

## **REPORT TO AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**Date of Meeting: 23rd SEPTEMBER 2015**

**Report of: AUDIT MANAGERS**

**TITLE: INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL TO 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015**

### **Is this a Key Decision?**

No

\* One that affects finances over £1m or significantly affects two or more wards. If this is a key decision then the item must be on the appropriate forward plan of key decisions.

### **Is this an Executive or Council Function? COUNCIL**

#### **1. What is the report about?**

To report on internal audit work carried out during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015, to advise on overall progress against the Audit Plan and to report any emerging issues requiring consideration.

#### **2. Recommendations:**

That the Internal Audit Progress Report for the first quarter of the year 2015/16 be noted.

#### **3. Reasons for the recommendation:**

One of the roles of this committee is to review quarterly internal audit reports and the main issues arising and seek assurance from management that action has been taken, where necessary.

#### **4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.**

None.

#### **5. Section 151 Officer comments:**

The significant issue to note is that there is significant work still to be done in respect of our key income streams and ensuring that the control environment is improved. It is important that the recommendations are implemented to time and that they are monitored to ensure that there is improvement in these areas.

#### **6. What are the legal aspects?**

There are no legal implications.

#### **7. Monitoring Officer's comments:**

The report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

#### **8. Report details:**

This Committee is responsible for the implementation and active monitoring of audit processes and actions, which includes performance against the annual audit plan,

reviewing quarterly internal audit progress reports and seeking responses and assurance from management regarding audit recommendations that have not been accepted or those not implemented within a reasonable timescale. The 2015/16 Audit Plan was approved at this Committee on 11th March 2015.

The purpose of Internal Audit is to provide an independent and objective review of the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for internal control, risk management and governance. The activities we audit are given an assurance rating as follows:

Excellent	★★★★★	The areas reviewed were found to be well controlled, internal controls are in place and operating effectively. Risks against achieving objectives are well managed.
Good	★★★★	Most of the areas reviewed were found to be adequately controlled. Generally risks are well managed but a few areas for improvement have been identified.
Some improvement required	★★★	There is a basic control framework in place, but not all risks are well managed and a number of controls are required to be strengthened.
Significant improvement required	★★	Most of the areas reviewed were not found to be adequately controlled. Risks are not well managed and require controls to be strengthened to ensure the achievement of system objectives.
Fundamental weakness	★	Controls are seriously lacking or ineffective in their operation No assurance can be given that the system's objectives will be achieved.

### 8.1 Work Undertaken

Internal Audit's objective is to examine the Council's financial and non-financial systems to check that there are adequate internal controls in place to prevent loss due to frauds, errors and inefficiency, and due attention is paid to corporate governance and risk management.

A summary of progress against the annual audit plan to date is shown at Appendix A, together with the current status of each area for review and the outcomes of the review, where completed.

The table is based on the audit plan and the systems grouped into the twelve strategic purposes as per the Corporate Plan.

A further summary of the outcomes of audits completed can be found at Appendix B.

Progress against the annual audit plan is on target.

### 8.2 Issues for consideration

There are no instances to report where recommendations were not accepted by management during this quarter.

There are no instances of management accepting a recommendation which was not subsequently implemented within a reasonable timescale.

### 8.3 Governance Issues

The Council's annual governance statement (AGS) included a number of significant issues identified in the Audit Manager's Annual report. The AGS states that the aim is to address these weaknesses during 2015/16 financial year, by way of an action plan for improving the governance framework and system of internal control and this will be monitored by the Audit and Governance Committee. An action plan of the issues identified has been included in Appendix C.

### 9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

Good governance contributes to the Council's purpose of a "Well Run Council".

### 10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

N/A

### 11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

N/A

### 12. Are there any other options?

N/A

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**Audit Managers**

#### Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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