



Governance Scrutiny Group

Thursday, 5 February 2026

Internal Audit Strategy 2026-2029

Report of the Director - Finance and Corporate Services

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. On 20 February 2025, the plan for 2025/26, as well as provisional internal audit plans for a new cycle of audits in 2026/27 and 2027/28, were approved by the Governance Scrutiny Group.
- 1.2. This report focuses on the planned audits due to take place in year two of the new cycle of audits. These are listed at Appendix A for consideration.
- 1.3. A member of the BDO internal audit team will attend the meeting to present the report and answer any questions the Group may have.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Governance Scrutiny Group review and approve:

- a) the Internal Audit Plan and Charter 2026/27-2028/29 Appendix A
- b) the Internal Audit Strategy, Appendix 1 of the Internal Audit Plan
- c) the Quality Assurance Improvement Plan (QAIP) Appendix 2 of the Internal Audit Plan.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. To conform with best practice and Public Sector Internal Audit Standards; and give assurance to the Governance Scrutiny Group regarding the Council's internal control environment.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. This report presents the proposed audit plan for the three-year period 2026/27 to 2028/29.
- 4.2. The plan is set within the context of a multi-year approach to internal audit planning, such that areas of key risks would aim to be looked at over a three-year audit cycle.

4.3. Appendix A gives an indicative strategic plan for 2026/27-2028/29 and the programme is kept under continuous review during the year with any areas of significant risk added during that period. Ten audits are planned for 2026/27 totalling 150 days and covering a number of the Council's key policies and systems. These include:

- Main Financial Systems
- Section 106 and CIL
- Income receipts (Car Parks and Garden Waste)
- Income receipts (Bingham Market)
- Licensing
- Waste and Recycling
- Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation
- GDPR
- Fraud Report
- Local Government Reorganisation.

4.4. There will also be a follow-up audit of recommendations made in previous years but not yet implemented to ensure that audit recommendations are being complied with by officers.

4.5. There are three questions to assist the Group in their consideration of the audit plan. These are:

- Is the Group satisfied that sufficient assurance is being received within their annual plan to monitor the Council's risk profile effectively?
- Does the strategy for internal audit cover the Council's key risks as they are recognised by the Group?
- Are the areas selected for coverage this coming year appropriate?

4.6. There is also a requirement that Councillors understand and approve the role and scope of Internal Audit covered in the Internal Audit Strategy as stated at Appendix 1 and the Quality Assurance Improvement Plan Appendix 2 of the audit plan. The Global Internal Audit Standards came into effect in January 2025 and for public sector authorities these engagements must be delivered in accordance with the Application Note Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector.

4.7. To conform with the new standards, internal audit providers must have an Internal Audit Strategy and a Quality Assurance Improvement Programme to demonstrate how the service aligns with the organisation's strategic objectives and visions, and to demonstrate ongoing learning and improvement by the service over the course of the three-year plan. The appendices provided in this report show how the Internal Audit Three-Year Plan aligns with the Council's strategic objectives and the indicators that internal audit will measure itself against to maintain a high standard of quality and service.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

5.1. There are no risks directly attributable to the report although the nature of the internal audit service and the audit plan helps manage risk. The audit fees are

always subject to risk in terms of if an internal control weakness is identified fees can potentially exceed the budget or work may take less time than planned (ie there is both upside and downside risk).

5.2. During the year it is possible other risks materialise and to this end the plan is in a state of flux and can be altered if an exceptional issue arises.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

The audit fee relating to the costs of the audit work is included within existing budgets. The audit plan is constrained by a finite number of days commensurate with the risks pertaining to the Council.

6.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.3. Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

6.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no Section 17 implications arising from this report.

6.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There are no Biodiversity Net Gain implications arising from this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	The nature of audit is that it is cross cutting across a range of services and will impact on all of the Council's Corporate Priorities.
Quality of Life	

8. Recommendations

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For more information contact:	Peter Linfield Director - Finance and Corporate Services Tel: 0115 9148439 plinfield@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix A –Internal Audit Plan 2026/27-2028/29