

REPORT TO: Audit and Governance Committee

MEETING DATE: 22 September 2020

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Resources & People Services)

SUBJECT: Revised Internal Audit Plan 2020/21

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform the Audit and Governance Committee of Internal Audit's revised operational plan for 2020/21.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Audit and Governance Committee is asked to approve the revised Audit Plan for 2020/21.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As advised to the Audit and Governance Committee a revised Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21 is being presented to take account of the impact of COVID-19. This plan will operate from September 2020 to June 2021.

- 3.2 The annual audit plan has been prepared in accordance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

- 3.3 In preparing the annual audit plan a range of factors have been taken into account, including:

- the Council Plan 2017-22 and the key actions that the Council will pursue in order to meet its objectives;
- areas highlighted by Senior Officers;
- corporate and service area risk registers;
- the Council's performance and financial statements;
- changes in service delivery;

- the findings from previous years' audit work; and
 - the need to incorporate flexibility for reactive/investigatory work.
- 3.4 Internal Audit's primary role is to independently review internal control systems within the Council. Internal Audit will evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of controls in responding to risks within the Council's governance, operations and information systems, regarding the:
- Achievement of the Council's strategic objectives.
 - Reliability and integrity of financial and operational information.
 - Effectiveness and efficiency of operations and programmes.
 - Safeguarding of assets.
 - Compliance with laws, regulations, policies, procedures and contracts.
- 3.5 Internal Audit are required to give an opinion on the Council's control environment in the annual Controls Assurance Statement and the audit work carried out will contribute to this opinion.
- 3.6 The provision of the Internal Audit service is on an in-house basis by the Council's Internal Audit Unit. The resources available have been applied to individual audits and a detailed operational plan has been produced for 2020/21 (see Appendix A).
- 3.7 Internal Audit will adopt a risk based approach to audit assignments as the principal means of providing assurance on the adequacy, reliability and effectiveness of internal controls. Testing of controls will be carried out on a sample basis. Samples are selected according to an agreed sampling methodology.
- 3.8 For each individual audit, a detailed audit report is prepared for the relevant member(s) of the Council Management Team (CMT). Copies of the audit report are provided to the Chief Executive, External Audit and to members of the Audit and Governance Committee.
- 3.9 Follow-up audits will be carried out to review the implementation of the recommendations made.

AUDIT COVERAGE

- 3.10 Core Financial Systems, Risk Assessed Service and Corporate Audits – Internal Audit will review the Council's systems to provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls. The audit plan includes a range of risk assessed core financial systems and non-financial audits.
- 3.11 Statutory Audits – Internal Audit undertake audit work in respect of specific grant awards made to the Council by the Scottish Government, to ensure

compliance with grant conditions. In addition work to provide assurances required by the Scottish Housing Regulator will also be completed.

- 3.12 Best Value Audit – Internal Audit will review the systems in place for the preparation and reporting of Performance Indicators.
- 3.13 Investigations – Time has been allocated to carry out work on the National Fraud Initiative 2020/21, and provide a reactive service to investigate fraud and irregularity when appropriate.
- 3.14 Integration Joint Board (IJB) – The Committee is asked to note that in 2020/21 internal audit services to the East Lothian IJB will be provided by East Lothian Council's Internal Audit Unit and time has been allocated to carry out audit work for the IJB.

INTERNAL AUDIT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 3.15 Internal Audit will report on the completion of the annual audit plan, the percentage of audit recommendations accepted by Management and the percentage of audit staff with CCAB accounting qualifications.

OTHER FACTORS

- 3.16 The Committee should note that reactive work may impact heavily on the Internal Audit Unit's ability to complete the audit plan. Contingency days are built in for 2020/21 in the investigations section, but by its nature reactive work is difficult to predict, particularly as COVID-19 controls changes continue to develop.
- 3.17 The plan and its completion have added importance, given its contribution to the annual Controls Assurance Statement to be prepared at the end of 2020/21.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial – None

6.2 Personnel – None

6.3 Other – None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

AUTHOR'S NAME	Duncan Stainbank
DESIGNATION	Service Manager – Internal Audit
CONTACT INFO	01620 827353
DATE	11 September 2020

APPENDIX A – REVISED INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2020/21

AUDITABLE AREAS	SCOPE OF THE AUDIT	INTERNAL AUDIT ASSESSED RISK	WEEKS
CORE FINANCIAL SYSTEMS AUDITS			
Housing Rents	We will examine the processes and controls in place for the billing and reconciliation of housing rents.	Medium	5
Payroll Systems	We will review the procedures in place for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of payroll information and overall payments being made to staff following the implementation of the new payroll system in 2019/20. This review will be subject to discussion with Audit Scotland to prevent duplication of assurance resources.	Medium	5
Council Tax	We will now focus Council Tax audit work on granting of reliefs and recovery processes.	Medium	5
Non-Domestic Rates	We will now focus our audit work on granting of new Non-Domestic Rates reliefs and recovery processes.	Medium	5
RISK ASSESSED SERVICE AND CORPORATE AUDITS			
EU Exit	We will review the actions identified to mitigate the risks of EU exit and examine the reported progress on implementation of these actions.	High	6
Section 75 (Developer Contributions)	Section 75 payments (developer contributions) bring significant funds to the Council for infrastructure projects. We will examine all control aspects of the Section 75 process.	High	5

AUDITABLE AREAS	SCOPE OF THE AUDIT	INTERNAL AUDIT ASSESSED RISK	WEEKS
Homelessness Assessment & Housing Allocation	We will review the processes in place for the assessment of homelessness, provision of preventative advice and allocation of temporary accommodation and housing rents following recent changes.	High	5
Cyber Security	We will examine the evidence of compliance with appropriate cyber security standards including ISO27001, International Standard for Information Security and the Scottish Government Cyber Resilience Strategy for Scotland, Public Sector Action Plan.	High	5
School Excursions	Review the control processes in place to ensure security of funding and reduction of risk for the arrangements of School Excursions.	High	5
COVID Lessons Learned	Internal Audit will review progress on implementation of mitigation actions as part of a lessons learned exercise for the COVID-19 pandemic.	High	5
Residential & Non Residential Care Charges	We will review the controls in place for charging for residential & non-residential care to ensure that all charges are being made and collected in accordance with policy.	Medium	5
Fleet Management	We will review the arrangements in place for the replacement, purchase, disposal and maintenance scheduling of vehicles through the new fleet management system.	Medium	5
Following the Public Pound	This audit rolled over from the 2019/20 audit plan and will review controls around a selection of organisations receiving Community Partnership Funding.	Medium	4

AUDITABLE AREAS	SCOPE OF THE AUDIT	INTERNAL AUDIT ASSESSED RISK	WEEKS
Risk Management	We will select a sample of High risks from both the Council's Corporate Risk Register and service area Risk Registers and will review the adequacy and effectiveness of the risk control measures in place.	Medium	2
STATUTORY AUDITS			
Miscellaneous Grants	For grants awarded to the Council by the Scottish Government, Internal Audit is required to provide a statement of compliance with grant conditions on an annual basis.	Medium	2
Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) Annual Assurance Statement	Work required to provide assurance of the regulatory requirements set out in the Scottish Housing Regulators Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework.	Medium	2
BEST VALUE AUDIT			
Review of Performance Indicators	Internal Audit will continue to review the systems in place for the preparation and reporting of Performance Indicators.	Medium	4
INVESTIGATIONS			
Fraud & Irregularity	Internal Audit will investigate all instances of suspected fraud or irregularity.	High	10
Whistleblowing	We will investigate concerns raised under the Council's Whistleblowing Policy.	High	5

AUDITABLE AREAS	SCOPE OF THE AUDIT	INTERNAL AUDIT ASSESSED RISK	WEEKS
National Fraud Initiative	Time has been allocated for coordinating and submitting data for the 2020/21 National Fraud Initiative (NFI) exercise, including additional requirements for COVID 19 Grants.	Medium	10
OTHER AUDIT WORK			
Integration Joint Board	Time has been allocated for work that will be undertaken by Internal Audit for the East Lothian Integration Joint Board (IJB). A separate audit plan will be prepared which will be presented to the IJB Audit and Risk Committee for approval.	Medium	15
Review of Previous Year's Work	Internal Audit will review the outcome of our previous year's work to ensure recommendations have been actioned as agreed and that risks accepted by Management have been properly managed.	Medium	8
Attendance at Stocktakes	Internal Audit will attend the year-end stocktakes at Property Maintenance, Road Services and Waste Services. We will review the final stock sheets. Additional attendance at interim stock takes is also planned for 2020/21 due to stock takes not taking place at the 2019/20 year end.	Medium	2
Community Councils and Management Committees	Community Councils – Internal Audit provide advice and support to Community Councils. Management Committees – Internal Audit will independently examine the annual accounts of Management Committees where applicable.	Medium	2

AUDITABLE AREAS	SCOPE OF THE AUDIT	INTERNAL AUDIT ASSESSED RISK	WEEKS
Advice and Consultancy	<p>Consultation on New Systems – for new systems implemented, Internal Audit will provide advice on internal control matters.</p> <p>Returned Cheques – investigating and recording the reasons for returned cheques.</p> <p>Financial Reports – providing service areas with financial information about companies and offering advice where applicable.</p> <p>Consultancy – providing advice and consultancy on internal control issues.</p>	Medium	4
TRAINING			
Training	An adequate allocation of budget resources and time will be given to maintaining and improving the knowledge base and quality of the staff resource. This includes time to attend the Scottish Local Authority Chief Internal Auditor Group (SLACIAG) and Computer Audit Sub Group, also for staff to undertake continuous professional development (CPD).	–	5
Annual Self-Assessment	Time has been allocated for internal assessment of the internal audit function against the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).	–	2

