

REPORT TITLE: GOVERNANCE QUARTERLY UPDATE – Q3 2018/19

7 MARCH 2019

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER: CLLR ASHTON – PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

To provide members of the Audit Committee with a summary overview of the key issues in respect of governance arising during the third quarter of the 2019/20 financial year.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Audit Committee notes the content of the report and the progress against the Internal Audit Plan, the Annual Governance Statement and LGA Peer Review Action Plan as set out in the Appendices.

IMPLICATIONS:1 COUNCIL STRATEGY OUTCOME

- 1.1 This summary document supports the Council's approach to providing efficient public services by managing and highlighting the latest key governance issues requiring action.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 None identified.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None identified.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Consultation on the content of the Report has been undertaken with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Chairman of the Audit Committee.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 None.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSEMENT

- 8.1 None required.

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 None required.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Reputation – ensuring that an effective governance framework is in place and followed</i>	This report is a summary of the arrangements in place to ensure the Council's governance processes and procedures are robust and fit for purpose.	By pulling together the latest issues from across governance information this gives the committee more of an opportunity to identify any cross-cutting themes that might occur.

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 11.1 This report sets out the summary information in respect of the third quarter of the 2018/19 financial year concerning governance.

Annual Governance Statement

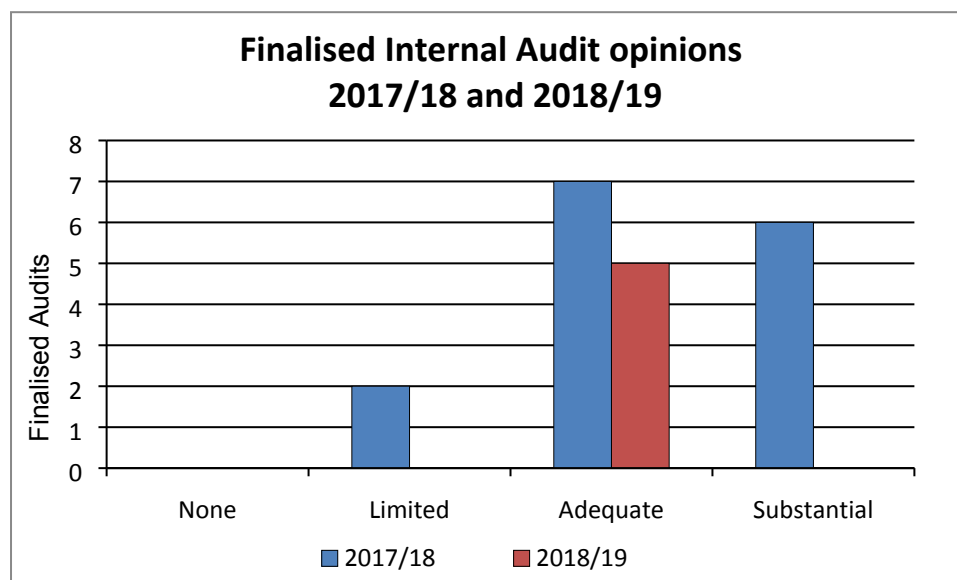
- 11.2 Progress against the actions included in the 2017/18 Annual Governance Statement is included in Appendix 2 to this report.

Gifts and Hospitality

- 11.3 During the period October to December 2018, there were fifteen declarations by members or officers having received gifts and hospitality.
- 11.4 This information will continue to be updated in future quarterly Governance reports.

Internal Audit assurance reports

- 11.5 The graph below shows the assurance levels of the completed internal audits that were included in the 2017/18 and 2018/19 Audit Plans.



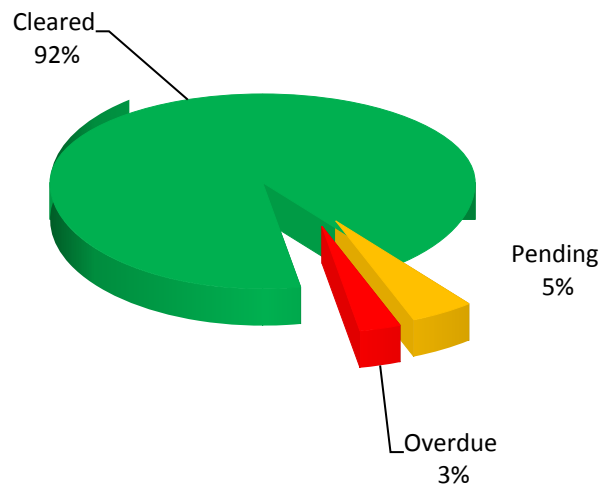
- 11.6 The limited assurance opinions issued during 2017/18 were in respect of two audits completed and these were for Partnership Working and Business Continuity. There have been no audit reports published during 2017/18 or 2018/19 that concluded with a “no” assurance opinion.

Internal Audit Management Action Tracking

- 11.7 The chart below shows the current position (since 1 April 2015) of the progress of the management actions arising from internal audit reports. More

detailed information is provided in the Internal Audit Progress Report included as Appendix 1 to this report.

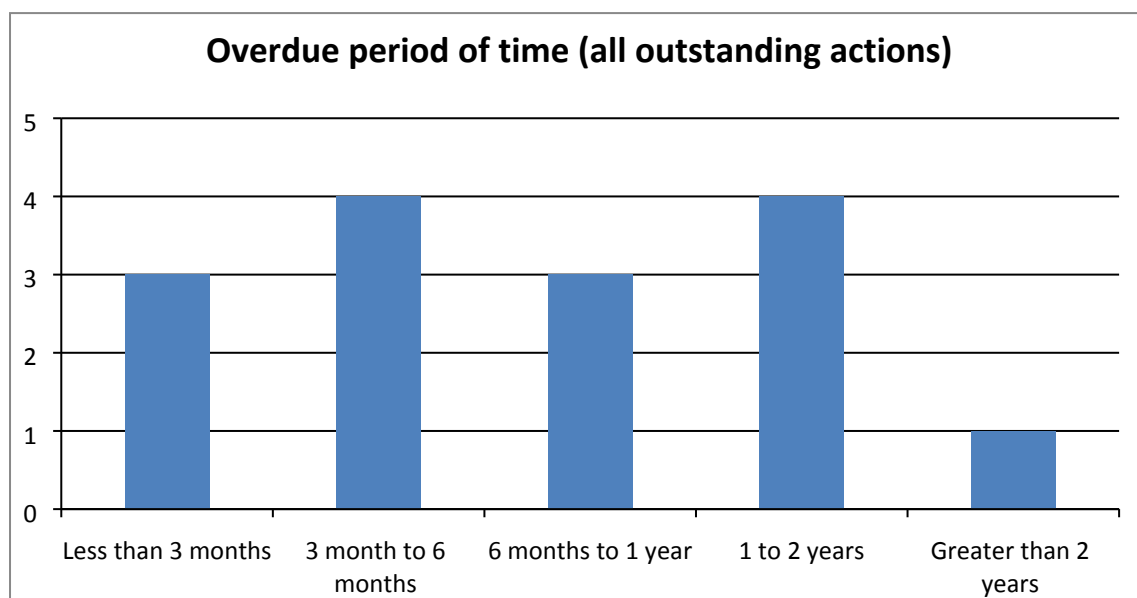
Summary of audit recommendation responses



- 11.8 Progress against the management actions that are included in the Internal Audit reports are reviewed regularly and a summary table showing the status of these actions is reported on a quarterly basis. These recommendations and actions are kept under regular review to assess where some are superseded by external or internal factors.
- 11.9 To support the Committee to quickly identify where there are overdue actions, the progress table on the next page includes only the audits where there are overdue actions. It remains a priority for officers to focus on completing their actions within the agreed timescales and progress continues to be made to reduce the total number of overdue actions.
- 11.10 The table below has been updated and includes only the internal audits where there are currently overdue actions.
- 11.11 There are currently 15 overdue audit actions with no high priority overdue actions.
- 11.12 There are a number of recently completed internal audits that have pending but not yet overdue actions, and as such are not included in the table.
- 11.13 The more detailed Internal Audit Progress report provided by the Southern Internal Audit Partnership is included in Appendix 1 to the report.

Audit Review	Report Date	Audit Sponsor	Assurance Opinion	Management Actions ('High Priority')				
				Reported	Not Accepted	Pending	Cleared	Overdue
Hampshire Cultural Trust	24/05/16	SDP	Limited	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)	1 (0)
Information Governance	28/03/17	SDR	Adequate	11 (1)	0 (0)	1 (0)	7 (1)	3 (0)
Development Management	17/05/17	SDS	Substantial	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)
Recruitment	18/05/17	SDR	Limited	6 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (0)	2 (0)
Cyber Security	27/09/17	SDR	Limited	5 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	1 (0)
IT Software Licensing and IT Asset Management	12/03/18	SDR	Adequate	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)	1 (0)
Housing Planned Maintenance	01/05/18	SDS	Adequate	2 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	1 (0)
Income Generation and Collection	11/06/18	SDR	Adequate	8 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (0)	3 (0)
Procurement	12/07/18	SDR	Adequate	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)	1 (0)
Risk Management	26/10/18	SDR	Adequate	6 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (2)	1 (0)

- 11.14 Committee members previously requested a chart be included in future quarterly governance monitoring reports that show the period of time that the outstanding audit management actions have been overdue.
- 11.15 There are currently 15 overdue actions and the chart below provides details of amount of time that has lapsed since the target date for these actions.



- 11.16 The chart above shows there is one management action that is over two years overdue. This action refers to the 2016/17 audit that reviewed the transfer between the Council and the Hampshire Cultural Trust.

External Audit

- 11.17 The External Auditor's Annual Certification of Claims and Returns for 2017/18 included elsewhere on this Committee's agenda (report AUD230 refers) provides a summary of the work undertaken by the auditors on the 2017/18 Housing Subsidy Claim.

LGA Peer Challenge Follow Up

- 11.18 At the last meeting of this Committee, members were presented with a report that provided feedback from the follow up undertaken by the LGA Peer Challenge Team in September 2018.
- 11.19 Attached as Appendix 3 to this report is an update on the progress that the Council has achieved in responding to the issues identified by the Peer Challenge Team.
- 11.20 The progress report shows that the Council has completed all of the actions that it set out to deliver and before the end of the current financial year.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 None.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

AUD220 Governance Quarterly Update – Q2 2018/19

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Internal Audit Progress Report

Appendix 2 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Monitoring Report

Appendix 3 – LGA Peer Challenge Follow-Up – Progress Report

Internal Audit Progress Report

February 2019

Winchester City Council



**Southern Internal
Audit Partnership**

Assurance through excellence
and innovation

Contents:

1.	Role of Internal Audit	3
2.	Purpose of report	4
3.	Performance dashboard	5
4.	Status of 'live' reports	6 - 7
5.	Executive summaries 'Limited' and 'No' assurance opinions	8
6.	Fraud and Irregularities	8
7.	Planning and resourcing	9
8.	Rolling work programme	9 - 13
9.	Adjustments to the plan	13

1. Role of Internal Audit

The requirement for an internal audit function in local government is detailed within the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, which states 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.’

The standards for ‘proper practices’ are laid down in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards [the Standards – updated 2017].

The role of internal audit is best summarised through its definition within the Standards, as an:

‘Independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisations operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes’.

The Council is responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate risk management processes, control systems, accounting records and governance arrangements. Internal audit plays a vital role in advising the Council that these arrangements are in place and operating effectively.

The Council’s response to internal audit activity should lead to the strengthening of the control environment and, therefore, contribute to the achievement of the organisation’s objectives.

2. Purpose of report

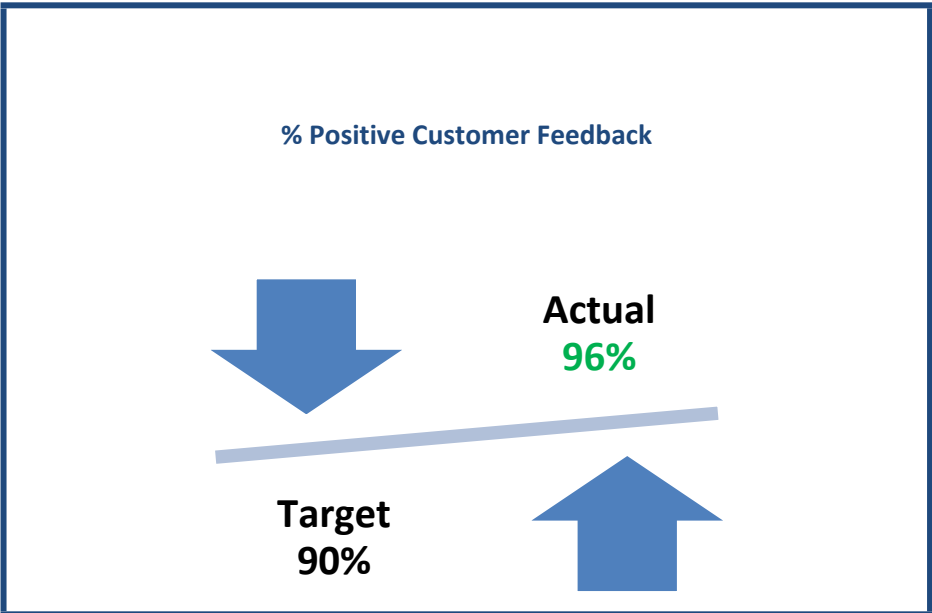
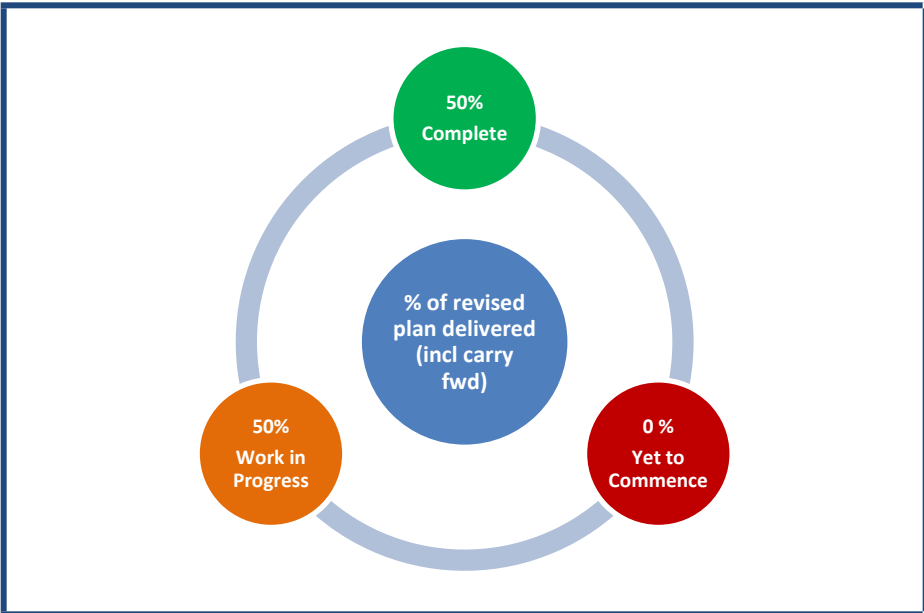
In accordance with proper internal audit practices (Public Sector Internal Audit Standards), and the Internal Audit Charter the Chief Internal Auditor is required to provide a written status report to ‘Senior Management’ and ‘the Board’, summarising:

- The status of ‘live’ internal audit reports;
- an update on progress against the annual audit plan;
- a summary of internal audit performance, planning and resourcing issues; and
- a summary of significant issues that impact on the Chief Internal Auditor’s annual opinion.

Internal audit reviews culminate in an opinion on the assurance that can be placed on the effectiveness of the framework of risk management, control and governance designed to support the achievement of management objectives of the service area under review. Assurance opinions are categorised as follows:

Substantial	A sound framework of internal control is in place and operating effectively. No risks to the achievement of system objectives have been identified
Adequate	Basically a sound framework of internal control with opportunities to improve controls and / or compliance with the control framework. No significant risks to the achievement of system objectives have been identified
Limited	Significant weakness identified in the framework of internal control and / or compliance with the control framework which could place the achievement of system objectives at risk
No	Fundamental weaknesses identified in the framework of internal control or the framework is ineffective or absent with significant risk to the achievement of system objectives

3. Performance dashboard



Compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards / Local Government Application Note	
	<p>An 'External Quality Assessment' of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership was undertaken by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) in September 2015. The report concluded:</p> <p><i>'It is our view that the Southern Internal Audit Partnership 'generally conforms' (top grading) to all of the principles contained within the International Professional Practice Framework (IPPF); Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS); and the Local Government Application Note (LAGN).</i></p> <p>In accordance with PSIAS, a further self assessment was completed in April 2018 concluding that the Southern Internal Audit Partnership continues to comply with all aspects of the IPPF, PSIAS and LGAN.</p>

4. Status of 'Live' Reports

Audit Review	Report Date	Audit Sponsor	Assurance Opinion	Management Actions ('High Priority')				
				Reported	Not Accepted	Pending	Cleared	Overdue
Hampshire Cultural Trust	24/05/16	SDP	Limited	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)	1 (0)
Ethical Governance	25/10/16	SDR	Adequate	12 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	12 (1)	0 (0)
Information Governance	28/03/17	SDR	Adequate	11 (1)	0 (0)	1 (0)	7 (1)	3 (0)
Development Management	17/05/17	SDS	Substantial	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)
Recruitment	18/05/17	CX	Limited	6 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (0)	2 (0)
Cyber Security	27/09/17	SDR	Adequate	5 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	1 (0)
Working in Partnership	05/10/17	SDP	Limited	6 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)	4 (0)	0 (0)
IT Software Licensing and IT Asset Management	12/03/18	SDR	Adequate	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)	1 (0)
Network Management	26/04/18	SDR	Adequate	10 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	10 (0)	0 (0)
Business Continuity	30/04/18	SDS	Limited	9 (2)	0 (0)	8 (1)	1 (1)	0 (0)

Audit Review	Report Date	Audit Sponsor	Assurance Opinion	Management Actions ('High Priority')				
				Reported	Not Accepted	Pending	Cleared	Overdue
Housing Planned Maintenance	01/05/18	SDS	Adequate	2 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	1 (0)
Income Generation and Collection	11/06/18	SDR	Adequate	8 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (0)	3 (0)
Procurement	12/07/18	SDR	Adequate	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)	1 (0)
Risk Management	26/10/18	SDR	Adequate	6 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (2)	1 (0)
Asset Management	04/01/19	SDP	Adequate	3 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
HR – Expenses	30/01/19	SDR	Adequate	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (0)	0 (0)
Digital Agenda	05/02/19	SDR	Adequate	3 (0)	0 (0)	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Affordable Housing	12/02/19	SDS	Adequate	7 (1)	0 (0)	5 (0)	2 (1)	0 (0)

Audit Sponsor (Director)	
Chief Executive	CX
Strategic Director - Resources	SDR
Strategic Director - Services	SDS

Audit Sponsor (Director)	
Strategic Director – Place	SDP

5. Executive Summaries of reports published concluding a ‘Limited’ or ‘No’ assurance opinion

There are no new reports published concluding a “limited” or “no” assurance opinion.

6. Fraud and Irregularities

In accordance with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 there is a requirement on local authorities to publish the following information with regard counter fraud work:

Local Government Transparency Code 2015	01.04.18 – 31.01.19
Part 2 Requirements - Fraud	
Number of occasions powers under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud (Power to Require Information) (England) Regulations 2014, or similar powers have been used	Nil
Total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of employees undertaking investigations and prosecutions of fraud	3 fte*
Total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of professionally accredited counter fraud specialists	5 fte*
Total amount of time spent by the authority on the investigation and prosecution of fraud	45 days***
Total number of new fraud cases investigated	1 **

*relates to internal audit staff across the wider SIAP only (does not include other areas of the Council that may affect reported figures i.e. legal, HR, Trading Standards, departmental investigating officers etc.)

**the definition of fraud is as set out by the Audit Commission in *Protecting the Public Purse - 'the intentional false representation, including failure to declare information or abuse of position that is carried out to make gain, cause loss or expose another to the risk of loss.'*

***relates to SIAP staff only and includes time spent on proactive fraud initiatives to identify or prevent potential fraud that may not result in a formal investigation or prosecution.

7. Planning & Resourcing

The internal audit plan for 2018-19 was approved by the Council’s Management Team and the Audit Committee in March 2018.

The audit plan remains fluid to provide a responsive service that reacts to the changing needs of the Council. Progress against the plan is detailed within section 8.

8. Rolling Work Programme

Audit Review	Audit Sponsor	Scoping	Audit Outline Issued	Fieldwork	Draft Report Issued	Final Report Issued	Assurance Opinion	Tracker (✓ on schedule ✗ Delay)	Comment
Carry Forward Reviews 2017-18									
Income Generation and Collection	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Adequate	✓	17/18 Annual Opinion
HR	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	Position Statement
Procurement	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Adequate	✓	17/18 Annual Opinion
Information Governance	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	Position Statement

Audit Review	Audit Sponsor	Scoping	Audit Outline Issued	Fieldwork	Draft Report Issued	Final Report Issued	Assurance Opinion	Tracker (✓ on schedule ✗ Delay)	Comment
Housing Benefits	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Substantial	✓	17/18 Annual Opinion
2018-19									
Strategic risks									
Programme & Project Management	SDP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	Position Statement
Transformation	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	Position Statement
Financial Stability	SDR	✓	✓					✓	
Corporate Strategy									
Delivering an Entrepreneurial approach to efficient public services									
Asset Management	SDP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Adequate	✓	
Digital Agenda	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Adequate	✓	
Delivering Quality Housing options									

Audit Review	Audit Sponsor	Scoping	Audit Outline Issued	Fieldwork	Draft Report Issued	Final Report Issued	Assurance Opinion	Tracker (✓ on schedule ✗ Delay)	Comment
Affordable Housing	SDS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Adequate	✓	
Governance									
HR - Expenses	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Adequate	✓	
HR – Use of Agency Staff	SDR	✓	✓	✓				✓	
National Fraud Initiative (NFI)	SDR	✓	n/a	✓				✓	
Proactive Fraud Initiative (Training & Awareness)	SDR	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	
Proactive Fraud Initiative (Social Housing)	SDS	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Contract Management	SDR	✓	✓					✓	
Health & Safety	SDP	✓	✓	✓				✓	
GDPR Compliance	SDR	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Core Financial Systems									

Audit Review	Audit Sponsor	Scoping	Audit Outline Issued	Fieldwork	Draft Report Issued	Final Report Issued	Assurance Opinion	Tracker (✓ on schedule ✗ Delay)	Comment
Housing Rents	SDS	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Main Accounting	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
IT									
Applications management	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Data security and management	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Mobile devices	SDR	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Business as Usual									
Bus Service Operator Grant	SDS	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	Grant certification work
Mayor's Charity	SDR	✓	n/a					✓	Certification work
Risk Management	SDR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Adequate	✓	
Licensing	SDS	✓	✓	✓				✓	

9. Adjustments to the plan

Previously reported adjustments:-

The Human Resources audit has been split into two reviews, focussing on 'Expenses' and the 'Use of Agency Staff' respectively, with no change to the overall audit plan days.

New adjustments:-

Due to a change in Ministry of Housing grant conditions/requirements, Internal Audit can no longer complete the Housing Capital Receipts Return and this has been removed from the plan.

The Environmental Services Contract audit has been postponed due to in year changes leading to the decision to extend the contract for one year to enable a full procurement exercise to take place.

The Development/Building Control review is postponed as this area is subject to an external ISO 9001:2015 LABC Quality Management System audit in February 2019 – internal audit seeks to place reliance on other assurance work where appropriate in order to reduce and remove duplication where possible. The outcomes of this audit will be considered for future inclusion in the audit plan.

Annual Governance Statement 2017/18

Progress Report – February 2019

No.	Issue	Actions	Progress Update	Lead Officer	Target Date	Current Status
1	Asset Management – the need to ensure that the Council has the capacity and skills to deliver the approved Asset Management Plan.	Regular monitoring and reporting of the progress against the actions in the Asset Management Action Plan to be undertaken.	All assets are recorded on the asset register database and works carried out are also recorded on Uniform system to allow ongoing monitoring and reporting of works. Then updated Asset Management Plan for the period 2016-2021 was considered by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 February 2019 (Report OS223 refers)	Corporate Head of Asset Management	Ongoing	Green
		Internal Audit planned for 2018/19 to review the assurance over effectiveness and delivery of Asset Management Plan including repairs and maintenance to non-housing assets (planned and reactive)	Audit report issued on fieldwork completed and final report issued on 4 January 2019 with adequate opinion.	Corporate Head of Asset Management	Audit to be carried out during Q2 of 2018/19	Complete
2	Project Governance and Reporting – ensuring that each of the Council's significant projects follow the agreed project governance policy.	Refresh the progress monitoring reports for the Council's significant projects	Monthly programme and project monitoring reports updated to new style and layout.	Strategic Director: Resources	June 2018	Complete
		Agree the governance arrangements for managing the Councils significant projects and set out in a new Project Governance Policy	Project Gateways now established and defined alongside governance arrangements for the approval of projects to pass through the gateways.	Strategic Director: Resources	September 2018	Green

No.	Issue	Actions	Progress Update	Lead Officer	Target Date	Current Status
		Ensure that all significant projects follow the arrangements as set out in the Project Governance Policy.	Programme Management Group (PMG) has responsibility for ensuring that all projects follow the new established governance arrangements	Strategic Director: Resources	October 2018	Green
		Internal Audit scheduled to take place in Q3 2018/19 covering Programme and Project Management. This audit was deferred from the 2017/18 Audit Plan	Audit complete and Position Statement issued on 4 February 2019	Strategic Director: Resources	December 2018	Complete
3	Contract Management – ensuring that the Council maintains a comprehensive, publicly accessible contract register, following its own contract procedure rules.	Ensure that a comprehensive contract register of all contracts over £5,000 is maintained and available to the public.	There has been increase in the numbers of contracts added to the Council’s contract register which is held on the South East Business Portal and is available for viewing by the public.	Strategic Director: Resources	Ongoing	Green
4	Corporate Peer Review Action Plan	Completion of the actions included in the 2017 Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan , including a review of political structures and developing a shared understanding of the financial challenges ahead	LGA Peer Challenge follow-up review took place over two days during September 2018. A report summarising the follow-up visit is included on this Committee’s agenda (Report AUD224 refers). An update on the action plan is included as Appendix 3 to this report.	Strategic Director: Resources	October 2017	Complete

LGA PEER CHALLENGE – FOLLOW UP ACTION PLAN

Progress Update – February 2019

No.	Issue	Actions	Target Date	Lead Officer	Current Status	Progress Update
1	<p>Develop an evidence-based approach to the council's understanding of the views and needs of the whole community - This will help balance strong local opinion and reinforce the decision-making process</p>	<p>Undertake Residents' Survey to understand the opinion and views of our residents.</p>	February 2019	Corporate Head of Strategic Support	Complete	Resident's and Young Persons survey launched on 24 January 2019, with results expected early March
2	<p>Be clear about how WCC is approaching transformation, entrepreneurialism and digital - ensure ambitions are understood by members and staff and supported with appropriate skills and technology</p>	<p>Create a Transformation Programme for the Council that supports its aims and ambition including that of being entrepreneurial in its approach</p>	February 2019	Strategic Director Resources	Complete	Following findings from customer service scoping exercise undertaken by iESE, a two-year service improvement programme called CustomerSMART, incorporating both customer and digital elements has been launched across the Council.
3	<p>Clarify roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. Staff structures seem confusing and, whilst they support effective service delivery, they inhibit collaborative and 'horizontal' working.</p>	<p>Review the Constitution with the remit focussed on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective and efficient decision making ▪ Effective contribution to policy development and pre-scrutiny ▪ Greater clarity on delegations between members and officers ▪ Build on existing review of 	March 2019	Strategic Director: Resources	Complete	Joint Overview & Scrutiny and Audit Committee scheduled for 19 February to consider the revised Constitution document before being adopted by Council on 19 March

No.	Issue	Actions	Target Date	Lead Officer	Current Status	Progress Update
		PHDs to make these more effective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarity of financial rules of procedure ▪ Build on effective member briefing/policy briefings 				
		Review and refresh member/officer protocol to help clarify what is expected of members and officers and how they work together.	March 2019	Strategic Director: Resources	Complete	Review undertaken and refresh included in draft new Constitution.
4	Strengthen programme and project management – The council’s Programme and Project Management Office needs to be suitably placed within the organisation and empowered to deliver and hold others to account.	Review the approval process for new projects, ensuring that the process considers the resources required to manage the project through to completion.	December 2018	Strategic Director: Resources	Complete	New projects are now considered by Programme Management officer group before being accepted onto the Project Register.
		Implement clear Gateway process for the management of projects as they move through the project cycle.	November 2018	Strategic Director: Resources	Complete	Gateway process for managing projects agreed by Programme Management officer group.
5	Use the new People Strategy/Workforce Plan to address concerns that the council has the capacity but lacks the skills to deliver , alongside new approaches to pay and reward, to ensure the council can attract the right people and to blend internal and external expertise	Review WCC salary scales against nearest neighbours and make adjustments to ensure the Council can continue to attract high calibre, skilled staff	November 2018	Strategic Director: Resources	Complete	Report PER318 (22 November 2018) recommended enhancements to annual leave and new salary scales for staff that would enable the Council to remain competitive