

**INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE
INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2008
(Report by the Audit & Risk Manager)**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the internal audit plan for the four month period commencing April 2008, attached at Annex A

2. STRATEGIC AND ANNUAL PLANNING

- 2.1 The Audit and Risk Manager is required to provide an opinion on the whole of the Council's internal control environment each year. This opinion also assists the Chief Executive and this Panel when they are preparing the Council's annual assurance statement. The work that is undertaken to allow the audit opinion to be formed is governed in the main by the annual audit plan.
- 2.2 The Internal Audit Service maintains a four year strategic audit plan, listing all the risk and system areas that are considered likely to affect the Council's internal control environment. The strategic plan shows the relative importance of each risk and system area and the frequency with which it should be audited. Over the last 12 months, the Council's risk register has become more robust. All but eight of the 81 risks in the registers have been mapped to, or added to the strategic audit plan. This means that the strategic plan now meets the requirements set out in the Audit Strategy.
- 2.3 To prepare the annual audit plan, the strategic plan is reviewed and audits placed in priority order. The highest priority schemes which can be delivered within the resources available are then included in the audit plan.

3 RESOURCING THE AUDIT PLAN

- 3.1 Two issues relating to staffing matters (maternity leave and the resignation of a member of staff) will affect the overall breadth of coverage that can be provided and consequently the level of assurance that the Panel will be able to take from the Audit & Risk Manager's annual opinion statement.
- 3.2 It is probably that one auditor will be absent until April 2009 on maternity leave. This employee's job share partner is also leaving in May. No decision has yet been taken on how to fill these vacancies. Consequently there is likely to be a net shortfall of 43 audit days in the plan period. Further information on this matter will be presented to the Panel in June, when a decision about how to staff the posts has been taken.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Panel approve the annual audit and assurance plan for the four month period commencing April 2008.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985

Strategic Audit Plan
The Council's Risk Register

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