

For General Release

REPORT TO:	GENERAL PURPOSES & AUDIT COMMITTEE 23 March 2016
AGENDA ITEM:	11
SUBJECT:	Internal Audit Charter, Strategy and Plan
LEAD OFFICER:	Head of Governance
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Simon Hall Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury
WARDS:	ALL
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT: Internal Audit's work helps the Council to improve its value for money by strengthening financial management and supporting risk management. Strengthening value for money is critical in improving the Council's ability to deliver services helping the Council achieve all its visions and aims. The external auditor relies on the work from the internal audit programme when forming opinions and assessments of the Council's performance.	
FINANCIAL IMPACT The Internal Audit contract for 2016/17 is a fixed price contract of £333,000 and appropriate provision has been made within the budget for 2016/17.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The General Purposes & Audit Committee is asked to approve the Internal Audit Charter (Appendix 1), Strategy (Appendix 2) and to note the plan of audit work for 2016/17 (Appendix 3).

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The current UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards came into effect on 1 April 2013. To help with the Council's compliance with these standards the Council's internal audit charter and strategy are reviewed annually and are now attached for approval. These will be reviewed and brought back for approval each year to ensure that they remain up to date and relevant. Also attached is the work plan for internal audit for 2016/17.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 In England, specific requirements are detailed in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, in that a relevant body 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.”
- 3.2 The UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards which apply to local and central government, the NHS and the three devolved governments came into force from 1st April 2013. Compliance with these satisfies the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.3 To help with the Council’s compliance with these standards the Council’s internal audit charter (appendix 1) and strategy (appendix 2) have been reviewed and are attached for approval. These will be reviewed and brought back for approval each year to ensure that they remain up to date and relevant. Also attached is the work plan for internal audit for 2016/17 (appendix 3).
- 3.4 The work plan for 2016/17 follows a similar format to previous years and its make-up is as set out in the audit strategy. It aims to maximise the value from the internal audit resource available, which has again been reduced from previous years.
- 3.5 The Council’s Executive Leadership Team reviewed the work plan at its meeting on 9 March 2016.

4. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The fixed price for the Internal Audit Contract is £333,000 for 2016/17 and there is adequate provision within the budget. There are no additional financial considerations relating to this report
- 4.2 Internal Audit’s planning methodology is based on risk assessments that include using the Council risk register processes.

(Approved by: Lisa Taylor – Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer)

5. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

- 5.1 The Solicitor to the Council comments that information provided in this report is necessary to demonstrate the Council’s compliance with requirements imposed by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and in particular that there is an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council’s risk management, control and governance processes.

(Approved by: Gabriel MacGregor, Acting Council Solicitor and Acting Monitoring Officer)

6. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 6.1 There are no immediate human resource considerations arising from this report for LBC staff or workers.

(Approved by: Michael Pichamuthu, HRBP on behalf of Heather Daley, Director of HR)

10. EQUALITIES, ENVIRONMENTAL AND CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACTS

- 10.1 When Internal Audit is developing the Annual Audit Plan or individual audit programmes the impacts of the issues above are considered depending on the nature of the area of service being reviewed. Issues relating to these impacts would be reflected in the audit reports and recommendations.

CONTACT OFFICER: Simon Maddocks, Head of Governance

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None