

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker	Audit Committee
Date:	19 July 2021
Title:	Annual Internal Audit Report & Opinion 2020-21
Report From:	Director of Corporate Operations

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Audit Committee with the Chief Internal Auditors opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of risk management, internal control and governance for the year ending 31 March 2021.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Audit Committee approves the Annual Internal Audit Report & Opinion 2020-21 as attached.

Contextual Information

3. In accordance with proper internal audit practices, the Chief Internal Auditor is required to provide a written report reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control and to assist in producing the Annual Governance Statement.
4. The Annual Report for 2020/21 (attached at Appendix 1) provides the Chief Internal Auditor's opinion on the system of internal control and summarises audit work from which that opinion is derived for the year ending 31 March 2021.

5. The Audit Committee's attention is drawn to the following points:
 - Internal audit was compliant with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards during 2020/21;
 - The revised internal audit plan for 2020/21 has been substantially delivered; and
 - The County Council's framework of governance, risk management and management control is considered to be 'Reasonable' and audit testing has demonstrated controls to be working in practice.
6. Where internal audit work identified areas where management controls could be improved or where systems and laid down procedures were not fully followed, appropriate corrective actions and a timescale for improvement were agreed with the responsible managers.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	no
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	no
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because: 'Board' approval of the Annual Report & Opinion, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Internal Audit Plan	23 July 2020
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Equality objectives are not considered to be adversely affected by the proposals within this report