

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 25 SEPTEMBER 2024

REPORT ON: INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN UPDATE AND PROGRESS REPORT

REPORT BY: CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITOR

REPORT NO: 253-2024

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To submit to Members of the Scrutiny Committee an update on the progress towards delivering the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan; the audits from previous years' plans that were not complete in June 2024; and information about the number of open internal audit recommendations. The report also comments on a review of the Internal Audit Charter.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee note:

- (i) the progress with the Internal Audit Plan;
- (ii) progress with the implementation of agreed internal audit recommendations; and
- (iii) the current position regarding the Internal Audit Charter.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

4.0 AUDIT PROGRESS

- 4.1 Appendix 1 notes the current stage of progress with implementing the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan and the outstanding items brought forward from the 2022/23 AND 2023/24 Plans (the plan).
- 4.2 Appendix 2 shows the open internal audit recommendations by service, audit year and risk priority. Progress has continued to implement actions, with eleven actions closed since this was last reported in April 2024. The majority of actions still require a revised completion date.

5.0 INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER

- 5.1. The Internal Audit Charter should be regularly reviewed and updated when necessary. An annual review is planned to take place in August each year starting in 2024. The Dundee City Council Internal Audit Charter was last reviewed and reported to the December 2023 Scrutiny Committee meeting. Report 357 –2023 refers.
- 5.2. There has been no change in the guidance for the content of the Audit Charter and therefore no changes are required or proposed.
- 5.3. The updated Global Audit Standards published in January 2024 make some changes which may be reflected in the new Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) that are expected to be published late 2024/early 2025 for implementation by 1 April 2025. The charter will be updated in line with the new PSIAS guidance once it is published.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services, or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate senior manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

The Council Leadership Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Appendix 1 - 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan update.

Appendix 2 - Outstanding Internal Audit Agreed Actions.

CATHIE WYLLIE
CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITOR

DATE: 3 SEPTEMBER 2024

Completed items

2022/23 and 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan - Progress Report (Audits completed after June 2024)

2022/23 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN	Proposed Coverage	Target Scrutiny Reporting	Status / Update	Assurance Level
Governance Reviews				
Staff Wellbeing/Absence Management (Contractor)	Review of the governance arrangements in place throughout the Council to promote and support staff wellbeing. The scope of this audit will pick up some elements of the absence management audit removed from the plan.	December 2024	In Clearance	
ICT Reviews				
Microsoft Office 365 (Contractor)	Review of access permissions and licensing arrangements for Office 365 including linking to management of network access.	December 2024	Draft report issued 7/6/24 Revised draft issued 3/7/24 Response rcd 3/9/24	
Civica CX	Review of the arrangements for the implementation of Phase 1 of Civica CX incorporating Housing Rent collection and recording of Housing Benefit/Universal Credit housing costs.	February 2025	Planned	
User Access Controls (Contractor)	High level review of the appropriateness of user access levels and associated permissions for a number of the Council's key IT systems including any arrangements put in place during working from home.	December 2024	Draft report issued 16/7/24	

2022/23 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN	Proposed Coverage	Target Scrutiny Reporting	Status / Update	Assurance Level
Systems Reviews				
Health and Safety - Incident Reports	Review of the Council's arrangements for the recording and reporting of Incident Reports.	September 2024	Complete	Substantial
Procurement / Contract Reviews				
Social Work Contracts and Payments	Review of contract management and commissioning arrangements, including payments, within Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership to assess their adequacy and effectiveness.	February 2025	In Progress	

2023/24 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN	Proposed Coverage	Target Scrutiny Reporting	Status / Update	Assurance Level
Governance Reviews				
Absence Management	Review the arrangements in place within the Council to mitigate long term and future absence arising from sickness absences.	December 2024	Joint with Staff Wellbeing above In Clearance	
Corporate Governance	Review of elements of the Annual Corporate Governance checklist with service areas to demonstrate evidence of compliance.	December 2024	Draft report Issued 4/9/24	
Financial Reviews				
Corporate Debt Recovery Arrangements	Corporate wide review of the Council's debt management and debt recovery arrangements.	December 2024	In Review	

2023/24 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN	Proposed Coverage	Target Scrutiny Reporting	Status / Update	Assurance Level
Financial Forecasting (Contractor)	High level review of the control framework in place to support the development of financial forecasting corporately and within service areas.	December 2024	Draft report issued 24/7/24	
Procurement / Contract Reviews				
SLAs with External Bodies	Assess the extent to which the Council has adequate service level agreements in place where Council responsibilities are delivered by external bodies. To include an assessment of arrangements to ensure satisfactory service delivery and value for money.	April 2025	Planning	
System Reviews				
Health and Safety Risk Assessments and Incident Management in Schools	Review of the arrangements in place within schools to ensure completion of health and safety risk assessments for activities including determination of roles and responsibilities.	February 2025	In Progress	
Section 75 Planning Obligations (Contractor)	Review of the arrangements in place for the recording, receipt, and monitoring of Section 75 payments/planning obligations from Developers.	February 2025	In Progress	
Safety Alarm Response Centre	To assess the arrangements for the operation of the Safety Alarm Response Centre (SARC) in line with the Council’s Resilience and Community Safety plans	December 2024	In Clearance	
Pentana	Review of the Council’s Performance and Risk Management system in terms of management reporting and efficiencies.	December 2024	In review	
Permanence	High level review of the arrangements in place to support the decision-making process surrounding children being placed in permanent care and ensure compliance with relevant legislation.	December 2024	In Progress	

2023/24 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN	Proposed Coverage	Target Scrutiny Reporting	Status / Update	Assurance Level
Recruitment (Contractor)	Review of the Council's Recruitment and Selection approach, including reporting and analysis of effectiveness, and identification of actions where required.	December 2024	Draft Report Issued 23/8/24	
Young People in Residential Care - Missing Persons Processes	Review of the arrangements for risk assessment, planning for, and prevention of young people going missing from Residential Care. To include review of processes for identifying, recording, and responding to such instances.	April 2025	Planning. Audit referred to take place later in 2024/25	

2024/25 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN	Proposed Coverage	Target Scrutiny Reporting	Status / Update	Assurance Level
Governance Reviews				
Child Poverty and Fairness Action Plan	Review of the arrangements to implement and oversee the next phase of the Fairness and Local Child Poverty Action Plan, including measurement of progress towards Scottish Government targets.	April 2025		
Partnership Working - Dundee Alcohol and Drugs Partnership	Review of the arrangements which underpin the Council's delivery responsibilities under the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership's Strategic Framework, including delivery plans, progress monitoring, and engagement with other members of the Partnership.	April 2025		
Tay Cities Deal	<p>The Grant Offer Letter provided to Dundee City Council as lead authority for the deal requires that the Authority's Internal Audit Service performs a review of arrangements to implement and oversee the deal at least every other year.</p> <p>This year's audit will be a review of the benefits realisation processes including assessment of benefits towards delivering outcomes.</p>	February 2025	Planned	

2024/25 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN	Proposed Coverage	Target Scrutiny Reporting	Status / Update	Assurance Level
Risk Management	A review of the Council's risk management processes will be carried out by the Internal Audit contractor.	June 2025		
ICT Reviews				
End User Computing - Cloud Migration	A critical friend review of the processes in place to manage end user device access to the Council's network and applications. There have been changes to how people work and the devices they use. From a security perspective, it is vital that only authorised	TBC		
User Access Management	The review will consider the adequacy of user access management controls for the Northgate application. This will include assessment of the processes for joiners, movers, and leavers as well as access management arrangement to achieve	TBC		
Financial Reviews				
Capital Planning and Monitoring	Review of the procedures to oversee the implementation of Capital Plans, in line with the Council's Capital Investment Strategy, and monitor and scrutinise Capital expenditure.	February 2025		
Payroll - Changes in Circumstances	Review of the processes by which information affecting individual's pay calculation is notified and actioned. To include pension contributions and salary sacrifice schemes.	February 2025		
Purchase to Pay	Review of expenditure processes following the implementation of purchase to pay. To include consideration approaches to support continuous auditing of purchasing data.	February 2025		
Systems Reviews				

2024/25 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN	Proposed Coverage	Target Scrutiny Reporting	Status / Update	Assurance Level
Asset Management	Review of the processes which ensure that the Council's asset management databases are complete, accurate, and kept up to date. To include processes for condition assessment.	February 2025		
Housing - Planned and Reactive Maintenance	Review of the processes to plan and carry out maintenance on Council housing stock, including arrangements for reactive maintenance.	April 2025		
Immigration Sponsorship and Visas	Review of the processes by which the Council considers and manages recruitment applications from individuals overseas and/or requiring visa sponsorship, including the update of these policies and procedures in line with changing legislation.	April 2025		
Onboarding & Induction	Review of onboarding processes for all staff, and the guidance available to line management overseeing and recording the onboarding of new starts.	June 2025		
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Intake processes	Review of the administrative processes to support the Multi-Agency Safeguarding hub in taking timely, effective action on referrals in collaboration with Council Services and partner bodies.	April 2025		
Climate Strategy and Delivery Plans	Review to be conducted using a scope and audit programme being developed by SLACIAG for use across local authorities in Scotland.	June 2025		
Insurance	A review of Insurance processes will be carried out by the Internal Audit contractor.	June 2025		
DHSCP Review	Review covering an aspect of DHSCP activity. Scope to be confirmed in consultation with the internal auditors for the IJB.	June 2025	Draft plan in discussion	
Other Work				

2024/25 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN	Proposed Coverage	Target Scrutiny Reporting	Status / Update	Assurance Level
Follow Up	Review of progress with the implementation of prior internal audit actions agreed by the Council, for the purpose of providing assurance to Elected Members that identified issues are addressed on a timely basis, and that management attention is appropriately directed towards issues which expose the Council to higher degrees of risk.	Each meeting	Ongoing.	N/A
Technical Development	Planning and Scoping work for review and update of the Council's Internal Audit Methodology, including the introduction of Continuous Auditing and Data Analytics and implementation of new Public Sector Internal Audit Standards expected late summer/early autumn 2024.	As required	Partially complete, with some areas in progress or awaiting revised Internal Audit Standards	N/A
Advice and Guidance	Provision of ad-hoc support to assist services in respect of specific queries and contribute to the delivery of improvements in the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control. This will include the ongoing provision of advice and guidance surrounding the development of newly implemented systems and processes, or the revision and update of those processes.	N/A	Ongoing	N/A
External Quality Assessment Process	As part of the peer review process developed to ensure conformance with the PSIAS, complete External Quality Assessment (EQA) of the Council's Internal Audit Service. Self-assessment provided to reviewer November 2023. Delays in progress with review due to reviewer's resourcing issues.	December 2024	Review in progress. Reporting is planned to December 2024 Scrutiny Committee	
PSIAS Quality Self-Assessment Process	Annual self-assessment for conformance with PSIAS.	June 2025		
Specific Investigations	To respond to requests for advice and assistance as required in respect of cases of suspected fraud, corruption, or malpractice.	As required	On-going as required	N/A

Definitions of Levels of Assurance

Comprehensive Assurance	The system of controls is essentially sound and supports the achievement of objectives and management of risk. Controls are consistently applied. Some improvement in relatively minor areas may be identified.
Substantial Assurance	Systems of control are generally sound, however there are instances in which controls can be strengthened, or where controls have not been effectively applied giving rise to increased risk.
Limited Assurance	Some satisfactory elements of control are present; however, weaknesses exist in the system of control, and / or their application, which give rise to significant risk.
No Assurance	Minimal or no satisfactory elements of control are present. Major weaknesses or gaps exist in the system of control, and/or the implementation of established controls, resulting in areas of unmanaged risk.

OUTSTANDING INTERNAL AUDIT AGREED ACTIONS

Agreed actions from Internal Audit recommendations are recorded in Pentana and implementation is monitored by Services and the Risk and Assurance Board. Implementation of the agreed action is the responsibility of the service area, and the risk exposure identified in the audit remains in place until the action has been completed. New dates should be agreed for actions that were not complete by their original due date.

The numbers of outstanding actions in Pentana for each Service, by audit year, on 3 September 2024 are summarised in the following tables.

- Table 1 - shows actions that have not yet reached their original agreed due date.
- Table 2 - shows actions that have had their due dates extended,
- Table 3 - shows actions overdue from their agreed due date, and which require a new date to be agreed.

At 9 September 2024 there were 48 open actions, compared to 44 at 29 May 2024. Two are critical but have not yet reached their due date. This represents the closure of 14 actions and addition of 18 actions. New dates for completion of overdue actions are required for the actions in Table 3. There is still work to be done to close off older actions, the majority of which have a high level of completion but still require a little more work to complete fully.

Table 1 - Actions not yet reached original agreed due date

Service	Audit Year	Critical	High	Medium	Low	Total
		No	No	No	No	No
Chief Executives Service	2022/23	2	-	-	-	2
	2023/24	-	2	1	1	4
Children and Families	2023/24	-	-	2	-	2
Corporate Services	2022/23	-	3	1	1	5
Neighbourhood Services	2022/23	-	1			1
Totals		2	6	4	2	14

Table 2 - Actions with due date extended from original due date

Service	Audit Year	Critical No	High No	Medium No	Low No	Total No
Children and Families	2022/23	-	-	-	2	2
City Development	2022/23	-	1	-	-	1
Corporate Services	2021/22	-	1	-	-	1
	2022/23	-	1	1	2	4
Totals		0	3	1	4	8

Table 3 - Actions overdue from agreed due date

Service	Audit Year	Critical No	High No	Medium No	Low No	Total No
Children and Families	2021/22	-	2	-	-	2
	2023/24	-	-	2	1	3
City Development	2022/23	-	1	-	-	1
Corporate Services	2020/21	-	1	-	-	1
	2021/22	-	-	-	5	5
	2022/23	-	-	4	2	6
Corporate	2021/22	-	1	-	1	2
Neighbourhood Services	2016/17	-	1	-	-	1
	2017/18	-	1	-	-	1
	2020/21	-	2	-	-	2
	2021/22	-	2	-	-	2
Totals		0	11	6	9	26

Definitions of Action Priority

Critical	Very high-risk exposure to potentially major negative impact on resources, security, records, compliance, or reputation from absence of or failure of a fundamental control. Immediate attention is required.
High	High risk exposure to potentially significant negative impact on resources, security, records, compliance, or reputation from absence of or non-compliance with a key control. Prompt attention is required.
Medium	Moderate risk exposure to potentially medium negative impact on resources, security, records, compliance or reputation from absence or non-compliance with an important supporting control, or isolated non-compliance with a key control. Attention is required within a reasonable timescale.
Low	Low risk exposure to potentially minor negative impact on resources, security, records, compliance, or reputation from absence of or non-compliance with a lower-level control, or areas without risk exposure but which are inefficient, or inconsistent with best practice. Attention is required within a reasonable timescale.

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