

Regulatory and Other Committee

Open Report on behalf of Pete Moore, Executive Director for Finance and Public Protection

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date:	26 January 2015
Subject:	Combined Assurance Status Reports

Summary:

The aim of this report is to provide the Audit Committee with an insight on the assurances across all the Council's critical services, key risks and projects.

Recommendation(s):

That the Committee:

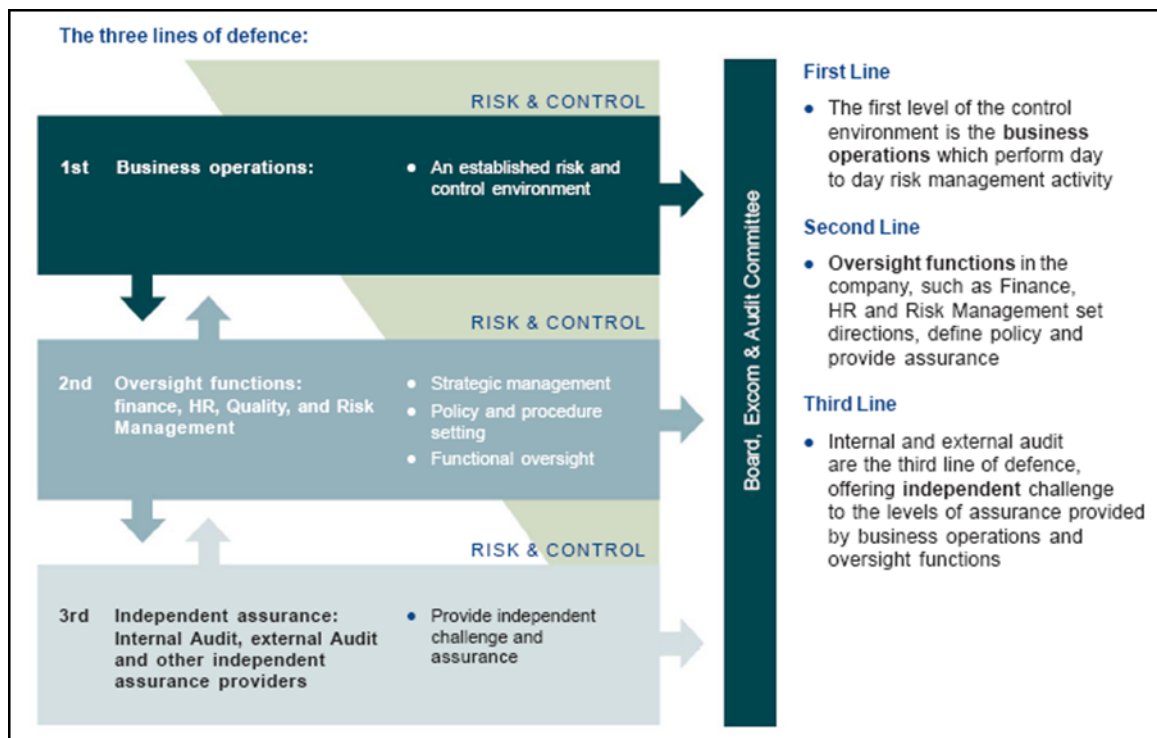
Notes the current status of the Executive Directors' assurance regime and makes recommendations on any further scrutiny requirements or actions

Background

1. These reports aim to provide an insight (snapshot) on what assurances are currently in place on areas of the business that matter most ie.

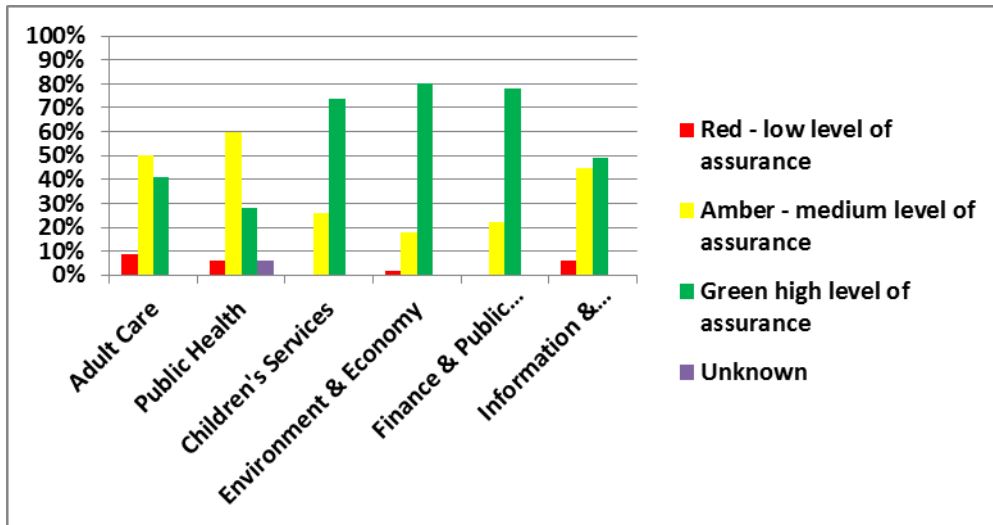
'have a significant impact on the delivery of our priorities or whose failure could result in significant damage to our reputation, financial loss or impact on people'
2. The combined assurance gives an overview of assurance provided across the whole Council – not just those from Internal Audit – making it possible to identify where assurances are present, their source, and where there are potential assurance 'unknowns or gaps'.
3. The methodology used is based on the 'three lines of defence (assurance) model' - which co-ordinates assurance from management, oversight functions and third parties (including Internal Audit – inspections etc).

Figure 1 – Three Lines of Defence – Assurance



- Internal Audit have triangulated information to help ensure that it 'stacks up' and applied some constructive challenge on the assurance opinions being given **but** as accountability rests with management it is senior managers views that have determined the overall assurance status. This is in line with a control environment that promotes a culture where we:
 - take what we have been told on trust
 - encourages accountability with those responsible for managing the service
 - provide some independent challenge / insight where appropriate.
- Figure 2 shows the overall assurance levels 2015. There are a number of areas where limited assurance is shown on critical activities these relate to:
 - **Adult Care** – Safeguarding (Deprivation of Liberty), Workforce Development
 - **Economy & Environment** – Lincolnshire Waterways Programme
 - **Public Health** – Coroners
 - **Information and Commissioning** - Records Management, Service Asset and configuration management

Figure 2 – Overall Assurance Levels 2015



6. Overall there is a high level of positive assurance on our critical systems, key risks and projects.
7. We identified no significant gaps in our assurance arrangements - with most being provided by management. This is supported by a good level of corporate / third party and independent assurance by Internal Audit. This helps increase the level of confidence that our 'business as usual systems' are working effectively.

Conclusion

8. Overall there is a high level of positive assurance on our critical systems, key risks and projects.
9. We identified no significant gaps in our assurance arrangements - with most being provided by management. This is supported by a good level of corporate / third party and independent assurance by Internal Audit. This helps increase the level of confidence that our 'business as usual systems' are working effectively.
10. The combined assurance reports provide the Committee with a good level of understanding about the level of assurances in place – supporting its 'watchdog' role and remit.
11. The information obtained from the combined assurance model will:
 - inform the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2015
 - streamline and avoid duplication of effort where assurance can be drawn from a third party or other sources

- inform the Internal Annual Audit Plan by identifying where more independent assurance is required based on significance and risk of the activity.
- Help inform the Head of Audit annual audit opinion 2015.

Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

N/A

Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Combined Assurance Status Report - Environment and Economy
Appendix B	Combined Assurance Status Report - Finance and Public Protection
Appendix C	Combined Assurance Status Report - Children's Services
Appendix D	Combined Assurance Status Report - Public Health
Appendix E	Combined Assurance Status Report - Adult Care
Appendix F	Combined Assurance Status Report - Information and Commissioning

Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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