

Report of the Chief Auditor

Audit Committee – 27 March 2014

INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN - METHODOLOGY

Purpose:	This report provides a briefing to the Audit Committee on the methodology used to prepare the Internal Audit Annual Plan in advance of the Annual Plan 2014/15 being reported to the Committee for approval.
Report Author:	Paul Beynon
Finance Officer:	Paul Beynon
Legal Officer:	Sharon Heys
Access to Services Officer:	Sherill Hopkins

FOR INFORMATION

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A risk based Internal Audit Plan is produced each year which is used to guide the work of the Internal Audit Section over the course of the year.
- 1.2 The Internal Audit Annual Plan is reported to and approved by the Audit Committee in April each year.
- 1.3 The aim of the Internal Audit Annual Plan is to provide sufficient coverage of the Council's risks and services to allow the Chief Auditor to deliver the annual opinion on internal control which informs the Annual Governance Statement.
- 1.4 This report provides a briefing to the Committee on the methodology used to prepare the Annual Plan in advance of the Plan for 2014/15 being reported to the Committee for approval.

2. Internal Audit Plan Methodology

- 2.1 The requirement to produce an Internal Audit Annual Plan is included in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) which are mandatory for all internal audit providers in the UK public sector.
- 2.2 An extract of the PSIAS requirements regarding internal audit planning is attached in Appendix 1

2.3 An Audit Needs Assessment is completed on an annual basis utilising the risk assessment undertaken for each audit. The risk assessment takes into account a wide range of factors which are grouped into the following categories

- Materiality e.g. income, expenditure
- Control Environment/Vulnerability e.g. previous frauds, staff turnover
- Management Concerns e.g. direct request for help, potential for embarrassment
- Sensitivity e.g. impact on service, effect on Council's welfare

2.4 A copy of the Risk Assessment form used is attached in Appendix 2

2.5 The outcome of the risk assessment is a risk index which is then used to determine the frequency of audit visits as shown in the following table

Risk Index	Risk Factor	Frequency of Visit
0 – 19	Low	4 years
20 – 25	Medium/Low	3/4 years
26 – 40	Medium	3 years
41 – 49	Medium/High	2/3 years
50 +	High	1/2 years

2.6 In addition to the risk assessment process, a number of systems have been identified, in consultation with our external auditors as fundamental e.g. Payroll, Accounts Receivable, Main Accounting, Council Tax. All fundamental systems are audited annually which accounts for over 350 audit days over the course of the year.

2.7 The use of the risk assessment process provides every audit in the Council's audit universe with a year when the next audit visit is due which is the starting point for the Internal Audit Annual Plan

2.8 Each year, a consultation exercise is held with all Heads of Service and Chief Officers giving them the opportunity to comment on the audit coverage in their area and to ensure that all risks within their services have been identified. Heads of Service and Chief Officers may also request specific reviews or pieces of work by the Internal Audit Section which are considered in light of the total Internal Audit resources available.

2.9 A review of the Corporate Risk Register also takes place to ensure that where necessary, Internal Audit resources are targeted at the areas considered to be the highest risk.

- 2.10 The ongoing review of the current year's Annual Plan also informs the planning process e.g. by identifying any emerging risks, new systems or developments, special investigations which may have a wider impact.
- 2.11 The Audit Needs Assessment i.e. the risk assessment process, consultation exercise and review of the Corporate Risk Register provides the total number of audit days required in the year which then has to be matched against the audit resources available.
- 2.12 For 2013/14, the audit resources available were 11.5 full time equivalents but this will be reducing to 10.6 for 2014/15 due to a Group Auditor leaving under the Council's ER/VR scheme.
- 2.13 The audit resources available have to allow for things such as annual leave, public holidays, training, administration, planning, fraud investigations and a contingency to allow for unplanned work. This provides the productive audit days available to deliver the required audit coverage obtained from the Audit Needs Assessment
- 2.14 Inevitably, the required audit coverage will exceed the available audit resources leading to a further review of the required audit coverage. This review will again be risk based to ensure that the areas of greatest risk are prioritised
- 2.15 As indicated above, Internal Audit resources are reducing in 2014/15 to contribute to the savings required to meet the challenging budget position faced by the Council
- 2.16 This will mean that a number of alternative ways of matching the required audit coverage to the available resources will need to be considered including
- Deferring lower risk audits
 - Extending the period of time between audit visits
 - Reviewing the range and frequency of audits
 - Increasing the use of alternatives e.g. self assessment
- 2.17 Any proposed changes will be discussed and agreed with our external auditors and reported to the Audit Committee
- 2.18 The Internal Audit Annual Plan is reported to the Audit Committee at the start of each year for approval. However, the Annual Plan must remain a flexible document that reacts to changing risks and priorities over the course of the year.

3. Equality and Engagement Implications

3.1 There are no equality and engagement implications associated with this report.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Extract from Public Sector Internal Audit Standards
Appendix 2 – Risk Assessment Form

Extract from Public Sector Internal Audit Standards

2010 Planning

The chief audit executive must establish risk-based plans to determine the priorities of the internal audit activity, consistent with the organisation's goals.

Interpretation:

The chief audit executive is responsible for developing a risk-based plan. The chief audit executive takes into account the organisation's risk management framework, including using risk appetite levels set by management for the different activities or parts of the organisation. If a framework does not exist, the chief audit executive uses his/her own judgment of risks after consideration of input from senior management and the board. The chief audit executive must review and adjust the plan, as necessary, in response to changes in the organisation's business, risks, operations, programs, systems, and controls.

Public sector requirement

The risk-based plan must take into account the requirement to produce an annual internal audit opinion and the assurance framework. It must incorporate or be linked to a strategic or high-level statement of how the internal audit service will be delivered and developed in accordance with the internal audit charter and how it links to the organisational objectives and priorities.

2010.A1

The internal audit activity's plan of engagements must be based on a documented risk assessment, undertaken at least annually. The input of senior management and the board must be considered in this process.

2010.A2

The chief audit executive must identify and consider the expectations of senior management, the board and other stakeholders for internal audit opinions and other conclusions.

2010.C1

The chief audit executive should consider accepting proposed consulting engagements based on the engagement's potential to improve management of risks, add value and improve the organisation's operations. Accepted engagements must be included in the plan.

2020 Communication and Approval

The chief audit executive must communicate the internal audit activity's plans and resource requirements, including significant interim changes, to senior management and the board for review and approval. The chief audit executive must also communicate the impact of resource limitations.

2030 Resource Management

The chief audit executive must ensure that internal audit resources are appropriate, sufficient and effectively deployed to achieve the approved plan.

Interpretation:

Appropriate refers to the mix of knowledge, skills and other competencies needed to perform the plan. Sufficient refers to the quantity of resources needed to accomplish the plan. Resources are effectively deployed when they are used in a way that optimises the achievement of the approved plan.

Public sector requirement

The risk-based plan must explain how internal audit's resource requirements have been assessed.

Where the chief audit executive believes that the level of agreed resources will impact adversely on the provision of the annual internal audit opinion, the consequences must be brought to the attention of the board.

City and County of Swansea - Risk Assessment Sheet - Internal Audit Section

Establishment/Site/System: _____

File Ref: _____

Completed By: _____ Date: _____ Approved (and copied to PFile/RAFile.) By: _____ Date: _____

Tick each factor that applies and score 1 point (except A) - maximum 5 points per category

A. Materiality	B. Control Environment / Vulnerability	C. Management Concerns	D Sensitivity														
Value of funds that pass through the system and/or direct expenditure <u>plus</u> income = £ _____ <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"><u>Annual Value (£)</u></td> <td style="width: 50%;"><u>Score</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>• < 1,000</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• 1,000 - 10,000</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• 10,001 - 100,000</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• 100,001 - 1m</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• 1m - 5m</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• > 5m</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> </table>	<u>Annual Value (£)</u>	<u>Score</u>	• < 1,000	0	• 1,000 - 10,000	1	• 10,001 - 100,000	2	• 100,001 - 1m	3	• 1m - 5m	4	• > 5m	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous frauds if < 5 years • Opinion rating less than 'satisfactory' • Last audit review > 3 years ago (date _____) • High staff turnover • New system(s) operating • High degree of devolution • Complex system(s) operating • Critical reports from outside bodies etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct requests for help • Potential for embarrassment • Specific problem areas • Control weaknesses • Assets at risk • Significant cash income (e.g.: > £10K p.a.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political sensitivity of activity • Large no. of sub-systems, interlinked or dependent systems • Effect on Authority's welfare • Unwelcome disclosure • Impact on service • Impact on other depts.
<u>Annual Value (£)</u>	<u>Score</u>																
• < 1,000	0																
• 1,000 - 10,000	1																
• 10,001 - 100,000	2																
• 100,001 - 1m	3																
• 1m - 5m	4																
• > 5m	5																
Total Score (max 5)																	
Weighting	5	8	4														
Weighted Scores																	
Total WS =risk index	Low 0 to 19, Medium/Low 20 to 25, Medium 26 to 40, Medium/High 41 to 49, High 50 and above																