

Northampton Borough Council Internal Audit Progress Report

Northampton
Borough Council
December 2014

Update to the Audit Committee on Internal Audit activity

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Distribution list	Audit Committee
Background and scope	The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update on the agreed 2014/15 internal audit plan.

Plan outturn

2014/15 Audit Plan

We have undertaken work in accordance with the 2014/15 Internal Audit Plan that was approved by the Audit Committee at its meeting in November 2014. Given the delay in approving the audit plan we are behind in our planned delivery of work. However, we are in the process of scoping and agreeing timescales for outstanding reviews which we will undertake between January and March 2015.

A series of meetings have been held with various staff members to develop an appropriate scope of work and focus for the scheduled internal audit reviews.

A statement tracking assignments undertaken and planned activity is shown in Appendix One.

Activity and Progress

Draft reports

Draft reports have been issued, and are with management for review, for the following areas:

- Good Governance questionnaire

The Committee will be advised of the outcome of these reviews via Internal Audit Progress Updates in future meetings.

Work in progress

Draft reports are being prepared / fieldwork is in progress in the following areas:

- Directorate Review – Customers' & Communities

The Directorate Reviews will examine the controls in place across each Directorate to ensure the Council's established processes for governance and financial accountability are operating consistently across the organisation and are suitably robust to achieve the Council's objectives.

Planned reviews

Fieldwork has been planned for the following reviews:

- Directorate Review – Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning – w/c 12th January
- Directorate Review – Borough Secretary – w/c 9th March

Scoping meetings have been arranged and / or draft terms of reference developed in relation to the following reviews:

- Environmental Services contract review
- Risk management / business continuity review
- Compliance review – data protection

Changes to the 2014/15 plan

The audit plan was approved by the Audit Committee in November 2014. Since we presented our Audit Plan we have continued to review the plan to ensure that it is focused on Northampton Borough Council's risks. On that basis, we have made the following revisions to the November 2014 Audit Plan as outlined below.

- LGSS contract follow up review – at the request of the Monitoring Officer this review has been put on hold until a responsible person has been recruited and established in post. The Council are currently trying to recruit for this post, which will sit within the Borough Secretary Directorate, however it is unclear when this will be.
- Information Governance and Data Protection compliance reviews – these reviews are defined separately on the Audit Plan, however it is considered most effective to combine these reviews into one review and complete on this basis. The audit days will remain the same.

Appendix 1 - Internal audit progress tracker

Ref	Auditable Unit	Number of audit days	Comments	Audit Sponsor	Expected month to complete
Cross Cutting Processes					
	Risk management and business continuity	30	Scoping meeting planned	Silvina Katz	February 2015
	Compliance - data protection	23	Terms of reference drafted, scoping meeting to be arranged	David Taylor	March 2015
	Compliance - information governance				
	Compliance - financial delegations	11.5	Planning to commence	TBC	TBC
	Compliance - procurement	11.5	Terms of reference drafted, scoping meeting to be arranged	Judy Goodman	February 2015
	Compliance - insurance	11.5	Planning to commence	TBC	TBC
	Compliance - corporate fraud	11.5	Terms of reference drafted, scoping meeting to be arranged	TBC	TBC
	Compliance - recruitment	11	Planning to commence	TBC	TBC
	Governance questionnaire and follow up	12	Draft report issued	Francis Fernandes	January 2015
Contracted services					
	Local Government Shared Service	28	Review on hold until responsible person appointed	TBC	TBC
	Environmental Services Contract	20	Terms of reference approved, to confirm fieldwork start date	Steve Elsey	March 2015
Directorate					
	Housing	15		TBC	TBC
	Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning	15	Fieldwork to commence 12th January	Steve Boyes	January 2015
	Customers and Communities	15	Fieldwork underway	Julie Seddon	January 2015
	Borough Secretary	10	Fieldwork to commence 9th March	Francis Fernandes	January 2015

Appendix 2 -Thought leadership publications

As part of our regular reporting to you we plan to keep you up to date with the emerging thought leadership we publish. The PwC Public Sector Research Centre produces a range of research and is a leading centre for insights, opinion and research on best practice in government and the public sector.

All publications can be read in full at www.psrc.pwc.com/

Good Growth for Cities – November 2014

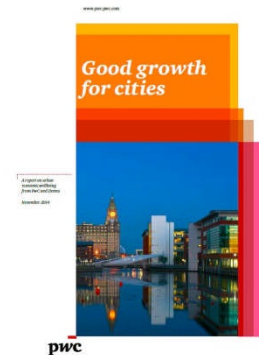
The economic outlook has improved, but there is some way to go until the recovery is sustainable – and the public finances still need to be repaired. And in the wake of the Scottish Referendum, there is heightened attention on future decentralisation to help unleash the economic potential of all parts of the UK.

This is our 3rd Good Growth for Cities report where we measure the performance of the UK's largest cities against a basket of ten categories defined by the public and business as a key to economic success and wellbeing.

This year, we've also looked back to before the recession, to compare how cities have fared since, and what this means for long term policy and decision making across UK cities.

Decentralisation Decade report: a plan for economic prosperity, public service transformation and democratic renewal

IPPR's report 'The Decentralisation Decade', which we have supported, sets out the prospects and priorities for decentralisation in England over the next 10 years.



The Public Matters – Autumn 2014

As we head towards the general election in May 2015, debate is heating up on the key issues for 2015 and beyond. But all too often the public's told what it should think, not asked.

Over five years, PwC has worked with BritainThinks to bring the public's views to the fore. Through our Citizens' Juries, we've assembled people from across the country to consider questions of national importance. And most recently, PwC and BritainThinks held Citizens' Juries at the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat Party Conferences.

The Public Matters is a special edition of our bi-annual Whitehall Matters newsletter reporting on the findings of our party conference season citizens' juries. This issue includes articles on what we found. We share the public's perspectives on reforming public services and dealing with the deficit, lifting living standards and delivering good growth and good jobs. We also explore the role of deliberative research in policy making, more widely.

The Local State We're In 2014: Our annual local government survey

Councils remain confident about their ability to manage funding cuts without impacting the quality of services or outcomes in the short term. But this confidence crumbles in the face of the longer term challenges ahead, and the gap between how councils see their own financial outlook and the health of the sector as a whole has closed. While in previous years, Leaders and Chief Executives thought it would be others who would end up in financial crisis, this year for the first time they are more concerned about their own financial futures.

With efficiency savings no longer enough, councils need to redefine what they do, as well as how they do it. Focusing on outcomes, taking much smarter approaches to technology and working in collaboration with private and public sector partners, as well as citizens themselves, will be critical.

The Local State We're In 2014 charts the progress councils have made on this journey to date and the outlook for the future.



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