

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORT

CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND AUDIT

25 June 2015

Internal Audit – Annual Report of Internal Audit

Helen Fowler – Audit and Assurance Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The annual report from Internal Audit provides a summary of the internal audit work performed in the year 2014/2015 and expresses an opinion on the overall internal control environment in place within Middlesbrough Council.
2. The annual report also considers the internal audit performance outturn for 2014/2015 and the performance of Tees Valley Audit & Assurance Services against the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards (PSIAS).

BACKGROUND

3. Internal Auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.
4. The Council's internal audit service is provided by Tees Valley Audit & Assurance Services, a shared service arrangement with Redcar and Cleveland Council. A shared service agreement has been documented between the two councils and includes a number of performance measures. The final outturn against the agreed performance measures is detailed in the Audit and Assurance Manager's annual assessment report which is **Appendix 1** to this report.
5. Members of the Audit and Governance Committee approved the 2014/2015 Audit Plan at their meeting in June 2014. The total number of planned audit days for 2014/2015 was 994 (2013/14: 1,325).
6. The work carried out by TVAAS is aimed at providing assurance to the Council's senior officers, elected members and members of the public that the key risks faced by the Council are being managed effectively and that appropriate safeguards are in place for public funds and assets. It contains audits to ensure

that sufficient work is undertaken to enable the production of an opinion as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk and internal control arrangements.

7. Internal Audit, along with other assurance processes of the Council, have a statutory obligation under the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2011 to provide assurance from the work they undertake in respect to the internal control systems operating within the Council.

OVERALL AUDIT OPINION 2014/2015

8. TVAAS undertakes its programme of work in accordance with the standards set out in the PSIAS. Standard 2450 states that the Council's chief audit executive should provide an annual internal audit opinion and report on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control. The overall opinion of the Audit and Assurance Manager on the controls operating in the Council, based on the audit work performed and the audit reports issued, is that they provide **Good Assurance**.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

9. Redcar & Cleveland Council charges Middlesbrough Council for the provision of an internal audit service. Charges are based on a daily charge rate linked to the grade of staff involved in the audit work.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS

10. There are no specific financial or ward implications arising from the Internal Audit Annual Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

11. That Members note and comment on the annual report of the Audit and Assurance Manager as set out in **Appendix 1** to this report and identify any areas where additional audit assurance is required by the Committee.

REASONS

12. The work of TVAAS is governed by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. In accordance with the Standards, the Audit and Assurance Manager is required to report to those charged with governance on the findings of audit work, provide an annual opinion on the Council's internal control environment and identify any issues relevant to the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.
13. Internal audit work is designed to provide the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee, senior officers and members of the public with assurance that the Council's framework of internal control is adequate and effective and thereby supports the Committee's review of the Annual Governance Statement. It is aimed at providing assurance that the key risks faced by the Council are being

managed effectively and that appropriate safeguards are in place for public funds and assets.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Individual internal audit reports
- CIPFA Guide to Audit Committees in Local Government
- Public Sector Internal Audit Standards

AUTHOR

Helen Fowler – Audit and Assurance Manager
Telephone: 01642 771165 or 01642 729821 or 07500 606942

Address: PO Box 99A, Town Hall, Middlesbrough. TS1 2QQ
Website: <http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk>