

For publication

**Chesterfield Borough Council
Internal Audit Plan 2024/25**

Meeting:	Standards and Audit Committee
Date:	17th April 2024
Cabinet portfolio:	Governance
Directorate:	Finance
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 To present to Members for consideration and agreement the Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 be agreed.

2.2 That it be noted that the plan is provisional and may need adjusting and prioritising in the light of any emerging risks / staff shortages etc.

3.0 Reason for recommendations

3.1 To comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and to determine the internal audit work plan for the year.

3.2 To ensure that the annual internal audit opinion can provide assurance in respect of the Council's governance, risk and control arrangements.

4.0 Report details

4.1 A key requirement of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards is that a periodic risk- based plan should be prepared that is sufficiently flexible to reflect the changing risks and priorities of the organisation. The risk- based plan should be fixed for a period of no longer than one year, should outline the assignments to be carried out, their respective priorities and the

estimated resources needed.

4.2 The plan has been prepared taking into account the following factors: -

- The organisations objectives and priorities,
- The organisations strategic and operational risks,
- The requirement to produce an annual internal audit opinion on the council's governance, risk and control arrangements,
- Consultation with the Corporate Leadership Team.

4.3 Over the last few years there has been a gradual reduction of time spent on the main financial systems. This is on the basis that the controls in place are tried and tested, that systems and staff remain the same. This allows us to spend more time on other areas that may pose greater risk or that we have not reviewed for some time. Internal audit covers the whole of the council's governance, risk and control arrangements and therefore there is an increasing number of non- financial areas to assess such as recruitment and selection and safeguarding.

4.4 Some reserve audit areas have been included at the end of the plan. Whilst every effort will be made to complete the 2024/25 planned areas first, a list of reserve areas provides more flexibility. At certain times of the year, particularly year end there can be legitimate reasons why an audit is not feasible at a particular time. If the contingency days are not required, then these will be utilised on the reserve areas or other emerging risk areas.

4.5 An annual report summarising the outcome of the 2023/24 internal audit plan will be presented to this Committee after the year-end. Some of the areas from the 2023/24 plan have been rolled forward to 2024/25.

4.6 A summary of the internal audit plan for 2024/25 is shown below and in detail at Appendix 1.

Internal Audit Plan 2024/25

Summary	Audit Days
Main Financial Systems	101
Other Operational Audits	269
Computer / IT Related	20
National Fraud Initiative	5
Corporate / Cross Cutting / Governance	65
Special Investigations & Contingency	30

Apprenticeships / Training	30
Audit Committee / Client Liaison / advice	40
Grand Total	560

4.7 Resource availability is based on the Consortium Business Plan that was approved by the Joint Board on the 27th March 2024. The plan allocates 560 days to Chesterfield Borough Council for 2024/25, this is the same allocation as in 2023/24.

4.8 The plan is ambitious and is reliant upon having a full staffing complement and fully trained staff.

5.0 Alternative options

5.1 Not Applicable

6.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

6.1 Financial – The internal audit budget for 2024/25 has been agreed by the Joint Board.

7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal

7.1 The core work of internal audit is derived from the statutory responsibility under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 which requires the Council to “undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking in to account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance”.

8.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources

8.1 None

9.0 Implications for consideration – Council plan

9.1 The internal audit plan is linked to the Council Plan in respect of its aim to provide value for money services and has recognised the Council’s priorities as outlined in the Council Plan.

10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate change

10.1 Whilst there are not considered to be any direct climate change impacts in relation to this report, sound internal control, governance and risk management arrangements will support the achievement of the Council’s objectives.

11.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 None

12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

12.1 The audit plan is designed to provide assurance that the council's significant risks identified as part of the risk assessment process are being managed effectively. If additional risks are identified and / or there are changes to priorities during the year the plan will be reconsidered. Any significant changes to the plan will be reported back to the Standards and Audit Committee for approval.

Decision information

Key decision number	N/A
Wards affected	None

Document information

Report author	
Jenny Williams Head of the Internal Audit Consortium Finance Directorate	
Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Internal Audit Plan 2024/25