



Audit Committee

26th April 2023

Title	Internal Audit & CAFT Plan 2023/24
Report of	Executive Director of Assurance Head of Internal Audit Assistant Director Counter Fraud, Community Safety & Protection
Wards	N/A
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix A - Internal Audit & CAFT Plan 2023/24
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Summary

The Internal Audit Plan has been formulated in consultation with the Council Management Team and with reference to the Council's risk registers.

Progress on the delivery of the plan will be given to the Audit Committee at each meeting during 2023-2024.

Recommendations

1. That the Committee approves the Internal Audit and CAFT Annual Plan for 2023/24 as highlighted in appendix A

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The Audit Committee's role in receiving the Internal Audit Plan for 2023-24 is to consider and approve the planned programme of work.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Not relevant.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The Internal Audit Plan will be delivered and progress against the plan reported to the Audit Committee at future meetings throughout the year.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 All internal audit planned activity is aligned with the Council's objectives set out in the Corporate Plan 'Our Plan for Barnet 2023 – 2026'.

- 5.1.2 A comprehensive Internal Audit Plan is essential to giving an annual Internal Audit Opinion on the internal control environment (ICE) which is fundamental for the achievement of all of the Council's objectives. This opinion forms an integral element of the Annual Governance Statement.

- 5.1.3 The Council has a responsibility to protect the public purse through proper administration and control of the public funds and assets to which it has been entrusted.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 This Plan, by being based on the risks of the organisation, will ensure the appropriate allocation of resources to those areas that require audit review and assurance.

- 5.2.2 In addition, the follow-up of audit recommendations will ensure that a positive culture of internal control is achieved.

- 5.2.3 The proposed plan is being achieved from Internal Audit & CAFT's current budget.

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 None in the context of this decision

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 The Council's Constitution (Article 7) sets out the terms of reference for Committees. The responsibilities for the Audit Committee include providing "independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment and to oversee the financial reporting process.
- 5.4.2 The Council also has a duty under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk. Regulation 6(1)(a) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires 'an authority to conduct a review at least once in a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and include a statement reporting on the review with any published Statement of Accounts (England)'.

5.5 Risk Management

- 5.5.1 The Plan is based upon the risks of the organisation and supports the Council's risk management system and processes as each internal audit or pro-active anti-fraud exercise will either comment on how well risks are being managed or how effective the controls to mitigate the risks in the area under review are.
- 5.5.2 Outcomes from internal audits will either confirm effective management of risk or suggest areas for improvement. In addition, this will provide Directors with assurances that managers are being effective in managing the risks within the service.
- 5.5.3 Internal Audit work contributes to increasing awareness and understanding of risk and controls amongst managers and thus leads to improving management processes for securing more effective risk management.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.6.1 Effective systems of audit, internal control and corporate governance provide assurance on the effective allocation of resources and quality of service provision for the benefit of the entire community. Individual audits assess, as appropriate, the differential aspects on different groups of individuals to ensure compliance with the Council's duties under the 2010 Equality Act.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 None in the context of this decision

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 N/A

5.9 Insight

5.9.1 None in the context of this decision

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

6.1 Not relevant to this report.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A