

<b>11 July 2024</b>		<b>ITEM: 7</b>
<b>Audit Committee</b>		
<b>2024/25 Internal Audit Plan (July 2024 – March 2025)</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key	
<b>Report of:</b> Frankie Smith - Head of Financial Assurance, Internal Audit, Risk & Insurance		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Dawn Calvert - Chief Financial Officer (S151)		
<b>This report is</b> Public		
<b>Version: Committee / Final</b>		

## Executive Summary

This report sets out the draft Internal Audit Plan for July 2024 – March 2025.

The report sets out why the Internal Audit Plan is required, and the planning methodology followed.

The report confirms that the Internal Audit Plan will be kept under regular review throughout the year to provide added value to the Authority by incorporating emerging risks and priorities into the Internal Audit Plan as needed.

The report illustrates the audit resource position for delivery of the Internal Audit Plan.

The report also details how the outcomes of each audit engagement will be used to form the basis of the Head of Internal Audit's 2024/25 Annual Audit Opinion and how this will be incorporated in the Authority's Annual Governance Statement.

The report also covers how the Internal Audit service will be developed throughout 2024/25 to ensure ongoing continuous improvement and conformance with the [Public Sector Internal Audit Standards](#) and the [Global Internal Audit Standards](#).

### Commissioner Comment:

The 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan has been discussed and agreed with the Finance Commissioner.

#### 1. Recommendation(s)

##### 1.1 That the Audit Committee

**Consider and Approve** the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan.

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 The [Public Sector Internal Audit Standards](#) specify that the Chief Audit Executive must create a risk-based Internal Audit Plan to support the achievement of the organisation's objectives.
- 2.2 The Council's [Internal Audit Charter](#) sets out that the Audit Committee will consider and approve the risk based Internal Audit Plan.
- 2.3 The 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan has been developed by the Audit Manager and Head of Financial Assurance, Internal Audit, Risk and Assurance, in conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.
- 2.2 The 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan has been developed through a series of audit planning activities, which has included discussions with key stakeholders.
- 2.3 The 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan includes 27 audit engagements, which include both assurance and consultancy reviews. The Internal Audit Plan also includes other work required for the ongoing management and continuous improvement of the Internal Audit service.
- 2.4 The report sets out the audit resource position for the year, and confirmation that the resource gap will be addressed through a combination of permanent and temporary recruitment.
- 2.5 The report also confirms that there are no conflicts of interest within the Internal Audit team, which would represent an actual or perceived impairment to independence or objectivity.
- 2.5 The report also confirms that all audit engagements completed during 2024/25 will conform with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the ambition to be working towards conformance to the new Global Internal Audit Standards by 31 March 2025.
- 2.6 The report also details that the Key Performance Indicators for the Internal Audit service are currently under review. An update on the KPI's will be reported to Audit Committee later in the year.
- 2.7 The 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan will be kept under regular review throughout 2024/25 to ensure there is sufficient coverage of new and emerging risks and priorities.

## **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 3.1 The number of audit engagements on the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan could be reduced, rather than recruiting additional temporary and permanent resources. However, this will limit assurance coverage on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's governance, risk management and internal control arrangements, which may impact on the Head of Internal Audit's 2024/25 Annual Audit Opinion.

## **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 To meet the requirements to devise and approve a risk-based Internal Audit Plan as set out in the Internal Audit Charter and Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

## **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 The 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan has been compiled following consultation with the Authority's Senior Management Leadership Team.

## **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

6.1 There is no direct impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community. Although delivery of a risk based Internal Audit Plan should add value to Council services through promoting the opportunity for improvement and efficiencies.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Rosie Hurst**  
**Interim Finance Manager**  
**22 May 2024**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

The proposal to recruit temporary and permanent Internal Auditor resources to support audit plan delivery will be from the existing Internal Audit budget.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Jayne Middleton-Albooye**  
**Interim Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer**  
**30 May 2024**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith**  
**Head of Community Development**  
**30 May 2024**

Whilst there are no direct diversity implications resulting from this report, implementing the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards will support improved equality outcomes.

### **7.4 Risks**

If the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan is not agreed, the Internal Audit service will not be conforming with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the Head of Financial Assurance, Internal Audit, Risk and Insurance will not be able to provide the 2024/25 Annual Audit Opinion, which will impact on the outcomes reported in the Authority's 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement.

7.5 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children

There are no other implications arising from this report.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- [Public Sector Internal Audit Standards \(PSIAS\)](#)
- [Global Internal Audit Standards](#)
- [Thurrock Council Internal Audit Charter 2024](#)

9. **Appendices to the report**

- 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan

**Report Author:**

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Head of Financial Assurance, Internal Audit, Risk and Insurance

Finance