

To: Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board

On: 22 March 2021

Report by: Chief Auditor

Heading: Annual Internal Audit Plan 2021/2022

1. Summary

- 1.1 In line with the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, a risk based internal audit plan for 2021/22 has been developed. The audit plan takes into account the outcomes of the internal corporate and service risk identification and evaluation processes, and the current business environment. In addition to undertaking work which will provide assurance on the robustness on key internal controls, the plan seeks to reflect the key priorities and challenges for the council.
- 1.2 A number of methods have been employed to facilitate production of the risk based audit plan for 2021/22:
- Consultation with all Directors and their Senior Management Teams,
 - Senior management from the associate bodies and Audit Scotland;
 - Benchmarking with other Local Authorities;
 - Review of strategic, corporate and service risk registers;
 - Cumulative audit knowledge and experience;
 - Review of key external audit and inspection reports.
- 1.3 The following influencing factors have been considered in our assessment of the current business environment and the priority areas of audit:
- Financial stability / sustainability;
 - Economy;
 - Organisational Resilience;
 - Asset Management; and

- Brexit

- 1.4 The total available resource is 1226 days, the operational audit time available for 2021/22 has been identified as 972 days (79%). The remaining 254 days relates to training, service development, administration and management. Coverage of the plan is achieved through the use of in-house staff and where relevant commissioned from other providers.
- 1.5 Operational and non-operational time has been calculated in accordance with CIPFA benchmarking criteria. Non-operational time includes provision for training, performance management and service development. In addition to the internal audit assurance function the Chief Auditor has managerial responsibility for risk management, insurance and corporate counter fraud which are excluded from the calculation of available operational audit resources.
- 1.6 Delivery of the risk based annual audit plan supports effective member scrutiny of the council's internal financial and other control mechanisms.

2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are asked to approve the content of the risk based audit plan for 2021/22.
- 2.2 Members are asked to note that the progress of the 2021/22 annual audit plan and summaries of the findings from each audit assignment will be reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community Planning – Safer and Stronger** - effective internal audit is an important element of good corporate governance.
4. **Legal** - None
5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - None

8. **Health & Safety** – None
9. **Procurement** - None
10. **Risk** - The subject matter of this report is the risk based Audit Plan for 2021 – 2022
11. **Privacy Impact** – None
12. **COSLA Implications** - None

Author: Andrea McMahon – 01416187017



Annual Internal Audit Plan 2021/22



Finance & Resources Internal Audit

Date	March 2021	

Renfrewshire Council
Annual Internal Audit Plan 2021/22

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Audit Plan Overview

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In line with the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, a risk based internal audit plan for 2021/22 has been developed. In formulating the audit plan a risk assessment has been undertaken, giving consideration to the following sources of information:

Risk assessment	(1) Risk assessment and prioritisation of all auditable activities (audit universe).
	(2) Strategic and Corporate Risk Register.
	(3) Service Risk Registers.
Consultation	(4) The Chief Auditor has met with each member of the CMT and their senior management teams to ascertain any changes to operational practice and national policy and to determine their priorities and risks.
	(5) Senior Management from the associate bodies and Renfrewshire Leisure have been consulted to ascertain their priorities and risks.
	(6) The Chief Executive has been consulted on what she sees as the council's priority and risk areas for the forthcoming year.
	(7) Feedback from, and the expectations of, the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board are identified through the regular meetings with the members of the board.
	(8) The Chief Auditor has met with Audit Scotland to ascertain their approach to the statutory audit where assurance on key internal controls could be provided to avoid any duplication of effort.
Benchmarking	(9) Other Local Authority internal audit plans.
	(10) Discussion with other Chief Auditors through the Scottish Local Authority Chief Auditors Group.
Review of key internal reports	(11) Thriving People – Connected Communities – Renfrewshire's Council Plan
	(12) The results of internal audit work in 2020/21 and in previous years.
Review of key external reports	(13) Audit Scotland: Renfrewshire Council - Report to Members and the Controller of Audit on the 2019/20 Audit.
	(14) Audit Scotland: Best Value reports issued during 2020/21.

- 1.2 On the basis of the above, the audit engagements planned for 2021/22 are set out in Appendix 1, 2 and 4, for the Council, Associate Bodies and the Integration Joint Board in the following categories of audit activity:

- Assurance,
- Governance,
- Contingency,
- Planning and Reporting

- 1.3 It is the responsibility of management to ensure that they have good governance, risk management and internal control arrangements over the functions they are responsible for. It is internal audit's role to provide an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity. The scope of the internal audit plan encompasses, but is not limited to, the examination and evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's governance, risk management, and internal control processes; as well as the quality of performance in carrying out assigned responsibilities to achieve the organisation's stated goals and objectives. Delivery of the internal audit plan supports the requirement for the Chief Auditor to provide an annual opinion which is used to inform the annual governance statement.

- 1.4 The Chief Auditor shares information and coordinates activities with other internal and external providers of assurance and consulting services, as appropriate, to ensure proper coverage and minimise duplication of effort. Internal audit may place reliance on the work of other providers of assurance and the ability to do so will be considered during each audit engagement.
- 1.5 The plan also includes provision for managing and developing the internal audit activity including audit planning, reporting, periodic quality assessments and for following up on previous recommendations and reactive investigative work. The plan includes contingency time to allow for completion of work carried forward from 2020/21 and provides for consultancy engagements to be undertaken where these can improve the council's operations, add value and improve the management of risks. Contingency time also provides for sufficient flexibility to accommodate changing risks and priorities during the course of the year. More detail on each of these elements is set out in sections 4 to 7 of this plan.
- 1.6 The internal audit service is delivered and developed in accordance with its purpose which, as set out in the Internal Audit Charter, to provide assurance by independently reviewing the council's risk management, control and governance processes.

2. The current business environment and key risk areas

- 2.1 To ensure that the audit activity supports the achievement of the council's objectives, the audit plan, detailed in Appendix 1, has been aligned with the themes contained in the council plan.
- 2.2 There are a number of significant risks, arising from the external and internal environment, which could impact on the council's ability to achieve its objectives. The most significant risks and the risk control measures to manage these risks, have been identified through the council's corporate risk management process. Subject to the overall flexibility of the Audit Plan, priority will be given to audit engagements which provide assurance in relation to the council's strategic and corporate risks. The key strategic and corporate risks taken into account in formulating this audit plan are detailed below:

(1) Financial Stability / Sustainability

The council is facing significant financial pressures in the short, medium and longer term. There is an imminent risk of both increased costs and losses of income which could destabilise the finances of the Council to an extent beyond its financial resilience in the short term. The medium to longer term financial sustainability risk remains very high and continues to be subject to significant and regular scrutiny. The 2020/21 audit plan includes time for reviewing:

- budgetary control procedures across all services;
- the control of overtime payments;
- council tax collection procedures;
- creditors payment procedures; and
- void properties

(2) Economy

The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in significant challenges for economies across the world. The UK and Scottish Governments have made funds available to support business during the lockdown periods and to sustain citizens in employment. Significant funds have been administered through the council on behalf of the Scottish Government. The 2020/21 audit plan includes a review of the arrangements for paying and accounting for those business support grants.

(3) Organisational Resilience

Business continuity planning is crucial to our ability to provide services, and those services are increasingly heavily reliant on ICT. If our plans are not sufficiently robust or co-ordinated there is a risk that service expectations could be impacted. The 2020/21 audit plan includes time for reviewing services business continuity plans.

(4) Asset Management

The Council has many statutory and other obligations in relation to its physical assets which require efficient management otherwise there could be financial, physical and reputational risk for the council and/ or service users. The 2020/21 audit plan includes time for reviewing:

- winter maintenance procedures;
- the arrangements for control and recording of assets;
- statutory inspections in public buildings; and
- housing safety checks.

(5) Brexit

Given the current uncertainty on the impact of Brexit in relation to the council's internal procedures, no specific audit engagements have been identified, although the audit plan remains sufficiently flexible and will be kept under review to incorporate any new or amended statutory duties or significant risk exposures.

3. Allocation of Resources

- 3.1 In addition to the internal audit assurance function the Chief Auditor has managerial responsibility for risk management, insurance and counter fraud which are excluded from the calculation of available operational audit resources.
- 3.2 Operational and non-operational time has been calculated in accordance with CIPFA benchmarking criteria. The calculation of operational staff time has been based on 6 full time equivalent employees plus 100 days to be provided from other service providers and trainees. The internal audit team is appropriately resourced with 4 qualified and 2 non-qualified staff. Non-operational time includes provision for training, performance management and service development.
- 3.3 Resources from any unfilled elements of posts and other available audit resource will be used flexibly to ensure that the audit plan commitments are met, through the engagement of temporary staff and other audit service providers where appropriate. Where engagements are undertaken by the other audit service providers, these can provide an opportunity for benchmarking and training and development. Sufficient resources are available to engage specialist contractors where necessary to address any specific risks faced by the council.
- 3.4 The total available resource is 1226 days; the operational audit time available for 2021/22 has been identified as 972 days (79%). The remaining 254 (21%) days relates to training, service development, administration and management. Resources are assessed as being sufficient to provide an evidenced based opinion.
- 3.5 The following paragraphs provide an overview of how audit time has been allocated to audit categories. A summary of the operational time by audit category is detailed in table 1 below. The analysis of non-operational audit activity is detailed in the table 2 below. The planned operational/non-operational time for 2020/21 is given for comparative purposes.

	2020/21		2021/22	
Category of audit	Planned Days	% of Operational Time	Planned Days	% of Operational Time
GOVERNANCE	113	11%	81	9%
ASSURANCE	433	43%	428	44%
CONTINGENCY ^{note 1}	344	34%	344	35%
AUDIT PLANNING / REPORTING	119	12%	119	12%
TOTAL OPERATIONAL TIME	1009	100%	972	100%

Table 1

Notes

1. This category includes time for the finalisation of the previous year's audits, corporate exercises and groups, investigations, significant project consultancy activities and emerging priorities.

	2020/21		2020/21	
Activity	Planned Days	% of Non - operational Time	Planned Days	% of Non - operational Time
TRAINING	62	23%	62	24%
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	26	10%	22	9%
TEAM ADMINISTRATION	94	36%	90	35%
DEVELOPMENT ^{note 1}	82	31%	80	32%
TOTAL NON-OPERATIONAL TIME	264	100%	254	100%

Table 2

Notes

1. This category includes time allocated to development activities to support continuous improvement activities.

4. Governance (9% of operational time)

- 4.1 Internal Audit must evaluate the risk exposures relating to the council's and associate bodies governance arrangements. The engagements within this category form the basis for the Chief Auditor's annual audit opinions and support the annual governance statements.
- 4.2 The results of the risk assessment are detailed at Appendix 1 and 2, Part A in respect of the current year, with a total of 81 days being allocated to these engagements for 2021/22.

5. Assurance (44% of operational time)

- 5.1 A risk based assessment has been undertaken of all auditable areas taking into account the risk management framework and the expectation of senior management and the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board. The engagements within this category also form the basis for the Chief Auditor's annual opinions and support the annual governance statements. For each engagement internal audit will consider whether there are any available external sources of assurance can be relied upon to deliver the plan. Time is also allocated to following up on the implementation of prior year audit recommendations.
- 5.2 The results of the risk assessment are detailed at Appendix 1 and 2, Part B in respect of the current year, with a total of 428 days being allocated to these engagements for 2021/22.

6. Contingency (35% of operational time)

- 6.1 This category includes time allocations for finalisation of the 2020/21 audit plan, undertaking reactive investigations of theft, fraud or other malpractice and provides for post-report work which includes attending disciplinary or appeal hearings, employment tribunals and court, as required.
- 6.2 The council is also undergoing a significant period of change and although these changes represent significant priorities and risks for the council, the arrangements may not be sufficiently well established to be suitable for evidence based audit reviews. In recognition of this, the 2021/22 audit plan includes provision for the on-going and anticipated involvement in significant project consultancy activities, including service re-design arising from Right for Renfrewshire reviews, optimisation of the Business World product, participation in corporate groups, as well as smaller scale internal control reassessment by services.
- 6.3 The allocation of time for this category is an estimate based on prior experience and available resources. However, this will be monitored during the course of the year to ensure that internal audit continue to be in a position to respond to other priority areas which emerge during the course of the year, and, if necessary, revise the audit plan accordingly. Appendix 1 and 2, Part C details the indicative time of 344 days allocated across the contingency heading.

7. Audit Planning / Reporting (12% of operational time)

- 7.1 This category includes annual planning activity and reporting arrangements to the Corporate Management Team and the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board, the Integration Joint Board Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board and the Boards of the other bodies we provide internal audit services to under a service level agreement. Appendix 1 and 2, Part D details the time of 119 days allocated to planning and reporting activities.

8. Analysis of Plan by Service

- 8.1 Appendix 3 shows the amount of operational audit time allocated to individual services in 2021/22 and compares it to the planned days for 2020/21.
- 8.2 The planned days allocated to all services relates to work which is cross-cutting rather than service specific as well as time which is allocated out to services as the year progresses, such as contingency and investigations.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The annual internal audit plan for 2021/22, based on the strategic risk assessment, reflects the current priorities and challenges for the council, and demonstrates that the internal audit service continues to deliver added value while continuing to improve the service in line with best practice.
- 9.2 The allocation of internal audit resources is sufficient to allow for flexibility to deal with emerging priorities and provide adequate coverage of governance, risk management and internal control to inform the annual assurance statement.
- 9.3 The plan may be subject to amendment during the course of the year due to the emergence of issues of greater priority, or other unforeseen circumstances. The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board will be requested to approve any necessary changes.

**Chief Auditor
March 2021**

Council Internal Audit Annual Plan 2021/22

Entity	Engagement Title	Service	Council Plan Theme ¹	Days Allocated	Strategic & Corp Risk
Part A – Governance				58	
Corporate Governance	Corporate Governance Framework	Corporate - All Services	5	8	No
Budgetary Control – Service Controls	Budgetary Control	Corporate - All Services	5	25	No
Schools Procedures	Administration of Medicines	Children's Services	2	25	No
Part B – Assurance				360	
Follow Up	Follow Up	Corporate - All Services	5	40	No
Non Domestic Rates	Non Domestic Rates	FAR	5	15	No
Housing Assurance Statement	Compliance checks	CHAPS	2	10	Yes
Payroll – Service Controls	Control of overtime	FAR	5	25	Yes
External Funding Arrangements	Leader	CE	1	10	No
Self Directed Support	Self Directed Support payments	AS	2	20	Yes
Economic Development	Business Support Grants	CE	1	25	Yes
Facilities Management	Statutory Inspections – Public Buildings	E&I	4	25	Yes
Asset Management	Control and Recording of Assets	Corporate – All Services	5	20	Yes
Void Properties	Void Properties	CHAPS	2	20	Yes
Business Continuity	Business Continuity Plans for ICT Systems	Corporate – All Services	5	25	Yes
Stores	Stock Issues	E&I	2	25	No
Roads Operations	Winter Maintenance Procedures	E&I	1	20	Yes
Council Tax	Council Tax Collection	FAR	4	20	Yes
Creditors	Creditors Payments	FAR	5	20	Yes
Asset Management	Housing Safety Checks	CHAPS	2	20	Yes
Children's SW Establishments	Cash Payments	Children's Services	3	20	No

¹ 1: Reshaping our place, our economy and our future, 2: Building strong, safe and resilient Communities, 3: Tackling equality, ensuring opportunities for all, 4: Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy, 5: Working together to improve outcomes.

Entity	Engagement Title	Service	Council Plan Theme ¹	Days Allocated	Strategic & Corp Risk
Part C – Contingency				336	
Contingency	Contingency	Corporate - All Services	N/A	126	N/A
Contingency	Corporate Groups	Corporate - All Services	N/A	50	N/A
Contingency	Investigations	Corporate - All Services	N/A	160	N/A
Part D – Planning & Reporting				100	
Planning & Reporting	Planning & Reporting	Corporate - All Services	N/A	100	N/A

Appendix 2

Other Bodies Internal Audit Annual Plan 2021/22

Entity	Engagement Title	Service	Days Allocated
Part A – Governance			23
Corporate Governance	Corporate Governance Framework	IJB	5
Governance	Records Management	Associate Bodies - RVJB	18
Part B – Assurance			68
Integration Joint Board – Financial Management	Budgetary Control	IJB	20
SE – Other systems	Workforce Planning	Associate Bodies - SE	25
RLL – Other Systems	Museum Collection processes	RLL	23
Part C – Contingency			8
Contingency	Contingency	Associate Bodies	8
Part D – Planning & Reporting			19
Planning & Reporting	Planning & Reporting	Associate Bodies	19

Appendix 3

Analysis by Service

Service	2020/21		2021/22	
	Planned Days	% of Operational Time	Planned Days	% of Operational Time
All Services ^{note 1}	579	57%	554	57%
Chief Executive's Service	35	4%	35	4%
Finance & Resources	115	11%	80	8%
Children's Services	45	5%	45	5%
Adult Services	20	2%	20	2%
Environment & Infrastructure	60	6%	70	7%
Community, Housing & Planning	40	4%	50	5%
COUNCIL TOTAL	894	89%	854	88%
Scotland Excel	24	2%	29	3%
Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority	3	0%	0	0%
Clydeplan	3	0%	5	0%
Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board	24	2%	23	2%
Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Integration Joint Board (Appendix 4)	35	4%	35	4%
Renfrewshire Leisure Limited	26	3%	26	3%
TOTAL	1009	100%	972	100%

Notes

- 1 Planned time includes, Follow up Audit, Contingency, Planning and Reporting and an element of Cross cutting Assurance and Governance Audits and is allocated against services during the course of the year

Appendix 4

Annual Audit Plan 2021/22 – Integration Joint Board

Audit Category	Engagement Title	No. of days	Detailed work
Assurance	Financial Management – Budget Monitoring	20	The purpose of the audit is to review the arrangements in place for monitoring and reporting on the delegated financial resources.
Governance	Local Code of Corporate Governance	5	Annual review of the adequacy and compliance with the Local Code of Corporate Governance to inform the governance statement.
Planning & Reporting	Annual Plan, Annual Report and Audit Committee reporting & Training	7	The Chief Internal Auditor is required to prepare an annual plan and annual report for the Audit Committee, summarising the work undertaken by Internal Audit during the year and using this to form an opinion on the adequacy of the control environment of the IJB.
Contingency	Ad-hoc advice and Consultancy	3	Time for advice and consultancy on relevant priorities and risks or change related projects.