

## **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

### **7 MARCH 2025**

## **INTERNAL AUDIT AND COUNTER FRAUD PLAN 2025/2026**

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### **Recommendation**

- 1. The Chief Internal Auditor recommends that the Internal Audit Charter, Strategy and Counter Fraud and Annual Audit Plan 2025/2026 be approved.**

### **Background**

2. The Global Internal Audit Standards are due to replace the current Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) from April 2025. Until April, PSIAS remain as the current Standards for Public Sector. The new Standards set out the requirements of a 'Board' and the Chief Audit Executive. A separate report has been prepared to provide an overview of the new Standards, the impact they will have, and the preparation undertaken to satisfy them. The Audit and Governance Committee, under its Terms of Reference contained in the Council's Constitution, is required to approve the Internal Audit Plan to provide assurance to support the overall governance framework.

3. This Council's revised Internal Audit Charter and Strategy is contained at Appendix 2 and formally describes the vision, purpose, authority, and principal responsibilities of the Council's Internal Audit Service. The Mandate that was agreed in March 2024 has been revised into a two-year Strategy notwithstanding the impact that devolution may have. The Service has transitioned over the past 12 months to become more risk based and return to being conformant with Sector Standards. The conformance will be tested against PSIAS and the new Global Internal Audit Standards using an independent external assessment due to take place in March 2025. The outcome of this assessment will be reported before Audit and Governance Committee and used to further develop the Service as part of the quality assurance improvement plan.

4. The Chief Internal Auditor is responsible for developing a risk-based plan which considers the organisation's risk management framework, including using risk tolerance levels set by management for the different activities or parts of the organisation. The outline plan can be found at Appendix 1.

### **Internal auditing**

5. 2025/26 will again see significant changes taking place within the organisation due to financial challenges and the ongoing preparation for devolution as well as County elections. Where there is change there is potential risk. The need for robust and effective controls to ensure that resources are used to best effect and deliver the authority's objectives has never been greater. Internal audit strengthens the organisation's ability to create, protect, and sustain value by providing the Audit and Governance Committee and management with independent, risk-based, and objective assurance, advice, insight, and foresight. Preparing a plan that addresses the

emerging risks and developing areas for the Council, whilst still covering the material and cross cutting systems, is essential and ensures that internal audit resources are directed in the most appropriate way.

6. Internal Audit, along with many other areas within the Organisation saw resource reductions in 2024/25. The impact of permanently losing resource in the Internal Audit Service and a vacancy saw a necessity to reduce the Plan midyear due to the reduced available resource.

7. The 2025/26 audit plan reflects a position of reduced available resource now we have had time to fully understand the real impact of losing a more senior post in the Service at the end of 2023/24. The Plan includes the link to corporate priorities, risk, resource allocation and outline scope of coverage. At the start of each audit the scope is discussed and agreed with stakeholders with the view to providing management, the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151) and Members with assurance on the control framework to manage the risks identified. The plan will remain flexible, and any changes will be agreed formally with the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151). Where changes are considered material, these will be reported to Audit and Governance Committee as part of the regular Progress Report.

8. The audit plan has taken into consideration the potential organisational changes for 2025/26. Where working arrangements cut across different Directorates these are shown separately e.g. financials, IT, certification.

## **Plan Formulation**

9. There continues to be a growing trend in the sector towards agile auditing. This way of auditing provides for a more flexible and responsive approach towards changing risks, in turn maximising resource focus to stakeholders when needed.

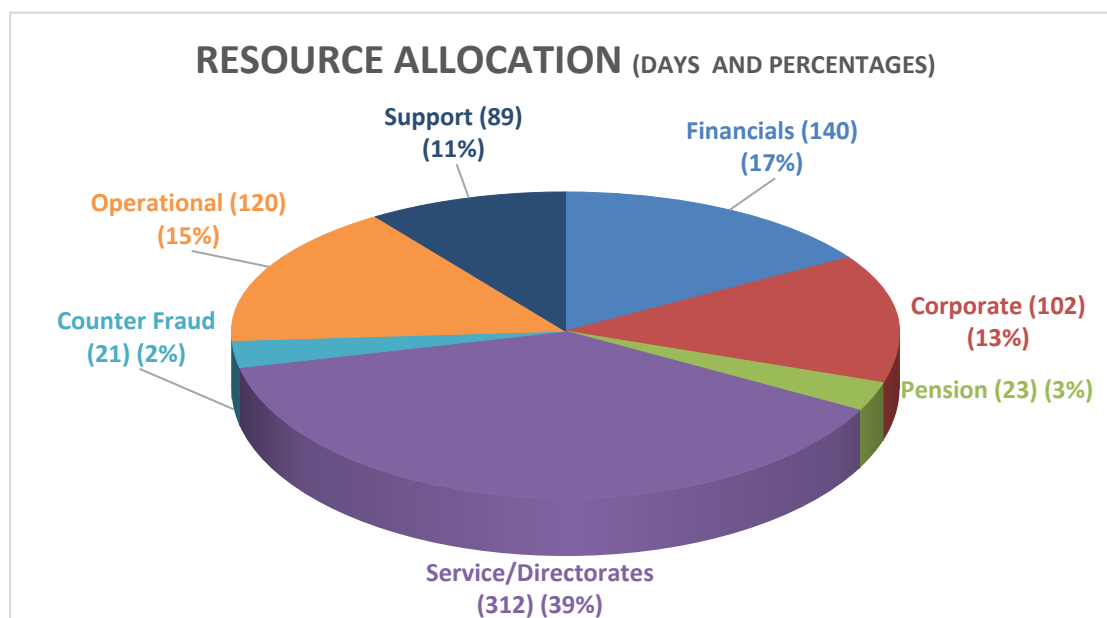
Benefits of this approach include:

- Greater and more regular discussion with stakeholder leads.
- Improved opportunity to keep the plan aligned to changing risks within the Services and the Authority as a whole.
- Plans change regularly so a reduction in non-productive resource planning.

10. The Plan is always built around organisational core priorities, risk management, local knowledge, audit requirements, perceptions of current issues in discussion with stakeholder management and other assurance processes. The audit resource deployment for 2025/26 will provide opportunity for greater depth reviews but the coverage will be more focussed. A balance has been applied to include those areas with what is considered higher risks.

11. The Internal Audit Plan (Appendix 1) details the coverage and approach we will take to provide assurance to those in Governance. The most appropriate review method i.e., process, hybrid, light touch, critical friend/advisory will be decided as part of the detailed scoping depending on the circumstances and risks that present at the time the review is undertaken. The indicative resource allocation across all areas to meet this summary plan is set out in the pie chart below. This indicates a balance across key business functions which will provide assurance on the control framework from which to produce

the annual assurance opinion. The total number of internal audit days for 2025/26 is 807. Corporate, Financials and Service/Directorates specific audits amount to a total of 554 days which is circa 69% of the plan.



12. The audit plan identifies key corporate, service risks and areas identified as of greatest audit need. Our expectation is that audit work is of most need in these areas. The 2025/26 Plan has been prioritised on a risk basis and has seen the potential work demands outstrip the available resource. To manage this a list of reviews has been compiled which will be monitored throughout the year and included in the plan on a risk approach if the risk priority changes. These are all underpinned by our core assurance work on the main financial systems, infrastructure systems and processes used to administer the most significant income and expenditure flows. Additional to this we expect to provide an allocation of resource on demand to service areas which is unscheduled and which we refer to as the 'flexible plan' and advisory services covered by the 'operational' budget. Included in this is the potential work regarding new system implementation, e.g. implementation of a new Tech1 finance system.

13. School audits have in the past featured prominently in the plan. 2024/25 saw a realigning of this resource requirement with a reduced coverage but more targeted engagement driven by identified risks within the school environment and areas of known weakness/risk. 2025/26 will see a further reduction in this coverage due to a need to place resource elsewhere based on risk. Internal Audit regularly attend a schools' forum to monitor and understand the risks associated with schools.

14. An element of our work ensures effective and efficient audit activity is provided to the Council and the internal audit Service continues to meet statutory responsibilities. In some instances, this work results in a direct output (i.e. an audit report) but in other circumstances the output may simply be advice or guidance. To provide for this an advisory budget is included in the Plan. The three lines of defence model will also be a key influencer with stakeholders and reviews and can be seen at Appendix 3.

## **Follow-up and implementation**

15. Follow up is a key aspect of internal audit service, ensuring potential risks have been mitigated to an acceptable level in a timely manner. Several areas where 'needs improvement' assurance outcomes were reported in 2024/25 will be revisited as part of the Plan to ensure that actions have been taken and evidence is in place thus helping to mitigate any high-risk issues.

## **Anti-Fraud and Corruption**

16. Fraud Prevention and Detection and the National Fraud Initiative Counter-Fraud arrangements remains a priority for the Council and assisting in the protection of public funds and accountability. From April 2024 a dedicated resource was no longer available in the Internal Audit Team for counter fraud work. To compensate for this, internal audit work contained elements of anti-fraud, bribery and corruption to ensure that sound and effective arrangements are in place to prevent and detect fraud and / or irregularity. A corporate strategy as well as policies were updated during 2024/25 along with the roll out of mandatory eLearning and a Christmas reminder reminding staff about counter fraud, bribery and corruption expectations. A 24/7 fraud hotline is monitored by Internal Audit with instances of potential fraud and irregularities being investigated using the budget included in the Plan.

17. The Council remain committed to reducing fraud, bribery and corruption. In recognition of the guidance in the Fraud Strategy for Local Government "Fighting Fraud Locally" there is a focus on stopping it before it happens. Nationally these areas include Procurement, Payroll, Blue Badges, Direct Payments and Pensions. For 2024/25 we propose to cover several of these areas in conjunction with corporate risk and continuing support of the National Fraud Initiative.

## **Third Party Assurance**

18. We recognise there are other review functions which provide sources of assurance, both internally and externally, (e.g., ICT Public Service Network, cyber essentials assurance testing, Ofsted, Home Office) over aspects of the Council's operations. Where possible we will seek to place reliance on such work thus expanding the internal assurance coverage without specifically including it in the plan.

## **External Audit**

19. To try to reduce duplication of effort we understand the importance of working with our External Auditors. The audit plan is shared with the external auditors for information along with some of the outcomes over the year. We will seek to develop a closer working relationship with our External Auditors Grant Thornton during 2025/26 which will be beneficial to both parties.

## **Resourcing**

20. 2024/25 saw a reduction in the Internal Audit establishment regarding a senior role. Twelve months on, the impact of the loss has become evident. The impact is a reduced internal audit plan as the mentoring capacity is now much reduced for the Auditors. The resource requirements have been assessed and the 2025/26 Plan is based on risk -v- resource availability. Those areas which had been identified as areas for consideration

for the Plan that have not been included are also included in Appendix 1. We will continually review the plan against the risks of the Council and will provide updates to the Audit and Governance Committee on a quarterly basis highlighting any material adjustments.

### **Internal Audit Charter and Strategy**

21. The Internal Audit Charter and Strategy (Appendix 2) are provided for approval.

### **Reporting**

22. The Plan delivery will be reported to Committee on a quarterly basis and will be a key tool for the Audit and Governance Committee to monitor progress.

### **Contact Points**

#### Specific Contact Points for this report

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### **Supporting Information**

Appendix 1 – Internal Audit Plan 2025/2026 Plan

Appendix 2 – Audit Charter and Strategy

Appendix 3 – 3 Lines of Defence Model

### **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Chief Internal Auditor) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter.

**Internal Audit Plan 2025/26**

Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
Financials	Assurance	Accounts Receivable	21	1-4	Assurance on a key financial system	R0002: Financial Instability	Medium	Open for Business	Rolling programme of testing to be undertaken on the Accounts Receivable system throughout the year.
Financials	Assurance	Accounts Payable	21	1-4	Assurance on a key financial system	R0002: Financial Instability	Medium	Open for Business	Rolling programme of testing to be undertaken on the Accounts Payable system throughout the year.
Financials	Assurance	Payroll	21	1-4	Assurance on a key financial system	R0002: Financial Instability	Medium	Open for Business	Rolling programme of testing to be undertaken on the Payroll system throughout the year.
Financials	Assurance	Budget Setting & Monitoring - Capital	16	2-3	Assurance on a key financial system	R0002: Financial Instability	Medium	Open for Business	Examination and test of the key controls involved in setting, approving, monitoring and reporting on the Capital budget.
Financials	Assurance	Treasury Management	8	3	Assurance on a key financial system	R0002: Financial Instability	Medium	Open for Business	Test and review that investments and borrowing are in line with the approved Treasury Management Strategy.
Financials	Assurance	Debt Management	21	1	Assurance on a key financial system	R0002: Financial Instability	High	Open for Business	Review and testing to cover all areas of the Council in relation to debt management to provide assurance that debt recovery processes are operating as expected.

Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
Financials	Assurance	Suspense Accounts / VAT	16	2	Assurance on a key financial system	R0002: Financial Instability	Medium	Open for Business	Review to ensure that suspense accounts are being cleared in a timely manner and VAT is being accounted for correctly.
Financials	Assurance	BACS Bureau audit	16	1	Assurance on a key financial system	R0002: Financial Instability	Medium	Open for Business	As a result of the BACS Bureau Audit Internal Audit have been asked to undertake an audit of BACS related operations
Corporate	Certification	Youth Justice Grant	9	1	Declaration required as part of grant conditions	Risk of loss of income to deliver services if declaration is not provided to grant paying body	Medium	Health and Wellbeing	Test a sample of expenditure attributed to the grant to provided assurance that the grant has been spent in accordance with the grant conditions.
Corporate	Certification	Disabled Facilities Grant	4	3	Declaration required as part of grant conditions	Risk of loss of income to deliver services if declaration is not provided to grant paying body	Medium	Health and Wellbeing	Test a sample of expenditure attributed to the grant to provided assurance that the grant has been spent in accordance with the grant conditions.
Corporate	Certification	Bus Subsidy (Revenue) Grant	6	2	Declaration required as part of grant conditions	R0113: Failure to maintain commercial bus operations	Medium	Open for Business	Test a sample of expenditure attributed to the grant to provided assurance that the grant has been spent in accordance with the grant conditions.

Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
Corporate	Certification	Worcester Business Central Growth Hub	9	1	Declaration required as part of grant conditions	Risk of loss of income to deliver services if declaration is not provided to grant paying body	Medium	Open for Business	Test a sample of expenditure attributed to the grant to provided assurance that the grant has been spent in accordance with the grant conditions.
Corporate	Certification	Capital Transport Grant	7	2	Declaration required as part of grant conditions	Risk of loss of income to deliver services if declaration is not provided to grant paying body	Medium	Open for Business	Test a sample of expenditure attributed to the grant to provided assurance that the grant has been spent in accordance with the grant conditions.
Corporate	Certification	Home Upgrade Grant	7	1	Declaration required as part of grant conditions	Risk of loss of income to deliver services if declaration is not provided to grant paying body	Medium	The Environment	Test a sample of expenditure attributed to the grant to provided assurance that the grant has been spent in accordance with the grant conditions.
Corporate	Certification	Local Transport Funds /BSIP	11	2	Declaration required as part of grant conditions	Risk of loss of income to deliver services if declaration is not provided to grant paying body	Medium	Open for Business	Test a sample of expenditure attributed to the grant to provided assurance that the grant has been spent in accordance with the grant conditions.



Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
Corporate	Certification	Basic Needs / Higher level needs	9	3	Declaration required as part of grant conditions	Risk of loss of income to deliver services if declaration is not provided to grant paying body	Medium	Children and Families	Test a sample of expenditure attributed to the grant to provided assurance that the grant has been spent in accordance with the grant conditions.
Corporate	Independent Examination	Kidderminster Trust	2	3	Independent Examination required to confirm the income, expenditure, assets and liabilities of the Trust are fairly stated.	Risk of incorrect reporting to the Trust's trustees.	Low	Children and Families	Test income, expenditure, assets and liabilities included in the Trust's account to provide assurance that they are fairly stated.
Corporate	Assurance	Risk Management	16	3-4	Risk management is an important function within the Council which links with the work of Internal Audit.	Risk identified by Internal Audit and External Audit	High	All	Internal Audit will review the risk management process and the new risk management system being implemented.
Corporate	Assurance	Performance Data (Rolling Programme)	11	4	Performance Data that is in the public domain will be checked for accuracy.	Risk identified by Internal Audit.	Medium	Open for Business	2025/2026 is the 2nd Year of a rolling programme of work, this year will cover Children and Families

Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
Corporate	Assurance	Data Protection and Data Handling (Rolling Programme)	11	3-4	To provide assurance that the Council is complying with GDPR.	R0025: Security - Cyber Security	Medium	Open for Business	2025/2026 is the 2nd Year of a rolling programme of work, this year will cover Secure disposal of data.
Pension	Assurance	LGPS Central Investment Audit	20	4	Rota of Investment and Governance audits undertaken by members of the Internal Audit Working Group.	The Pension Fund invests money on behalf of its members which is of significant value.	Medium	Good Governance	In 2025/2026 Worcestershire County Council Internal Audit are allocated the Investment audit (the scope is decided by the working group)
Pension	Assurance	LGPS Central - Internal Audit Working Group	3	1-4	Worcestershire County Council is one of eight partners in LGPS Central. Attendance at the meetings and review of audit reports is undertaken collectively as a group.	The Pension Fund invests money on behalf of its members which is of significant value.	Medium	Good Governance	Time allocated for attendance at the Internal Audit Working Group for LGPS Central Ltd and review of audit report relating to the Company.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Direct Payments	26	3-4	Potential for fraud to be committed.	Potential fraud	Critical	Health and Wellbeing	Review of the systems and processes in place in relation to the payment of Direct Payments.

Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Continuing Health Care	16	1-2	There have been changes in the application of the Framework which is open to interpretation.	Discussion with management as part of the planning process.	High	Health and Wellbeing	Test check that the Council are applying the Continuing Health Care Framework correctly.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Highways system follow up	13	2	Result of a review undertaken in 2023/2024	Discussion with management as part of the planning process.	High	Open for Business	Follow up of the recommendations made in the 2023/2024 report.
Service/ Directorate	Advisory	Project Management	23	3	A redesign of project management is being undertaken with a new system being implemented.	Discussion with management as part of the planning process.	High	All	Review of the processes, Internal Audit to undertake the role of critical friend.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Artificial Intelligence and the Corporate use	21	1-2	Artificial Intelligence is becoming more widely used but this brings risks and challenges around data protection and cyber security.	Internal Audit R0025: Security - Cyber Security	High	Open for Business	Review the Council's approach to managing AI and the controls in place surrounding the use of AI.

Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	External Projects - Legal	18	1	There are many projects within the Council which use an external legal firm who need to be suitable for the project they are involved in.	Discussion with management as part of the planning process. R0112: Financial strength of our primary contractors	High	All	Identify projects where there is a legal firm involved and review how the suitability of the legal team was assessed.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Placements	24	1	High expenditure area in Children's services.	Discussion with management as part of the planning process. R0089: Serious harm or death of a child or a young person & R0078 Increase in demand for safeguarding	High	Children and Families	Review of the start to end of the process of children's placements and ascertain how good the Council are at reducing costs.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Focused school audit	16	1	Review of schools on a risk basis	Review of school on a risk basis	Medium	Children and Families	Review and test check of the financial controls of the school.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Focused school audit	16	1	Review of schools on a risk basis	Review of school on a risk basis	Medium	Children and Families	Review and test check of the financial controls of the school.

Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Contract Management	26	4	Contract management covers all Directorates within the Council and is important to ensure that the Council are not exposed to any liabilities as a result of poor contract management	Discussion with management as part of the planning process. R0112: Financial strength of our primary contractors	Medium	All	For major contracts of the Council the audit trail from the invoice back to the contract monitoring will be reviewed to ensure monitoring is undertaken to provide assurance the invoice is correct to be paid.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Emergency Planning	16	1	The Council need to ensure that it is prepared in an emergency situation	Discussion with management as part of the planning process. R0123: Insider threat	Medium	All	Review of the processes in place should an emergency situation occur.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Complaints	16	4	Two recent public interest reports and to ensure that complaints to the Council are answered in line with policy.	Discussion with management as part of the planning process.	Medium	All	Review of the process for the Council handling complaints.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Bank and Petty Cash at Children's homes	11	3	Main area of spend in the Council's Children's homes	Discussion with management as part of the	Medium	Children and Families	Review and test check transactions relating to the bank account and petty cash to provide

Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
						planning process.			assurance on expenditure.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	S106 Money	16	1	Potential for repayment or non-receipt of S106 monies	Discussion with management as part of the planning process.	Medium	Open for Business	Ensure that the process for recording S106 monies is robust to identify any balances remaining avoiding the potential for repayment.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Strengthening Communities	16	3-4	The Council receive £7.9m of grant for Household Support Fund which is to be spent in accordance with the requirements of the grant.	Discussion with management as part of the planning process.	Medium	Health and Wellbeing	Review and ensure that the grant is being spend in accordance with the grant conditions.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Procurement Cards expenditure in Children's Directorate	11	1-4	To ensure that spend on procurement card is in line with the policy.	Discussion with management as part of the planning process.	Medium	Children and Families	Rolling programme of tests against procurement card spend.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Early Years entitlements expansion	16	4	Early Years entitlement funding has increased significantly.	Discussion with management as part of the planning process.	Medium	Children and Families	Review processes for paying Early Years providers to provide assurance that they are robust.
Service/ Directorate	Assurance	Business Continuity	11	1	Follow up of 2023/2024 audit	Result of Internal Audit	Medium	All	Review of the implementation of the

Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
						work undertaken in 2023/2024.			business continuity finding.
Counter Fraud	Investigation	NFI	2	1-4	Requirement - data matching service	N/A	N/A	N/A	To assist Council staff with any queries relating to the NFI matches.
Counter Fraud	Investigation	Counter Fraud / Investigations	15	1-4	Time included to enable any fraud investigations to be undertaken.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Should a potential fraud be brought to the attention of Internal Audit time is required to investigate and report.
Counter Fraud	Investigation	Monitoring Fraud Hotline	4	1-4	Required to monitor the calls being received via the hotline.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Time is required to triage calls received on the fraud hotline.
Operational	Assurance	Completion of 2024/2025 year reviews	30	1	Time included for completion of 2024/2025 audits.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Time included to complete any 2024/2025 reviews.
Operational	Assurance	Follow up (review of Actions)	50	1-4	Requirement as a result of the audit process	N/A	N/A	N/A	Any actions as a result of an audit require the actions to be followed up to gain assurance that they have been implemented.
Operational	Assurance	Contingency (Data Analytics/grants)	40	1-4	Time included in case of any requirements to audit areas not included in the plan.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Time included to respond to new and emerging risks.

Area	Indicative Output	Audit Area	Total Days	Indicative Quarter(s)	Driving factor	Risk Source	Risk Score	Strategic Objective	Description
Support Requirements		Advisory to include Pension Administration Workflows	25	1-4	Ad hoc queries and reviews of policies when received by officers of the Council.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Internal Audit receive queries from Council staff regarding policies and procedures, time is included to answer these queries.
Support Requirements		Mtgs, cttee support, horizon scanning, networking	44	1-4	Required to support the Internal Audit service	N/A	N/A	N/A	Time allocated to attending relevant meetings and reporting.
Support Requirements		Service Plan delivery	20	1-4	Requirement to improve the service.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Time to implement any improvement recommendations from the External Quality Assessment.

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## Internal Audit Plan for 2025/26

The table below provides a list of potential review areas that have not been included in the Plan for 2025/26. It is considered that audit resource is better focussed to those areas identified in the plan for the coming year based on risk. A watching brief will be kept on these areas, along with those included in the Plan, as the year progresses as part of the overall risk consideration.

Directorate	Audit	Type	Risk Score	Justification why not Included in the Plan
Finance, Commercial and Performance Services	New Finance System	Assurance	High	Internal Audit to attend the meetings on the implementation of the new finance system therefore no testing to be undertaken.
Finance, Commercial and Performance Services	IFRS 16 - Leases	Assurance	Medium	Unidentified leases. Not a priority area for Internal Audit.
Finance, Commercial and Performance Services	Corporate Statutory Reporting	Assurance	Medium	Issue was regarding out-of-date data being presented at meetings. Not a priority area for Internal Audit.
Children's	High Needs Grant	Assurance	High	Ongoing issue that is being managed. The Council are on board and the S151 is involved. A statutory override in place.
Children's	Data accuracy regarding spend against child on LAS.	Assurance	Medium	Procurement card audit has already undertaken and the action regarding recording on LAS has been implemented.
Pension (Admin)	New systems / Workflow / Policies	Advisory	Medium	Watching brief on this. To allocate to advisory budget if time required.
Human Resources	Mileage and Subsistence	Assurance	Medium	Work is being undertaken in quarter 4 of 2024/2025 which will include findings and actions therefore this to be deferred to 2026/2027 to undertake a full audit.
Human Resources	Learning and Development (Apprenticeship levy)	Assurance	Medium	The apprenticeship levy is changing. Internal Audit need to review the changes, and the levy spend but this is due towards the end of

Directorate	Audit	Type	Risk Score	Justification why not included in the Plan
				the financial year. To be undertaken at the beginning of 2026/2027.
Human Resources	HR – value for money impact monitoring for initiatives	Assurance	Medium	Audit would cover wellbeing - map the value added and are the wellbeing initiatives having an impact. Not a high priority area for Internal Audit.
Information Technology	Data Usage	Assurance	Medium	As part of the cyber audit currently being undertaken memory sticks are being covered and AI is already included as an audit.
Legal and Governance	Scheme of Delegation	Assurance	Medium	The constitution is being updated and being aligned with the current structure, therefore an audit for 2026/2027.
Adults and Communities	Advocacy Services	Assurance	High	Issue is regarding the third-party advocacy services referring cases to legal. As third party unsure what IA can do to add value.
Adults and Communities	Adult Front Door	Assurance	Medium	Unsure what would add value from an audit perspective and the service has limited capacity.
Adults and Communities	Libraries	Assurance	Medium	There is a refreshed strategy. Watching brief as to how the Council is meeting the Strategy.
Economy and Infrastructure	Home to school scrutiny breakdown (taxis)	Assurance	Critical	Home to School expenditure relating to taxis has been taken to Children and Families Overview Scrutiny 27/01/2025
Economy and Infrastructure	Shrub Hill Site Governance	Assurance	Medium	There is an awareness of the site and the challenges it presents.
Economy and Infrastructure	Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG)	Assurance	Low	Watching brief for this area