

Annex 1 Internal Audit Plan 2023/24

Updated to show position as at end of January 2024

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND RISK						
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Corporate Core	Complaints Procedures	Failure to comply with Council policy and regulations, potential for reputational damage should a complaint be taken to the Ombudsman.	Review of system for receiving and dealing with complaints.	15	QTR 1	<p>Roll forward from 22/23.</p> <p>Deferred to Q4 23/24 on request of Director of Law and Democratic Services.</p> <p>Further changes in roles and responsibilities identified.</p> <p>March Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25</p>
Corporate Core	FOI /Subject access	Failure to comply with Council policy and regulations, potential for reputational damage should a complaint be taken to the Ombudsman.	Review of system for receiving and dealing with FOI / SAR requests. Specific request to focus testing on Childrens' Services.	15	QTR 2	<p>Roll forward from 22/23.</p> <p>Further changes in roles and responsibilities identified.</p> <p>March Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25</p>

Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Corporate Core	ROPA	Failure to comply with Council policy and regulations, potential for reputational damage should the Council fail an ICO inspection.	Review of the processes in place to ensure that the Register of Processing Activities is collated and maintained up to date.	10	QTR 4	Risk Register March Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25
Corporate Core	Health and Safety	Potential damage to health / wellbeing or loss of life which may result in claims, reputational damage, litigation or corporate manslaughter / Failure to comply with Council policy and regulations, potential for	Review of Health and Safety at Corporate level - CPFA matrix Review processes in place for the recording and reporting of Health and Safety incidents	20	QTR 2	Previous audit - Limited Assurance Audit not now to be undertaken due to assurance obtained from an external review commissioned by the Director of People and Inclusion. March Committee – proposal to remove from plan.

		reputational damage should the Council fail a HSE inspection				
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Operations	Health and Safety	Potential damage to health / wellbeing or loss of life which may result in claims, reputational damage, litigation or corporate manslaughter	Review of Health and Safety arrangements within Operational Services, including the identification of services provided, the risk assessments in place action to address any remedial action identified.	15	QTR 4	<p>Originally planned as a roll forward from 22/23, however HSE enquiries ongoing so allocation to be used for follow up of implementation of recommendation from HSE review.</p> <p>Audit not now to be undertaken due to assurance obtained from an external review commissioned by the Director of People and Inclusion.</p> <p>March Committee – proposal to remove from plan.</p>

Financial / HR Systems						
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Corporate Core - Finance	Finance Systems - key controls	Errors and omissions resulting in weaknesses in the integrity of financial data and statements	Routine annual review of high-level controls within the key finance systems, retrospective review looking at transactions in 2022/23, to support closure of accounts process: Council Tax NNDR Housing Benefits Treasury Management Payroll Creditors Main Accounting Debtors Cash Collection and Banking	88	QTR 1 to 4	Annual work required to support statement of accounts <u>Reviews completed:</u> - Housing Benefits <u>Other reviews deferred to Q4:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debtors • Creditors • Council Tax • Main Accounting • Treasury Management • Payroll • Cash Collection and Banking#

						NNDR key controls will not be assessed but subject to a full system review.
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Corporate Core - Finance	Budgetary Control	Failure to identify budget variances promptly and take corrective action.	Routine review of the Council's approach to budget development, monitoring/ forecasting and taking action to address significant variances.	15	QTR2	Roll forward from 22/23 Corporate Core Accountancy team are undertaking a zero-based budget exercise across the organisation and, additionally Finance Improvement Panel are scrutinising Council Financial position. Potential for review to be removed from plan. December Committee – removed from plan.
Corporate Core - Finance	National Fraud Initiative	Statutory requirements are not complied with	Manage and co-ordinate the NFI including additional checks on data matches where appropriate.	15	Ongoing through-out the year	Annual work. <i>In progress.</i>

Corporate Core - Finance	NNDR	Failure to collect NNDR promptly, and failure to apply Business Rates Relief accurately.	Systems review of the processes in place for the billing and collection of National Non-Domestic Rates, including the application of Business Rates Relief	15	QTR 2	Audit knowledge Allocated to Auditor, testing being undertaken.
Corporate Core – Finance	Insurance	Failure to process insurance claims promptly	Review the process in place for the administration of Insurance claims	15	QTR 2	Request from client December Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Corporate Core - Finance	Capital Programme	Failure to meet corporate objectives and ineffective use of resources	Evaluate the governance, processes and controls, supporting key capital projects and ensure compliance with procurement rules and regulations	15	QTR 3	Risk Register March Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25
Corporate Finance/HR.	iTrent - Payroll – Additional hours /	Failure to respond effectively and efficiently to any major incident.	Review arrangements to manage and process timekeeping and overtime effectively as the self-serve	15	QTR 1	2022/23 looked at Operations, select another department for review.

	overtime payments		module is introduced in iTrent. Cover all directorates, and report to each Executive Director with results of findings.			December Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25
Corporate Finance / HR	iTrent – Expenses Module	Inaccurate / fraudulent claims for expenses may be made.	Review the processes in place for the submission, authorisation and payment of employee's expenses.	15	QTR 4	Request from client December Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Corporate Finance/HR	Automated Absence Pay	Absence not identified and inaccurate calculations of absence pay	Review the processes in place for the calculation of absence pay	15	QTR 3	Request from client December Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25
Children's Services	Recruitment Process	Failure to undertake robust pre-employment checks (right to work in the UK etc.) which may result in reputational damage or	Review of recruitment process – including assurance over the design and operation of the recruitment process including: 1. completeness and timeliness of pre-employment checks	15	QTR 3	Roll forward from 22/23 December Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25

		financial penalties.	2. completeness, accuracy and timeliness of adding new employees to the payroll 3. monitoring by HR of compliance with pre-employment and recruitment processes 4. an appropriate division of duties is enforced by the system.			
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Operations	Procurement of Contractors	Failure to comply with contract procedure rules, and failure to have adequate systems in place, could result in financial loss and additionally in reputational damage should complaints / allegations be received.	Review of processes in place for the selection of contractors, the award of works and subsequent payments.	15	QTR 2	Request from client Update from client that an internal investigation was being undertaken to address the concerns being raised. March Committee – removed from plan.

Grants and Verification						
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Corporate Finance	Grant Claims	Failure to comply with grant arrangements.	<p>Certification of those grant claims required to be certified by the Council's Head of Internal Audit.</p> <p>Anticipated during 2023/24: Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Bus Operator Grant Pothole Grant Universal Drug Treatment Grant</p>	15	QTR 1 to QTR 4	<p>Annual work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus Operators Grant 2022/23 • Changing places Fund Grant
Children and Young People	GM Supporting Families (TFG)	Failure to comply with grant requirements and failure to deliver programme objectives.	<p>Routine annual review. GMCA have been granted devolved powers over the programme and are collaborating to develop a more traditional / risk- based approach to the annual assurance work. Reviews to be undertaken once / twice a</p>	10	QTR3/4 (in line with GMCA)	<p>Annual work for GMCA</p> <p><i>Awaiting notification from GMCA, likely to be undertaken late QTR4 / QTR1 2024/25</i></p>

			year as directed by GMCA and the devolution agreement.			
SERVICE AREAS						
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Corporate Core	CCTV	Failure to adhere to the agreement and follow the CCTV Code of Practice could impact on the Council's reputation and reliance placed on the CCTV function in supporting other agencies and community safety.	Annual review as required by CCTV agreement.	5	QTR 2	Annual review Audit complete – report issued
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments

Corporate Core	Members Delegated Funds	Loss of accountability, lack of corporate ownership of decision making and possible failure to deliver the expected level of services to residents.	Routine review to focus on the transparency add compliance of the arrangements in place for administration of payments to Members.	5	QTR 4	Previous audit – limited assurance Allocated to Auditor, preparation work being undertaken.
Corporate Core – Finance	Cash handling and banking activities	Cash is not handled in a secure manner. Inappropriate reimbursements of expenditure are made.	Review of the processes for reimbursement of petty cash claims, and for the handling of cash and associated banking activities within the Business Support Unit.	15	QTR 3	Request from client December Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25
Operations	Stores	Weaknesses in the control of assets and stock may result in losses / increased costs.	Review the arrangements to manage the assets held at the Stores based at Bradley Fold depot.	15	QTR 2	Transport Stores undertaken in 2022/23, look at Building Stores in 2023/24 Auditor knowledge Draft report review in progress
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments

BGI	Estates Property Management	Inaccurate information may be held in the financial accounts and income due may not be collected	Review the management arrangements over the rental estates portfolio to ensure that adequate records are maintained, income due is collected promptly and valuations are regularly undertaken and updated in the Councils accounts.	15	QTR 4	Previous audit – Limited Assurance December Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25
BGI	Rent collection from Commercial Tenants	Failure to achieve objectives due to inappropriate or ineffective use of fund	Evaluate the processes and controls over the management of commercial and investment properties to ensure an appropriate return is being generated from the assets and properly accounted for.	15	QTR 1	Risk Register Draft report review in progress
Operations	Waste Management	Inadequate arrangements in place for the provision of waste services.	Review the management and contractual arrangements in place for the delivery of the Waste Management Service.	15	QTR 4	Request from Monitoring Officer March Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments

Children and Young People	Independent Foster Agency (IFA)	Inability to place “looked after children” with suitable families or promptly as the need arises.	Review of the use of IFA’s, including the controls in place to help ensure cost effectiveness and manage quality and quantity of placements.	15	QTR 2	Roll forward from 22/23 Draft report has been issued to client awaiting response
Children and Young People	Care Packages	Failure to comply with Council policy and legislation when procuring goods / services / administering contracts with suppliers. Best value may not be achieved, and high-cost care packages may not be challenged.	A review of the process for the calculation and award of care packages for vulnerable children, and the billing and payment processes around care processes to provide assurance that financial risks are mitigated. Review the arrangements in place for ongoing reviews of care packages, to ensure they are still appropriate and consider the financial controls in particular authorisation for changes to rates and providers. Determine if any benchmarking processes are in place and review.	15	QTR3	Roll forward from 22/23 March Committee – proposal to defer to 2024/25

Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Children and Young People	Schools	Appropriate financial and operational control is not maintained over school funds.	Provision for undertaking reviews at schools.	45	QTR 1 to QTR 4	Request from client. One review undertaken at request of Childrens Services – Chesham Primary School. Completed – Final report issued. Now agreed a schedule of 10 schools for audit review, caveat, that time spent to be monitored and not all 10 may be deliverable and school reviews may have to roll forward into 2024/25. Preparation works underway on three schools to be audited.
Children and Young People	School and College Transport	Children with special educational needs may be excluded from education as they may not have any available transport or other support to enable them to be able to	Review the management and contractual arrangements over SEN transport to ensure outcomes for service users are achieved and risks to the service users and the Council are mitigated. Ensure VFM is received by planning routes and	15	QTR 2	Roll forward from 22/23 Draft report been issued to client – awaiting response

		travel to and from school.	consider the make use of shared transport.			
One Commissioning Organisation	Integrated Community Equipment Stores	Weaknesses in the control of assets and stock may result in losses / increased costs.	Review the arrangements to manage the assets (equipment) and stock of care equipment.	15	QTR 2	Previous audit – Limited Assurance Review in progress, testing complete.
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
One Commissioning Organisation	Substance Misuse Commissioning	Inappropriate procurement processes in place. Contract procedure rules and legislation not followed. Value for money not obtained.	Review the arrangements in place for the procurement of goods / services related to the prevention of Substance Misuse.	15	QTR 2	Request from client Review in progress.
Operations	Fleet Management	Vehicles and plant equipment may not be maintained appropriately and may also be mis-used / mis-appropriated	Review to assess the maintenance and security of the vehicle and plant equipment and the arrangements in place to ensure that all items can be accounted for.	15	QTR 1	Roll forward from 22/23 Audit complete – report issued

Operations	Car Parking Income	Income due may not be collected, affecting cash flow of the Council. Additionally, errors and omissions resulting in weaknesses in the integrity of financial data and statements	Review the processes in place to ensure that income due to the service is collected in line with any agreements in place, and that the income is collected and posted to the accounts promptly.	15	QTR 1	Roll forward from 22/23 Review in progress, testing complete.
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Operations	Highways - Potholes	Failure to meet corporate objectives and ineffective use of resources	Evaluate the governance and controls over the use of funds provided to improve highways across the Borough.	15	QTR 3	Request from Monitoring Officer Allocated to Auditor, preparation work being undertaken
Operations	Climate Change	Due to the Global increase in energy prices, there will be significant increases in gas and electricity costs for 2023/24.	Review processes in place for the monitoring and targeted reduction of energy costs, including energy audits, building conditions surveys, and rationalisation of the estate.	15	QTR 2	Roll forward from 22/23 Allocated to Auditor, preparation work being undertaken

CONTRACTS						
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Business Growth and Infrastructure	Regeneration Projects	Failure to comply with Council policy and legislation	Identify regeneration projects that have / are taking place. Review a project to ensure that best practice was followed, considering project initiation, procurement of works, ongoing monitoring, and administration of payments, record keeping and post project implementation review.	15	QTR 3	Roll forward from 22/23 March Committee – proposal to remove from plan. Due to delays in the delivery of the regeneration projects
SUPPORT / SYSTEMS IMPLEMENTATION						
Directorate	Topic	Potential Control / Governance Issue	Proposed Audit Coverage	Indicative Days	Proposed Timing	Comments
Corporate Core – Finance	iTrent	Failure to adequately secure systems could result in a data breach, loss of	Provision to support system implementation.	5	Ongoing through the year	Annual Provision - Advice to be given as and when requested.

		service / downtime and loss of data.				
			TOTAL	623		

OTHER COMMITMENTS		
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Indicative Days</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Completion of audits commenced in previous years: <u>2021/22</u> Housing Development Programme Highways Maintenance <u>2022/23</u> Home Care Care Planning Permissions Six Town Housing Invoice Processing Six Town Housing Arrears Prevention	35	Complete – Final report issued Complete - Final report issued Complete – Final report issued Review in progress Draft report issued to client – awaiting response Draft report issued to client – awaiting response

<p>Audit work for Six Town Housing (STH) and Persona (separate audit plans)</p>	<p>56</p>	<p>STH 36 – separate plan agreed with Six Town Housing Audit Committee – 3 audit reviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to Buy – Draft report issued to client – awaiting response • Procurement • Housing Rents Key Controls 2023/24 – moved to Q4. <p>Also, complete two reviews outstanding from 2022/23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invoice Processing – Draft report issued to client • Arrears Prevention – Draft report issued to client <p>and undertake 7 follow up exercises to reports issued in 2022/23.</p> <p>Provision for Persona 20 – plan now agreed with Persona:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debtors – Draft report review in progress • Creditors – Final report issued • Payroll – Final report issued • Property – Leasing and Building Maintenance – Allocated to Auditor, preparation work being undertaken • Also, act as a critical friend to support Persona as they review their own processes of Supported Living.

Post Implementation Reviews and Action Tracking

35

Following up limited assurance reviews in more depth – so increased provision from 22/23 to allow for additional testing.

Follow ups completed quarter 1:-

- Petty cash – Choices for Living Well
- Leisure Centres Income review
- Taxi Licencing
- CCTV
- Adoption Services
- STH Fire Safety
- Pooled budgets

Follow ups completed quarter 2:-

- Complaints Procedures – Childrens Services
- Contracts Register
- STH – Anti-Social Behaviour -since Oct
- Debtors Key Controls 21/22
- Housing Benefit Key Controls 21/22
- NNDR Key Controls 21/22
- STH – No Access
- Council Tax Key Controls 21/22
- Main Accounting Key Controls 21/22
- Transport Stores

First follow ups completed quarter 3:-

- STH Anti-Social Behaviour
- STH No Access
- Treasury Management Key Controls

Second follow ups completed quarter 3:-

- Complaints Procedures CYP
- Housing Benefits Key Controls 21/22
- Contracts Register

First follow ups completed since December 2023 Committee:

- STH Hoarders
- Highways and Footway Maintenance
- Creditors Key Controls 21/22

Second follow ups completed since December 2023 Committee:

- Taxi Licensing
- Debtors Key Controls 21/22
- NNDR Key Controls 21/22
- Treasury Management Key Controls 21/22

First Follow ups currently in progress:

- Cash and Bank Key Controls 21/22
- STH – Procurement & Delivery of Capital Programme
- STH – Whistleblowing Allegations
- CBRE
- Housing Rents Key Controls 21/22
- Adoption Services

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payroll Key Controls 21/22 • Additional Hours and Overtime • STH – Disabled Facility Adaptions • Chesham Primary School • Twitter Account <p><u>Second follow ups currently in Progress</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Stores • Council Tax Key Controls 21/22 • Main Accounting Key Controls 21/22 • STH Anti-Social Behaviour • STH No Access • Estates • STH – Hoarders
Contingency for GMCA Collaboration / reactive GM assurance work	5	PSIAS Reviews to be undertaken at two North West Councils.
Contingency for Investigations and supporting the council's counter fraud strategy, including revision of whistleblowing policy.	60	Provision increased from 22/23. Whistleblowing cases investigated and report prepared.
Contingency for reactive or unplanned work, management request, consultancy work	64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starters and leavers and control of establishment • Assurance of Six Town Housing HR data to be transferred to the Council

Audit Service Management and administration, including service development, assurance mapping, Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme, Internal Audit Charter and Strategy, (QAIP), anti-fraud and corruption strategy, audit planning and Committee's support

155

Quarter 1

- Audit server cleansed
- Audit working paper package reviewed
- Audit timesheet monitoring reviewed and updated to enable easier monitoring of individual projects and reduced duplication of effort.
- Developing a recommendation tracker using excel
- Commenced review of Anti-fraud and corruption strategy

Quarter 2

- Audit server further cleansed and restructured.
- Audit working paper package reviewed and a number of administrative processes reduced.
- Developed a recommendation tracker using excel.
- Introduced a formal file closure process.
- Reviewed and amended the follow up process.

Quarter 3

- Development and introduction of individual assignment briefs to aid the 2024/25 audit plan and future years.
- Research into the creation of the audit universe.

Continuing work

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing work to Registrars re destruction of spoilt certificates
Provisions for annual leave / training / sickness	284	Increased from 2021.22 – to reflect appointments to vacant posts
Provision of ICT review – by Salford Computer Audit Services (System Licencing)	20	<p>Two reviews planned – to be undertaken September 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT Asset Management – engagement process starter – Auditors due on site in October 2023. Audit review has commenced, site visits planned for January 2024 Software Licensing – planned for Q3 or early Q4 Audit review has commenced.
Total:	714	
Combined Total:	1337	
Audit days to be delivered	898	(Exclude 155+284)