

Report of	Meeting	Date
Service Lead Audit and Risk	Governance Committee	Tuesday, 24 May 2022

Review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit 2022

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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Purpose of the Report

1. This report relates to the results of the self-assessment carried out by Internal Audit against the requirement of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and Local Government Application Note (LGAN) as a means of assessing the effectiveness of Internal Audit.

Recommendations to Governance Committee

2. That the Committee notes the results of the self -assessment recently undertaken as part of the Governance Committee's consideration of the system of internal control.

Reasons for recommendations

3. Evidence that the Council has an effective Internal Audit Service.

Corporate priorities

4. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (please bold all those applicable):

An exemplary council	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

Background to the report

5. The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 requires that the relevant body , at least once in a year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal audit. The purpose behind the review is to ensure that the opinion in the annual report by the Head of Audit / Chief Audit Executive (CAE) can be relied upon as a key source of evidence in the Annual Governance Statement.
6. The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards came into effect on the 1st April 2013 and are applicable to the whole of the public sector. A Local Government Application Note was produced by CIPFA in collaboration with the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors as a sector specific requirement within the PSIAS framework. The LGAN was re-issued in 2019 with minor amendments.
7. One of the Attribute Standards within the PSIAS refers to a Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme (QAIP) which must comprise both internal and external assessments. At the meeting in May 2021, the Governance Committee requested sight of the QAIP, and this has been recently been reviewed and is included at **Appendix A**.
8. The QAIP states that internal assessments are both on-going and periodic, whilst an external assessment must be undertaken at least once every five years. External assessment can be in the form of a full external assessment or a self-assessment with independent external validation. The majority of Lancashire districts made the decision to continue with the annual self-assessment to be independently verified by a peer review. The last external assessment was conducted in April 2018 and reported to the Governance Committee with the next review scheduled for completion in early 2023.

Annual Assessment

9. In order to meet the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations, a self-assessment has been carried out by the Service Lead Audit and Risk using the checklist contained within the revised LGAN. The LGAN states that if the periodic assessment is in the form of a self-assessment, the checklist contained within the guidance should be used for assessing conformance as it covers both the PSIAS and the LGAN.
10. The self-assessment is attached at **Appendix B** to this report. This demonstrates that the Service conforms with the Standards. There are 134 aspects of conformance, of which full conformance has been achieved for 128. There are 5 areas which are not applicable to the Internal Audit Service with only 1 partial conformance.
11. The Action plan at **Appendix C** shows the identified actions from the 2021 self-assessment with an update of the current status of each action. There is only the one action being carried forward to 2022 for the one area of partial conformance.

Climate change and air quality

12. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

Equality and diversity

13. The material presented and discussed in this report has no direct implications on equality and diversity.

Risk

14. Failure to undertake the annual self-assessment against the PSAIS and LGAN will leave the Council unable to demonstrate that the Internal Audit Service conforms with the expected Standards.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

15. No comment

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

16. No comment

Background documents

Public Sector Internal Audit Standards

Local Government Application Note

Appendices

Appendix A – Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme

Appendix B - Self Assessment

Appendix C – Action Plan

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