

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Decision Maker:</b> | Audit Committee                             |
| <b>Date:</b>           | 31 March 2011                               |
| <b>Title:</b>          | Internal Audit Strategic Audit Plan 2011-14 |
| <b>Reference:</b>      | 2731  |
| <b>Report From:</b>    | <i>County Treasurer</i>                     |

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#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Audit Committee with an overview of the Internal Audit Strategic Plan 2011/12 – 2013/14 (Appendix 1).
- 1.2. The attached appendices provide a copy of the Internal Audit Strategic Plan to be introduced from 1 April 2011.

#### 2. Contextual information

- 2.1. The aim of internal audit's work programme is to provide independent and objective assurance to management, in relation to the business activities, systems or processes under review that:
  - The framework of internal control, risk management and governance is appropriate and operating effectively; and
  - Risks to the achievement of the County Council's objectives are identified, assessed and managed to a defined acceptable level.
- 2.2. The internal audit plan provides the mechanism through which the Chief Internal Auditor can ensure most appropriate use of internal audit resources to provide a clear statement of assurance on risk management, internal control and governance arrangements.
- 2.3. Internal audit focus should be proportionate and appropriately aligned. In accordance with the internal audit strategy only high and medium priority reviews are incorporated within the Strategic Audit Plan.
- 2.4. All low priority review areas remain within the audit universe and are reassessed on an annual basis, however, will not be routinely incorporated in the planning process if continued to be assessed as a low priority.

- 2.5. The audit plan will remain fluid and a contingency has been incorporated to ensure appropriate levels of resource are available should the risk environment change during the year.
- 2.6. Other reviews, based on criteria other than risk, may also be built into the work plan. These may include 'mandatory' audits or reviews requested or commissioned by management. Any commissioned review must be able to clearly demonstrate a contribution to the audit opinion on risk management, control and governance

### **3. Finance / Performance**

- 3.1. A restructure of the internal audit team has introduced a matrix style approach to enable the delivery of the strategic plan, by using a resource pool of multi disciplinary auditors capable of forming into teams as audit projects determine.
- 3.2. This approach will ensure seasonal peaks in demand can be effectively managed, an appropriate level of independence in the rotation of audit reviews and the avoidance of over reliance on individual areas of expertise

### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1. The Strategic Audit Plan 2011/12 – 2013/14 has been developed to operate at a strategic level providing a value adding, and proportionate, level of assurance aligned to the County Council's objectives.
- 4.2. The endorsement and sponsorship of the plan at member / chief officer level will assist in providing the engagement and buy-in of staff at an operational level to ensure the outcome of audit reviews are optimised.

### **5. Recommendation(s)**

- 5.1. That the Audit Committee is invited to comment on and approve the Strategic Audit Plan for 2011/12 – 2013/14

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Corporate Strategy**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| <b>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</b>   | yes/no |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):  |        |
| <b>Maximising well-being:</b>   | yes/no |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):  |        |
| <b>Enhancing our quality of place:</b>  | yes/no |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):  |        |
| <b>OR</b>   |        |
| <b>This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:</b>                              |        |
| Member approval of the Internal Audit Strategy, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2003, as amended in 2006. |        |

*NB: If the 'Other significant links' section below is not applicable, please delete it.*

**Other Significant Links**

|  |                          |                                 |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>                           |                          |                                 |
| <u>Title</u><br>Internal Audit Strategy 2011-14                      | <u>Reference</u><br>2338 | <u>Date</u><br>09 December 2010 |
| <b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b> |                          |                                 |
| <u>Title</u>   | <u>Date</u>              |                                 |

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

| <u>Document</u> | <u>Location</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| None            |                 |

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

- 1.1. Equality objectives are not considered to be adversely affected by the proposals within this report.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

- 2.1. The proposals in this report are not considered to have any direct impact on the prevention of crime., however internal audit work is planned to ensure that controls are in place to minimise the risk of fraud and corruption against the County Council.

### **3. Climate Change:**

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

No specific changes

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No specific proposals affecting adaptation to climate change