeneration	
Waste disposal B/F	Assurance on the arrangements for waste disposal, including contract management, environmental responsibilities and VFM	Environment, Economy & Infrastructure	Kath Jickells, Environment	
Public Health Performance Information and data security (emphasis on suicide)	Assurance on the governance arrangements for delivery of the Cleethorpes masterplan, particularly the management of risks from working to short deadlines	Public Health	Geoff Barnes, Public Health	
Public Health- to be determined		Public Health	Geoff Barnes, Public Health	
School Nursing B/F	Assurance on the governance arrangements for school nursing with reference to good practice provided by the Local Government Association	Public Health	Diane Halton , Public Health	

	Brief outline	Leadership Team Member	AD	Original days
Data Quality	Provide Assurance on the Council's to ensure the quality of its data used to assess performance and aid decisions, using data maturity models.	Resources	Jo Robinson, Policy, Strategy and Resources	
Delivery of the commissioning plan	Provide assurance on the governance arrangements relating to the monitoring and delivery of the commissioning plan	Resources	Jo Robinson, Policy, Strategy and Resources	
Freeport	Provide ongoing assurance in relation to the Council's role as the accountable body	Resources	Simon Jones, Law and Governance	
Governance of the Delivery of the Capital Programme	Provide assurance on the governance arrangements to produce and the deliver the capital programme	Resources	Jo Robinson, Policy, Strategy and Resources	
Member Development	Provide assurance on how the Council supports and develops Members to carry out their role	Resources	Simon Jones, Law and Governance / Vicky Leach People and Culture	
Organisational Development/ People and Culture	Provide assurance on the development of the Council's Organisational Development strategy and supporting systems	Resources	Victoria Leach, People and Culture	
Risk management	Provide assurance on the Council's risk management arrangements	Resources	Simon Jones, Law and Governance	

	Brief outline	Leadership Team Member	AD	Original days
Financial systems	Providing assurance on the design and operation of the fundamental financial systems, including on a cyclical basis those systems which feed into them.			100
ICT	Providing assurance on the effectiveness of the Council's approach to ICT and Information governance, and key ICT systems.			35
Probity and counter fraud	Proactive and reactive work to support the Council's approach to anti-fraud and corruption, to provide assurance on the controls in place designed to prevent fraud in areas of high risk			50
Follow up	Follow up of previous actions via following up specific reports and sending reminders to managers about their outstanding actions, and receiving their responses			30
Advisory work	Providing advice and support on governance and internal control matters			50
Grants	Mandatory certification of grant claims,			30
Procurement and Contract Management	Providing assurance on the Council's procurement and contract management processes, including reviews of a sample of key procurement exercises			25
Audit Management				75
23/24 work not completed to be reported in 24/25				37
Contingency				74
Total				825