

# ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

## REPORT TO AND DECISION OF AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ON 25 FEBRUARY 2021

### PART A : REPORT

**SUBJECT:** Progress Against the Audit Plan

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Stephen Pearce, Internal Audit Manager

**DATE:** January 2021

**EXTN:** 37561

**PORTFOLIO AREA:** Corporate Support

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Each year Internal Audit undertakes its work against an annual audit plan, as approved by the Audit & Governance Committee prior to the start of the financial year

The Committee is required to oversee the provision of an adequate and effective internal audit service

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members of the Audit & Governance Committee are requested to note the content of the report on progress made against the outline Audit Plan agreed by the Committee at its February 2020 meeting

#### 1. BACKGROUND:

An outline Audit Plan was presented to, and approved by, the Committee at its February 2020 meeting reflecting the resource currently available. The aim of the plan was to ensure that mandatory work is completed while consideration is given to the future resourcing of the section.

The Committee was advised that there would again need to be considerable flexibility through the year as to the assignment of resource to specific tasks and should there be a significant change during the year in the work to be undertaken by the section or in the resource available to it, then a revised Plan would be prepared and advised to the Committee.

Since mid-March 2020, the work of the section has been impacted by the changes implemented by the Council in response to the global Covid-19 crisis and, with the agreement of the Group Head of Corporate Support, a significant amount of resource has had to be directed to assist other areas on work that was not included in the original plan (e.g. in respect of Government financial returns and fraud checks in respect of the distribution of Business Support Grants). Emergency / temporary changes to Council operations, staff working from home, etc. have impacted on the section's ability to

progress the existing plan effectively and a revised plan is likely to be provided in due course once the Council's 'recovery' status becomes clearer. The impact on the work of the section will be reported in the annual audit opinion for the 2020/21 year.

With government restrictions (e.g. lockdowns, tiers, etc.) in place and now extending to at least mid-February 2021 (and probably longer) it has not been appropriate to provide a revised 'plan' for 2020/21 to the Committee. A new outline plan covering 2021/22 will be presented to the Committee, but until such time as the lockdown / restrictions have been lifted or relaxed and 'new normal' methods of working for the Council have been identified and implemented this will remain at a high level only.

The attached report identifies the main areas of work undertaken by the Internal Audit section to February 2021.

**2. PROPOSAL(S):**

It is proposed that the Committee notes the content of the report on progress made against the outline Audit Plan agreed by the Committee at its February 2020 meeting

**3. OPTIONS:**

To note the contents of the report, or not

**4. CONSULTATION:**

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓
<b>5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Financial		✓
Legal		✓
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓

**6. IMPLICATIONS:**

**7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:**

The Committee notes the content of the report on progress made against the outline Audit Plan agreed by the Committee at its February 2020 meeting

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

N/A