
6. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT BLOCK 1, 2016/17 (A1362/7/PN)**

Purpose of the report and key issues

1. This report presents to Members the internal auditors' recommendations for the first block of the 2016/17 audit and the agreed actions for consideration. The Internal Auditors will be available at the meeting to answer any questions relating to the audit report or process as usual.

Key issues include:

- The auditors give an opinion based on five grades of assurance (High / Substantial / Reasonable / Limited / No) The two areas audited, Woodlands Management and Fleet Management and Equipment, have been given a Substantial and Reasonable level of assurance respectively.
- The priority of agreed actions is determined based on a scale of 1 – 3, with 1 representing a fundamental system weakness which needs urgent attention, 2 a significant weakness which needs attention, and 3 no significant weakness but merits attention. Managers have responded to 9 Priority 3 actions and 3 Priority 2 actions.

2. **Recommendations**

1. **That the internal audit reports for the two areas covered under Block 1 for 2016/17 be received (in Appendices 1 and 2) and the agreed actions considered.**

How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

3. As identified in the Annual Governance Statement, the Internal Audit process is regarded as an important part of the overall internal controls operated by the Authority and recommendations are addressed by the Authority's managers in the management response to the audit report.

Background

4. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require that the Authority maintains an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices in relation to internal control. The contract for the internal audit service is let to Veritau Ltd. Officers in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this committee approved a two year extension of the current contract up to 31st March 2019 (the original contract was a three year contract starting April 2014, with an option to extend for two years). The Internal Audit Plan for 2016/17 was approved by this committee in July 2016.

Proposals

5. Managers have carefully considered the internal auditors' recommendations and the agreed actions are set out in the audit reports in Appendices 1 and 2 for members' consideration. The original audit plan for Block 1 included a short follow up of the Procurement Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCIDSS) audit and also a Health & Safety Audit, but these were deferred as the auditors were asked to look at a specific matter arising from an external complaint.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

Financial:

6. There are resource implications of implementing recommendations and this is why prioritisation of action is important as this has to be managed within existing budgets and staffing levels, taking account of the level of risk agreed by management. The cost of the Internal Audit Service Level Agreement is found from within the overall Finance budget.

Risk Management:

7. The Internal Audit process is regarded as an important part of the overall internal controls operated by the Authority.

Sustainability:

8. There are no implications to identify.
9. **Background papers** (not previously published) – None

Appendices -

Appendix 1: Woodlands Management
Appendix 2: Fleet Management & Equipment

Report Author and Job Title

Philip Naylor, Head of Finance, 12 January 2017