

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Audit and Governance Committee	Date:	4th March 2024
Subject:	Draft Internal Audit Plan 2024-25		
Report Of:	Head of Audit Risk Assurance (ARA)		
Wards Affected:	Not applicable		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Piyush Fatania, Head of ARA		
	Email:	Tel:	
	piyush.fatania@gloucestershire.gov.uk	01452 328883	
Appendices:	A: Draft Internal Audit Plan 2024-25		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with a summary of the draft risk based Internal Audit Plan 2024-25, as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) 2017.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Audit and Governance Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** to:
- i. Agree that the Internal Audit Plan for 2024-25 reflects the risk profile of the Council; and
 - ii. Approve the Internal Audit Plan 2024-25 as detailed in Appendix A.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 All councils must make proper provision for Internal Audit in line with the Account and Audit Regulations 2015 (the Regulations). The Regulations provide that a relevant council 'must undertake an effective Internal Audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance'. Completion of annual internal audits based on the risk profile of a council also supports the Section 151 Officer's duty to ensure proper administration of a council's financial affairs.

- 3.2 The guidance accompanying the Regulations recognises the PSIAS 2017 (the Standards) as representing 'proper Internal Audit practices'. The Standards define the way in which the Internal Audit service should be established and undertake its operations. These Standards require the Head of ARA to produce an annual risk based Internal Audit Plan to determine the priorities of the Internal Audit activity.

- 3.3 The proposed activity should be consistent with the Council's priorities and objectives, considering the risk management framework, risk appetite levels set by management and Internal Audit's own judgement of risks.

- 3.4 To ensure Internal Audit resources continue to be focused appropriately, particularly during periods of organisational change, it is essential that we understand the Council's needs. This required building relationships with key stakeholders, including other assurance and challenge providers, to gain crucial insight and on-going understanding of the strategic and operational change agendas within the Council.
- 3.5 This insight is not only identified at the initial development stages of the risk based Internal Audit Plan. Dialogue continues throughout the financial year(s) and increased the ability for the Internal Audit service to adapt more closely to meet the assurance needs of the Council, particularly during periods of significant change. Our Plan is therefore dynamic and flexible to meet these needs.
- 3.6 To ensure that an effective Plan is developed and alongside Internal Audit's own assessment of risk, a consultation process took place with Corporate Directors, Heads of Service and Service Managers to establish priorities and assurance requirements. Any Audit and Governance Committee and wider Members audit requests from 2023-24 were also considered as part of the consultation approach. The proposed activity from all sources were collated and matched against Internal Audits resource availability and prioritised accordingly.
- 3.7 By continuing to apply risk based Internal Audit planning principles, this level of input is considered acceptable to provide the Internal Audit assurance requirements of the Council. The Head of ARA will continue to reassess Internal Audit resource requirements against the Council's priorities and risks and will amend the Plan throughout the year as required. Any key changes to the Plan will be reported to the Audit and Governance Committee.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

- 4.1 There are no Social Value implications as a result of the recommendations made in this report.

5.0 Environmental Implications

- 5.1 There are no Environmental implications as a result of the recommendations made in this report.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 No other options have been considered as a risk based Internal Audit Plan is required by the PSIAS.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 A requirement of the PSIAS is for the Head of ARA to produce an annual risk based Internal Audit Plan and for this Plan to be approved by the appropriate body. In the case of the Council, the appropriate body is the Audit and Governance Committee.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 8.1 Regular reports on progress against the risk based Internal Audit Plan and any significant control issues identified will be presented to the Audit and Governance

Committee. These will be captured within the Audit and Governance Committee work programme for 2024-25.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of the recommendations made in this report. Internal Audit forms part of the Council's governance arrangements.

Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 As set out in this report, the risk based Internal Audit plan assists the Council to discharge its statutory responsibilities under Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2005 and significant aspects of the Section 151 Officer's duties. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted in the preparation this report.

11.0 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications

11.1 Failure to deliver an effective risk based Internal Audit Plan will impact on the statutory requirement to provide the Council with an annual independent Internal Audit opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's control environment comprising of risk management, control and governance.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

12.1 The Internal Audit service is delivered by ARA which is an Internal Audit and Risk Management Shared Service between Gloucester City Council, Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire County Council. Equality in service delivery is demonstrated by the team being subject to, and complying with, the Council's equality policies.

12.2 A PIA is not required.

13.0 Community Safety Implications

13.1 There are no Community Safety implications as a result of the recommendations made in this report.

14.0 Staffing and Trade Union Implications

14.1 There are no Staffing and Trade Union implications as a result of the recommendations made in this report.

Background Documents:

[Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#)

[PSIAS](#)

CIPFA Local Government Application Note for the UK PSIAS