

<b>Committee:</b>	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
<b>Report Title</b>	Internal Audit Annual Report 2024/25
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	26 June 2025
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<b>Lead Officer</b>	Alex Thompson Executive Director of Finance and Transformation
<b>Wards Affected</b>	All wards
<b>Appendices (if any)</b>	1. Internal Audit Annual Report 2024/25

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The main purpose of the report is to provide the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Section 151 Officer with an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and control processes. The contents of the report also provide one element of the evidence that is required to underpin the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

## **2 Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:-

- Consider and comment upon the Internal Audit Annual Report 2024/25

## **3. Proposals – Reasons for the recommendations**

- 3.1 To inform the Committee of the contents of the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2024/25, which also provides an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and control processes.

## **4 Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee of the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2024/25. As such, there is no alternative option.

## **Context and Key Issues**

- 5.1 The report summarises the audit work undertaken during the year in a tabular format. This includes:
- the areas subject to review during the year (Auditable Area)
  - an assessment of the assurance need assigned to each auditable area (high, medium or low)
  - the number and type of recommendations made as a result of each audit review.
  - The level of assurance assigned to each review.
- 5.2 Finally, it provides a summary of the key control issues that arose during the year that in the opinion of Audit Services should be brought to the attention of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Section 151 Officer.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 There are no financial or resource implications directly arising as a result of this report.

## **7. Legal and Governance Implications**

- 7.1 Internal audit is a statutory service in the context of the Local Government Accounts and Audit Regulations (Amendment)(England) 2015. The Act states that: "A relevant authority must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance". These Standards were adopted by the Council's internal audit section.

## **8. Risks**

- 8.1 The agreed actions detailed in Internal Audit reports are designed to mitigate risks.

## **9. Equality and Diversity Implications (including the public sector equality duty)**

- 9.1 It was not necessary to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

## **10. Background Documents**

None.

## **11. How does this deliver the objectives of the Strategic Themes?**

This report will support the delivery of the following Strategic Themes:-

- Growing up in Sandwell
- Living in Sandwell
- Healthy in Sandwell
- Thriving Economy in Sandwell
- One Council One Team Approach.

Internal Audit operates across the Council and helps it accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.