

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 9 th September 2020
Report Subject	Internal Audit Annual Report
Report Author	Internal Audit Manager
Type of Report	Assurance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Internal Audit Manager is required to deliver an annual internal audit opinion and report that can be used by the organisation to inform its governance statement.

The annual report must incorporate:

- The opinion;
- A summary of the work that supports the opinion; and
- A statement on conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), and the results of the quality assurance and improvement programme (QAIP).

This report fulfils that requirement. The audit opinion is that Flintshire has an adequate and effective framework of governance, risk management and control. Audit work undertaken throughout the year is summarised within the report. A self-assessment against the PSIAS, including a review of QAIP was undertaken and due to be reported to the committee in March 2020 however this has been carried forward to September 2020 due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. This report shows that Internal Audit generally conforms to the Standards, and the QAIP is in operation and effective in promoting continual improvement.

The report and opinion has been used to inform the Annual Governance Statement, presented in another paper to this committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	The committee is requested to consider the report and receive the internal audit annual opinion.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT
1.01	The Internal Audit Manager is required to prepare a report giving the annual internal audit opinion and summarising the outcome of all internal audit work undertaken during the year. This is part of the framework of assurance that assist the Council in preparing the Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20.
1.02	It also aids the Audit Committee in its role to review the effectiveness of the Authority's systems of corporate governance, internal control and risk management and to make reports and raise actions to the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements.
1.03	<p>The report outlines the role of the Internal Audit team and the professional standards it must meet. It includes a statement that the team generally conforms to the PSIAS. It then gives the annual audit opinion.</p> <p>For the year ending 31 March 2020, based on the work we have undertaken, my opinion is that Flintshire County Council has an adequate and effective framework of governance, risk management and internal control.</p>
1.04	The report covers the governance framework. In detail this covers corporate governance, information governance, risk management and internal controls. The report highlights where independent external assurance is received which supports the adequacy of the Council's governance arrangements.
1.05	The report gives the level of coverage of the audit team during the year and summarises the work undertaken in 2019/20. Summary information by Portfolio is provided on the assurance levels given to the reviews, together with the categorisation and the number of agreed actions to address control weaknesses.
1.06	The work on investigations and advisory work is outlined in the report. During 2019 the Whistleblowing Policy, Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and Fraud and Irregularity Response Plan were reviewed, updated and approved by Audit Committee and Council.
1.07	The overall performance of the team throughout the year against targets is then given.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a result of this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	None required.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Internal Audit operate to a risk-based plan designed to enable the annual opinion to be delivered. The report includes an opinion on risk management within the Council.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix A – Internal Audit Annual Report.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None. Contact Officer: Lisa Brownbill, Internal Audit Manager Telephone: 01352 702231 E-mail: Lisa.brownbill@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>PSIAS, Public Sector Internal Audit Standards: a set of standards that all Internal Audit teams working in the public sector must comply with.</p> <p>Corporate Governance: the system by which local authorities direct and control their functions and relate to their communities. It is founded on the basic principles of openness and inclusivity, integrity and accountability together with the overarching concept of leadership. It is an inter-related system that brings together the underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes.</p> <p>Risk Management: the process of identifying risks, evaluating their potential consequences and managing them. The aim is to reduce the frequency of risk events occurring (wherever this is possible) and minimise the severity of their consequences if they occur. Threats are managed by a process of controlling, transferring or retaining the risk. Opportunities are managed by identifying strategies to maximise the opportunity or reward for the organisation.</p>