

Audit Committee Meeting	
Meeting Date	25 November 2020
Report Title	Interim Internal Audit & Assurance Report 2020/21
Cabinet Member	Cllr Roger Truelove
SMT Lead	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer
Head of Service	Rich Clarke, Head of Audit Partnership
Lead Officer	Rich Clarke, Head of Audit Partnership
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. To note progress against the 2020/21 Internal Audit & Assurance Plan and findings so far.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report provides to Members an update on progress so far towards completing the 2020/21 Internal Audit & Assurance Plan. It also provides the update information needed by Audit Standards including an assessment of available audit time, results of audit work and commentary on performance of the audit service.
- 1.2 Following delays arising from the Covid Pandemic, we presented our final report for 2019/20 to Members in September along with an updated 2020/21 Plan. We have begun work on that plan and anticipate concluding the first engagements later this month. At present there are no matters of broader concern we wish to bring to Members' attention.

2 Background

- 2.1 The report provides an update for Members on progress against the 2020/21 Internal Audit & Assurance Plan approved by this Committee earlier this year and updated in September. The report also meets our duties under Public Sector Internal Audit Standard 2060 to report to Members on:
 - Our audit charter,
 - The independence of internal audit,
 - Audit plan changes and progress against the plan,
 - Resource needs of the audit service,
 - Results of audit work so far,
 - Affirming conformance with the Standards and Code of Ethics, and

- Details of risks taken by management that, in the Head of Audit Partnership’s judgement, may be unacceptable to the authority.

2.2 We will continue to adjust our plans according to the Council’s risk profile and remain confident of delivering a robust audit opinion by year end. We note in the report forthcoming CIPFA guidance on *Limitation of Scope Opinions* where a Head of Internal Audit is unable to gather enough evidence to support an opinion (for example where an audit service has been depleted through redeployment). We do not currently expect to be at that position come year end but, following the guidance, will report promptly to Senior Management and Members if that judgement changes.

2.3 We note good levels of delivery for officers acting to fulfil agreed actions.

2.4 We also report our continuing conformance with the Standards (including independence) and the Code of Ethics. We include an update on progress towards the recommendations included in our External Quality Assessment published by CIPFA in May 2020.

3 Proposals

3.1 To keep conformance with the Standards we must report progress periodically to Members. This report fulfils that duty and provides the opportunity for Members to review, comment on and question the progress we have made and the results we have reached.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 We do not propose any alternative action.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 We discuss results of audit work with responsible officers within the authority before issuing as final. We remain pleased to record to Members continuing strong levels of co-operation from officers.

5.2 The report builds on Committee comments from previous similar reports at equivalent points in earlier years.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Internal audit and its findings provide assurance to Members on the effectiveness of the Council’s governance. Good governance is necessary for successfully fulfilling the Corporate Plan.

Issue	Implications
Financial, Resource and Property	Continuing the audit and assurance plan is within already approved budgetary headings and so needs no new funding for implementation.
Legal and Statutory	Reporting to Members in his way contributes to fulfilling the Council's duties under the Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014.
Crime and Disorder	The report makes no recommendations that impact crime and disorder.
Environmental Sustainability	The report makes no recommendations that impact environmental sustainability.
Health and Wellbeing	The report makes no recommendations that impact health and well being.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	<p>We present this report for information only so it has no direct risk management implications.</p> <p>Audit Standard 2060 demands we report to Members any risks accepted by management that in our view may be unacceptable to the organisation. For example, this might include audit recommendations that management refuse to address.</p> <p>There are no risks we have identified in our work that we believe management have unreasonably accepted.</p> <p>The report makes no recommendations that impact health and safety.</p>
Equality and Diversity	The report makes no recommendations that impact equality and diversity.
Privacy and Data Protection	The audit service collects no data directly from the public. Any data we collect during our reviews we hold in line with the Council's applicable policies.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Interim Internal Audit & Assurance Report

8 Background Papers

None applicable.