

For General Release

REPORT TO:	GENERAL PURPOSES & AUDIT COMMITTEE 22 March 2017
AGENDA ITEM:	7
SUBJECT:	Internal Audit Update Report April 2016 to January 2017
LEAD OFFICER:	Simon Maddocks, Director 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 which, in turn helps 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 Committee is asked to note the Internal Audit Report for April 2016 to January 2017 (Appendix 1).

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report details the work completed by Internal Audit so far during 2016/17 and the progress made in implementing recommendations from audits completed in previous years.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The Internal Audit report (Appendix 1) includes the following:
- a list of all audits completed so far in 2016/17; and
 - lists of follow up audits completed and the percentage of priority one, and other audit recommendations implemented.
- 3.2 Internal Audit is responsible for conducting an independent appraisal of all the Council's activities, financial and otherwise. It provides a service to the whole Council, including Members and all levels of management. It is not an extension of, nor a substitute for, good management. The Internal Audit Service is responsible for giving assurance on all control arrangements to the Full Council through the General Purposes & Audit Committee and the Chief Financial Officer (also known as the Section 151 Officer), who is currently the Executive Director of Resources. It also assists management by evaluating and reporting to them the effectiveness of the controls for which they are responsible.
- 3.3 Based on the 40 finalised internal audit reports published so far this year, an overall **Satisfactory Assurance** level can be given as 95% of reports finalised to date received Substantial or Full assurance.

4. FOLLOW-UP REVIEWS

- 4.1 When Internal Audit identifies risks, recommendations are made and agreed with service managers to mitigate these. The Council then needs to ensure that action is taken to implement audit recommendations. The Council's targets for audit recommendations implemented are 80% for all priority 2 and 3 recommendations and 90% for priority 1 recommendations. The performance in relation to the targets set for 2012/16 audits are shown Table 1.

Table 1: Implementation of Audit Recommendations

	Target	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Implementation of priority one recommendations at follow-up	90%	100%	100%	100%	59%
Implementation of all recommendations at follow-up	80%	93%	95%	89%	70%

5. PROGRESS AGAINST THE AUDIT PLAN

- 5.1 By 31 October 2016 **81%** (82% last year) of the 2016/17 planned audit days had been delivered and **61%** (52% last year) of the draft audit reports due for the year had been issued. The contractor has given assurances that the necessary resources are available to deliver the internal audit plan in-year as usual.

6. PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

- 6.1 Following a decision at the June 2015 meeting of this committee, all finalised

internal audit reports from the year 2015/16 onwards are published on the Council's public internet site.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The outcome of all audit work is discussed and agreed with the lead service managers. The final reports and audit recommendations are sent for consideration by Departmental Management Teams (DMT). Details are circulated and discussed with Directors on a quarterly basis.

8. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 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
- 8.2 Internal Audit's planning methodology is based on risk assessments that include using the Council risk registers processes.

(Approved by: Zolfiqar Darr, Head of Finance, Resources)

9. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

- 9.1 The Solicitor to the Council comments that information provided in this report is necessary to demonstrate the Council's compliance with requirements imposed by Regulation 5 of the Local Government Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015. The Council is required to 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.

(Approved by: Jacqueline Harris-Baker, Acting Director of Law and Monitoring Officer)

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 10.1 There are no immediate human resources issues arising from this report for LBC staff

(Approved by: Jason Singh, Head of HR)

11. EQUALITIES, ENVIRONMENTAL AND CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACTS

- 11.1 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, Director of Governance

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

APPENDICES: Appendix 1 – Internal Audit report for the period
1 April 2016 to 31 January 2017