

Report to	Governance & Audit Committee
Date of meeting	30 April 2025
Lead Member / Officer	Bob Chowdhury – Chief Internal Auditor
Report author	Bob Chowdhury – Chief Internal Auditor
Title	Internal Audit Update

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This report provides an update for Governance and Audit Committee on Internal Audit's latest progress in terms of its service delivery, assurance provision, reviews completed, performance and effectiveness in driving improvement.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To provide information on the work carried out by Internal Audit since the last Committee meeting. It allows the Committee to monitor Internal Audit's performance and progress as well as providing summaries of Internal Audit reports so that the Committee can receive assurance on other council services and corporate areas. This enables the Committee to discharge its responsibilities as per Terms of Reference. Delivery of the audit plan will assist the Committee with obtaining assurance that the Annual Governance Statement appropriately reflects the conditions of the Council.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That the Committee considers the report content, assesses Internal Audit's progress and performance.
- 3.2. That the Committee decides whether it needs further assurance on any of the audited areas to follow up progress with implementing the improvement action plans.

4. Report details

- 4.1. Appendix 1 provides an update on Internal Audit work carried out since the last update report to the Committee in January 2025.
- 4.2. Since the last Governance and Audit Committee update in January, 10 internal audit reports have been completed with six being awarded a high assurance rating and four receiving a medium assurance rating.
- 4.3. This year has been a challenging year for Internal Audit with a number of factors outside the control of the team which include: -
 - Six whistleblowing complaints to date and after initial discussions with the Corporate Director – Governance and Business, Internal Audit have undertaken five investigations with the other being carried out by the service.
 - Three members of the team volunteered to support Highways and Environmental service with the roll out of the new waste service.
 - We have had an unusually high amount of sickness since 1 April to 31 March 2025 resulting in 219 days being lost, and
 - Finally, one of the Career Pathway Senior Auditors resigned on 25 November 2024, which will have had an impact on the plan as we have been one auditor down.
- 4.4. The table below outlines all the work the team has completed/partially completed during the 2024/2025 financial year and outlines the progress we have made against the plan.

Internal Audit Plan - Year	Narrative	Number of Reviews	Percentage
2023/2024	Reviews started in 2023/24 but completed in 2024/25	6	N/A
2024/2025	Completed in year	24	37%
2024/2025	At draft stage	3	4.5%
2024/2025	At fieldwork stage	9	13.5%
2024/2025	Scoped	7	10.5%
2024/2025	On hold	9	13.5%
2024/2025	Not started	14	21%

4.5. Internal Audit monitors performance to address actions arising from audit reviews. It is management's responsibility to address these actions and record progress on the performance management system (Verto). Internal Audit continues to perform 'follow-ups' and reports on progress with implementing action plans arising from low assurance audits to ensure necessary improvements are being implemented.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1. There is no decision required with this report. There is no direct contribution to Corporate Priorities, but some projects in the audit plan will review Corporate Priority areas and will provide assurance on their delivery.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. Not applicable – there is no decision or costs attached to the report.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. Not applicable – this report does not require a decision or proposal for change.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. Not required

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. There are no financial implications attached to this report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. Should insufficient audit work be completed during the year, there is a risk that the Chief Internal Auditor is unable to draw on sufficient assurance to issue a complete annual opinion in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Audits are prioritised to provide coverage of governance, risk management and internal controls and scopes for these audits will focus on key risks.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Not applicable – there is no decision required with this report.