

Open Report on behalf of Andrew Crookham, Executive Director of Resources

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date:	25 September 2023
Subject:	Audit Committee Work Programme

Summary:

This report provides the Committee with information on the core assurance activities currently scheduled for the work plan.

Recommendation(s):

To review and amend the Audit Committee's work plan ensuring it contains the assurance areas necessary to approve the Annual Governance Statement.

Background

1. The work plan, as attached at Appendix A, has been compiled based on the core assurance activities of the Committee as set out in its terms of reference and best practice.

Training and Development Programme

2. An important element of the Audit Committee's effectiveness is continuous training and development. This enables committee members to remain up to date on key issues, hot topics and any developments that impact on Audit Committee role and remit.
3. After discussion with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Audit Committee the following training and development programme is proposed.

Session One – A half day event – in person event at Lincoln (Date to be confirmed).
Covering the following topics:

- **Effective Audit Committee** – CIPFA has issued some new guidance for Audit Committees. We propose to recap and run through any changes. We will also undertake an assessment of the effectiveness of the Committee – benchmarked against this best practice guidance.
- **Risk Management** – demonstration of new risk management software.

- **Horizon scanning** – picking up some of the big issues and risks facing public sector, how they potentially impact the governance and control framework of the council. Looking to develop the forward work plan – agenda items.

Webinars – Team meeting training events. 1 hour sessions on key elements of the Committee role and remit. Scheduled over 2023.

- **Risk management** – recap on how risks are managed – our risk appetite – how we gain oversight and assurance that our risk and issues are being effectively managed.
 - **Counter fraud** – recap on our approach our fraud risk register with horizon scanning from a fraud perspective.
 - **Good governance and our assurance arrangements.** Propose a workshop with Overview Scrutiny Management Board on how our governance and assurance arrangements measure up against good practice and recent public interest reports.
4. **Lincolnshire Audit Committee Forum** – there’s been a number of requests for this forum to be reinstated. This is where Lincolnshire Audit Committees meet to share their experience – bring out common themes and risks facing the public sector and how Audit Committees can help improve the governance, risk and control environment.
 5. **Working with Overview & Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB)**– quarterly meetings held to discuss areas of common interest. Work programmes are shared and the Chairman of the Audit Committee attends (OSMB) as appropriate (depending on agenda items) and vice versa.
 6. **Emerging Risks** - A verbal update / discussion on any emerging high-risk areas that the Committee may wish to consider for future agenda items.

Conclusion

7. The work plan helps the Audit Committee effectively deliver its terms of reference and keeps track of areas where it requires further work and/or assurance.

Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

No

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Work Programme

Background Papers

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

This report was written by Claire Goodenough, Head of Audit and Risk Management, who can be contacted Claire.Goodenough@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Appendix A - Audit Committee Work Plan 2023/24

25 September 2023 – 10.00 am		
Item	Contributors	Assurances Required/ Sought
Adult Social Care – Market Supply	Glen Garrod (Executive Director of Adult Care and Community Wellbeing)	To provide an update to the Audit Committee on the current position in relation to market supply and the actions being taken to mitigate the risk.
Update on Statement of Accounts and External Audit of Accounts for Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Pension Fund.	Sue Maycock (Head of Finance – Corporate)	Ensure that the explanatory forward to the accounts help the public understand the authority's financial management of public funds. Consider the outcome of the External Audit and the appropriateness of management responses. Consider any concerns arising
External Audit Strategy Memoranda – Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Pension Fund 2022/23	Representatives of Mazars	Consider the outcome of the External Audit and the appropriateness of management responses.
Risk Management Progress Report – November 2023	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management) Mandy Knowlton-Rayner (Insurance & Risk Manager)	Seek assurance that risk-related issues are being addressed.
Annual Governance Statement 2022/23	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	Confirm that the final Annual Governance Statement accurately reflects the Committees understanding of how the Council is run.
13 November 2023 – 10.00 am		
Item	Contributors	Assurances Required/ Sought
Draft Audit Committee Annual Report 2023	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	Provide assurance that the Committee has adequately discharged its terms of reference and has positively contributed to how well the Council is run.
Strategic Risk – Deep Dive (Selected by the Committee)	Risk Owner	That risk management processes working effectively – with appropriate oversight and monitoring of control actions in place or being developed.
Counter Fraud Progress Report – November 2023	Dianne Downs (Team leader – Counter Fraud)	Confirm that the Council's counter fraud activity is targeted and effective.

Horizon Scanning	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	To provide early signs of potentially important developments – identifying potential treats, risks, emerging issues and opportunities.
5 February 2024 – 10.00 am		
Item	Contributors	Assurances Required/ Sought
Combined Risk Reports	Chief Executive, Executive Directors, and Chief Fire Officer	Understand the level of assurances being provided on the Council's critical systems, key risks and projects and how they link to the Committees role and remit and the Annual Governance Statement. Seeking assurance that they are working well and that any significant risk and issues are being actively managed.
Internal Audit Progress Report – February 2024	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	Gain an understanding of the level of assurances being provided by the Head of Internal Audit over the Council's governance, risk and internal control arrangements and why. The Internal Audit Plan focuses on the key risks facing the Council and is adequate to support the Head of Audit opinion. Confirm that the plan achieves a balance between setting out the planned work (must do's) for the year and retaining flexibility to changing risks and priorities during the year.
Committee Annual Report 2023	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	Provide assurance that the Committee has adequately discharged its terms of reference and has positively contributed to how well the Council is run.
25 March 2024 – 10.00 am		
Item	Contributors	Assurances Required/ Sought
External Audit Strategy – Lincolnshire County Council & Pension Fund 2023/24	Representatives of Mazars	Seek assurance over progress and delivery of the external audit plan and that any risks to successful production of the financial statements and audit are being managed.
Statement of Accounts 2023/24 – Accounting Policies	Sue Maycock (Head of Finance – Corporate)	Confirm that the appropriate accounting policies are being applied and understand the impact of any material changes that affect the Council's or Pension fund accounts.

Risk Management Progress Report – March 2024	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management) Mandy Knowlton-Rayner (Insurance & Risk Manager)	Seek assurance that risk-related issues are being addressed.
Counter Fraud Plan 2024/25	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	On the overall effectiveness of the Authority's arrangements to counter fraud and corruption.
Internal Audit Plan 2024/25	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	That the Internal Audit Plan focuses on the key risks facing the Council and is adequate to support the Head of Audit opinion. Confirm that the plan achieves a balance between setting out the planned work for the year and retaining flexibility to changing risks and priorities during the year. Ensure that the Internal Audit Resource has sufficiently capacity and capabilities to maintain an effective internal audit function.
17 June 2024 – 10.00 am		
Item	Contributors	Assurances Required/ Sought
Counter Fraud Progress Report – June 2024	Dianne Downs (Team Leader – Counter Fraud)	Confirm that the Council's counter fraud activity is targeted and effective.
Risk Management Progress Report – June 2024	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management) Mandy Knowlton-Rayner (Insurance & Risk Manager)	Seek assurance that risk-related issues are being addressed.
Internal Audit Report & Annual Opinion 2023/24	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	Provides the Committee with the adequacy of the Council's Governance, Risk and Control environment and delivery of the Internal Audit Plan
Information Assurance Annual Report 2023/24	David Ingham (Head of Information Assurance)	
Monitoring Officer Annual Report	Monitoring Officer	Enables the Committee to consider the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report

DRAFT Annual Governance Statement 2023/24	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	
Counter Fraud Annual Report 2023/24	Dianne Downs, Team Leader – Counter fraud	
22 July 2024 – 10.00 am		
Item	Contributors	Assurances Required/ Sought
Internal Audit Progress Report – July 2024	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	<p>Gain an understanding of the level of assurances being provided by the Head of Internal Audit over the Council's governance, risk and internal control arrangements and why.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Plan focuses on the key risks facing the Council and is adequate to support the Head of Audit opinion.</p> <p>Confirm that the plan achieves a balance between setting out the planned work (must do's) for the year and retaining flexibility to changing risks and priorities during the year.</p>
23 September 2024 – 10.00 am		
Item	Contributors	Assurances Required/ Sought
Approval of the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2023/24	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	Confirm that the final Annual Governance Statement accurately reflects the Committees understanding of how the Council is run.
External Audit Strategy 2023/24 Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Pension Fund	Representatives of Mazars	<p>Consider the outcome of the External Audit and the appropriateness of management responses.</p> <p>Consider any concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.</p> <p>Consider the proposed Value for Money Conclusion and any matters arising.</p>
Statement of accounts 2023/24 – Lincolnshire County Council & Pension Fund	Sue Maycock (Head of Finance – Corporate)	<p>Ensure that the explanatory forward to the accounts help the public understand the authority's financial management of public funds.</p> <p>Consider the outcome of the External Audit and the appropriateness of management responses.</p>

		Consider any concerns arising
11 November 2024 – 10.00 am		
Item	Contributors	Assurances Required/ Sought
Draft Audit Committee Annual Report 2024	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	Provide assurance that the Committee has adequately discharged its terms of reference and has positively contributed to how well the Council is run.
CF Progress Report – November 2024	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	Confirm that the Council’s counter fraud activity is targeted and effective.
Risk Management Progress Report – November 2024	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management) Mandy Knowlton-Rayner (Insurance & Risk Manager)	Seek assurance that risk-related issues are being addressed.
Strategic Risk – Deep Dive (Selected by the Committee)	Risk Owner	That risk management processes working effectively – with appropriate oversight and monitoring of control actions in place or being developed.
Horizon Scanning	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	To provide early signs of potentially important developments – identifying potential treats, risks, emerging issues and opportunities.
3 February 2025 – 10.00 am		
Item	Contributors	Assurances Required/ Sought
Internal Audit Progress Report – February 2025	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	Gain an understanding of the level of assurances being provided by the Head of Internal Audit over the Council's governance, risk and internal control arrangements and why. The Internal Audit Plan focuses on the key risks facing the Council and is adequate to support the Head of Audit opinion. Confirm that the plan achieves a balance between setting out the planned work (must do’s) for the year and retaining flexibility to changing risks and priorities during the year.
Combined Risk Reports	Chief Executive, Executive Directors, and Chief Fire Officer	Understand the level of assurances being provided on the Council's critical systems, key risks and projects and how they link to the Committees role and remit and the Annual Governance Statement.

		Seeking assurance that they are working well and that any significant risk and issues are being actively managed.
Committee Annual Report 2024	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	Provide assurance that the Committee has adequately discharged its terms of reference and has positively contributed to how well the Council is run.
24 March 2025 – 10.00 am		
Item	Contributors	Assurances Required/ Sought
External Audit Strategy – Lincolnshire County Council & Pension Fund 2024/25	Representatives of Mazars	Seek assurance over progress and delivery of the external audit plan and that any risks to successful production of the financial statements and audit are being managed.
Statement of Accounts 2024/25 – Accounting Policies	Sue Maycock (Head of Finance – Corporate)	Confirm that the appropriate accounting policies are being applied and understand the impact of any material changes that affect the Council's or Pension fund accounts.
Risk Management Progress Report – March 2025	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management) Mandy Knowlton-Rayner (Insurance & Risk Manager)	Seek assurance that risk-related issues are being addressed.
Internal Audit Plan 2025/26	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	That the Internal Audit Plan focuses on the key risks facing the Council and is adequate to support the Head of Audit opinion. Confirm that the plan achieves a balance between setting out the planned work for the year and retaining flexibility to changing risks and priorities during the year. Ensure that the Internal Audit Resource has sufficiently capacity and capabilities to maintain an effective internal audit function.
Counter Fraud Plan 2025/26	Claire Goodenough (Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management)	On the overall effectiveness of the Authority's arrangements to counter fraud and corruption.

Items to be programmed:

Integration of Health and Social Care (including IMT) – Glen Garrod (Executive Director of Adult Care and Community Wellbeing)

Emerging Risks