



East Staffordshire Borough Council

Draft: 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan

(For Audit Committee consideration following consideration by Corporate Management Team in April 2024)



Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	2
<u>Summary Plan</u>	2
<u>2024/25 Draft Internal Audit Plan</u>	4
<u>Engagement with executive officers and Audit Committee</u>	4
<u>Planning process</u>	4
<u>Statutory requirements</u>	6
<u>Conclusion</u>	7
<u>Appendix A1 – Your Internal Audit Plan and indicative phasing for 2024/25</u>	8
<u>Appendix A2 – Exclusions from the Internal Audit Plan 2024/25</u>	12
<u>Appendix B – Strategic audit plan 2022-2027</u>	13
<u>Appendix C – High Level Audit Universe</u>	15
<u>Appendix D – 360 Assurance Charter 2024/25</u>	16
<u>Appendix E – ESBC Corporate Plan, Strategic and Corporate Risks</u>	22
<u>Key 360 Assurance contacts</u>	24

This document, prepared by 360 Assurance and addressed to East Staffordshire Borough Council directors or officers is prepared for the sole use of East Staffordshire Borough Council, and no responsibility is taken by 360 Assurance to any director or officer in their individual capacity. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the document has not been prepared for, and is not intended for, any other purpose and a person who is not a party to the agreement for the provision of Internal Audit between East Staffordshire Borough Council and 360 Assurance dated 1 April 2024 shall not have any rights under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999. The appointment of 360 Assurance does not replace or limit East Staffordshire Borough Council's own responsibility for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure that its operations are conducted in accordance with the law, guidance, good governance and any applicable standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

Introduction

This is your 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan.

Your Internal Audit Plan has been developed to meet your assurance requirements. It reflects your objectives and priorities, provides assurance and supports improvement, is fully compliant with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and provides for an annual Head of Internal Audit Opinion. We will take a flexible approach and will keep the workplan under review throughout the coming year.

The plan does not cover all identified key risks in the audit universe, reflecting prioritised allocation of internal audit resources through discussions with Trust officers. The Audit Committee should acknowledge this limitation when approving the plan, which is drafted based on available internal audit resources advised by the Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer).

Summary plan

This table summarises your 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan. The full plan is provided at [Appendix A1](#).

Ref.	Audit	Indicative Phasing*	Indicative Days	Core or Risk Assessed / Assurance or Advisory
Corporate				
1	Head of Internal Audit Opinion	Q1-4	15	Core - Assurance
2	National Fraud Initiative	Q1-4	8	Advisory
3	Financial Management and Reporting	Q4	15	Core - Assurance
Chief Executive				
4	Human Resources (Sickness Absence)	Q4	15	Core - Assurance
Head of Corporate and Environment				
5	Business continuity	Q4	15	Risk assessed - Assurance
6	Emergency planning	Q4	15	Risk assessed - Assurance
7	Contract management – leisure services	Q2	15	Risk Assessed – Assurance

Ref.	Audit	Indicative Phasing*	Indicative Days	Core or Risk Assessed / Assurance or Advisory
Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer)				
8	Benefits	Q3	12	Core - Assurance
9	Revenues (Council Tax and Business Rates)	Q3	20	Core - Assurance
10	Financial systems - Treasury Management	Q3-4	12	Core (cyclical) - Assurance
11	Grant Certifications	Q1-4	20	Risk assessed - Certification
Head of Regeneration and Development				
12	Shared Prosperity Fund (Ward Enhancement Programme)	Q2-3	15	Risk assessed - Assurance
Head of Legal Regulatory Services				
13	Taxi Licensing	Q2-3	15	Risk assessed - Assurance
Management				
14	Audit management, attendance at Audit Committee and action tracking	Q1-4	36	Core - Assurance
15	Contingency and benchmarking	Q1-4	7	Advisory
TOTAL			235 days	

* Quarters have been allocated where specifically requested, other audits will be balanced across the year to align with client requirements and resource availability.

2024/25 Internal Audit Plan

Engagement with executive officers and Audit Committee

In producing this plan we have reviewed key documents and held planning discussions with the following officers at the Council:

- Chief Executive
- Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer)
- Head of Corporate and Environment
- Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
- Head of Regeneration and Development

The draft Plan will be considered by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and will be presented to the Audit Committee for consideration and approval.

Planning process

We undertake a risk assessment to ensure your plan is focused on your key risks and which:

- ensures appropriate coverage to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS)
- facilitates the Audit Committee in discharging its responsibilities in relation to governance, risk management and control
- supports achievement of corporate priorities.

We will continue to take a flexible approach to delivery of your plan. Even once the plan is agreed, we will continue to scan your local and national risks and agree any proposed changes to the plan through the Audit Committee, as appropriate. We will also take into account any third party assurances received.

The process is outlined in the table below:

Stage 1

Mandated

- Ensures adherence to the PSIAS over a five year cycle. Supports your AGS and legislative and regulatory requirements.
- Core review assessment completed and provided in the five year strategic plan ([Appendix B](#)).

Stage 2

Risk based

- Uses our wider understanding to consider your strategic risks.
- The plan in [Appendix A1](#) is mapped to your strategic risk register and risks not covered by reviews in the plan are highlighted in [A2.1](#).

Stage 3

High level audit universe

- Considers potential areas for review across your organisation in line with Corporate Plan Priorities. This does not present an assurance map or include all auditable units. We also consider any other requests made.
- As part of the planning process we have considered coverage against the High Level Audit Universe. Please see [Appendix C](#).

The output of this risk assessment process informs the proposed annual plan. [Appendix A](#) summarises your proposed 2024/25 annual plan. The strategic internal audit plan is presented in [Appendix B](#).

Statutory requirements

Head of Internal Audit Opinion

Our planning process is designed to meet the requirements of the Head of Internal Audit Opinion Statement and to support your Annual Governance Statement, including ensuring the risk management processes in place are well designed and operating as intended.

Our year-end Head of Internal Audit Opinion will be based on the findings of our annual work programme, which focuses on the four areas outlined in the diagram below. The Head of Internal Audit opinion levels are available to view in full on [our website](#).



Public Sector Internal Audit Standards

The Plan is compliant with the PSIAS. Our Internal Audit Charter is included at [Appendix D](#) to demonstrate how we align to your internal audit requirements.

Conclusion

The Audit Committee has been delegated responsibility by the Council to approve the internal audit plan for the organisation. The Audit Committee must be satisfied with the planned coverage and take into account other sources of independent assurance. The plan has been developed on the basis of 235 internal audit days being delivered during the year.

We seek approval from the Audit Committee for our proposed plan. We will continue to horizon scan and liaise with the Heads of Service to ensure the plan remains relevant to the rapidly changing environment in which you operate.

We work in partnership with the Council to deliver this plan and continue to seek efficiencies in the way we work. Cooperation of Council officers is essential to support the timely delivery of our plans.

Appendix A1 – Your Internal Audit Plan and indicative phasing for 2024/25

Ref.	Audit and nominated lead officer	Strategic / Corporate Risk Register / Corporate Plan reference	Indicative Days	Indicative Phasing *	Outline scope	Assurance or Advisory
Corporate						
1	Head of Internal Audit Opinion (Lloyd Haynes- Chief Finance Officer S151 Officer)	All	15	Q1-4	To undertake a comprehensive annual work programme to support our year-end Head of Internal Audit Opinion statement.	Assurance
2	National Fraud Initiative	Not Applicable	8	Q1-4	To provide key contact, project management and overview support to ensure progression of the NFI process to meet Cabinet Office requirements.	Advisory
3	Financial Management and Reporting (Lloyd Haynes- CFO S151 Officer)	All - Improving Financial Stewardship (IDL04 -12)	15	Q4	Control processes regarding the MTFS, budget setting and reporting. Review of underlying controls to ensure accuracy of financial ledger upon which reporting is based.	Assurance
Chief Executive						
4	Human Resources (Sickness Absence) (Linda McDonald / Helen Bacon, Shared Services Manager HR and Payments)	C15 / Increasing Staffing Availability (COM27)	15	Q4	Review of sickness absence controls.	Assurance
Head of Corporate and Environment						
5	Business Continuity (James Abbott, Corporate and Commercial Manager)	C18 / All	15	Q4	To provide assurance over the business continuity plans in place.	Assurance
6	Emergency Planning (Andrea Davies, Principal Democratic Services Officer)	C18 / All	15	Q4	To review the systems and processes in place for flooding relief.	Assurance

Ref.	Audit and nominated lead officer	Strategic / Corporate Risk Register / Corporate Plan reference	Indicative Days	Indicative Phasing *	Outline scope	Assurance or Advisory
7	Contract management – Leisure services (Dan Langford, Leisure Services Contract Officer)	C11 / 5 - Standing up for our communities (Managing Sport and Leisure Contracts (COM17))	15	Q2	To provide assurance on the contract management arrangements in place for the leisure services contract.	Assurance
Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer)						
8	Benefits (Greg Osborne, Revenues and Benefits Manager)	C11 / 5 – Standing up for our communities (Delivering better services to support cost of living crisis and maximise income through collection processes (COM22-26))	12	Q3	Key public facing system requiring regular assurance over accuracy, validity and timeliness of benefits. Review of controls over benefits and council tax support.	Assurance
9	Revenues (Business Rates and Council Tax) (Greg Osborne, Revenues and Benefits Manager)	C11 / 5 – Standing up for our communities (Delivering better services to support cost of living crisis and maximise income through collection processes (COM22-26))	20	Q3	Key financial and public facing systems requiring regular assurance. Review of key controls over council tax, business rates.	Assurance
10	Treasury Management (Lloyd Haynes- CFO S151 Officer)	C13 / Improving Financial Stewardship (IDL04 -12)	12	Q3-4	To provide assurance over the framework in place to manage treasury management activities.	Assurance
11	Grant Certifications (Lloyd Haynes- CFO S151 Officer)	All	20	Q1-4	To provide Chief Auditor certification of grants as required by central government.	Certification
Head of Regeneration and Development						
12	Shared Prosperity Fund (Ward Enhancement Programme) (Kelly Derr- Kelworth)	C11 / 2 Creating a prosperous East Staffordshire (Regenerating our communities COM18-19)	15	Q2-3	Review of governance arrangements for the Ward Enhancement Programme. Detailed scope to be agreed with management.	Assurance

Ref.	Audit and nominated lead officer	Strategic / Corporate Risk Register / Corporate Plan reference	Indicative Days	Indicative Phasing *	Outline scope	Assurance or Advisory
Head of Legal and Regulatory Services						
13	Taxi Licensing (John Teasdale, Head of Legal and Regulatory Services)	C11 / 5 – Standing up for our communities (Backing our taxi Drivers COM11)	15	Q2-3	To provide assurance over procedures and controls in place for managing taxi licensing and compliance with the Councils Taxi Licensing Policy.	Assurance
Management, action tracking, and contingency						
14	Management	Not Applicable	26	Q1-4	<p>For management of the Council’s internal audit service, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • production of the Strategic Internal Audit Plan and annual work programme • continual review and update of the Internal Audit Plan to ensure it meets the needs of the organisation • provision of ad hoc advice/support regarding internal control and governance issues • quality management • progress reports to the Audit Committee and Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) • liaison with External Audit • attendance at Audit Committee, client progress meetings, and other meetings as required. <p><i>This section is in accordance with requirements of Internal Audit Standards.</i></p>	Assurance
15	Action tracking	Not Applicable	10	Q1-4	To follow up agreed actions in all internal audit reports using the tracker.	Assurance

Ref.	Audit and nominated lead officer	Strategic / Corporate Risk Register / Corporate Plan reference	Indicative Days	Indicative Phasing *	Outline scope	Assurance or Advisory
16	Contingency	Not Applicable	7	Q1-4	Contingency is used to cover the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to audit assignments that could not have been reasonably foreseen • Facilitate additional work where required or scope increases • Where we experience delays in obtaining evidence and/or receiving responses to queries • Where meetings are cancelled and we prepared and/or travelled to client sites • In line with our KPIs where we do not receive agreement to terms of reference and agreement to draft reports in a timely manner. <i>This section is in accordance with requirements of the PSIAS.</i>	Assurance
TOTAL			235 days			

* Quarters have been allocated where specifically requested, other audits will be balanced across the year to align with client requirements and resource availability.

Appendix A2 – Exclusions from the Internal Audit Plan 2024/25

A2.1 Principal risks in Strategic Risk Register not covered by reviews in the 2024/25 plan

Strategic risk	Reason for non-inclusion in the plan
S1. The risk of not delivering the Towns Fund: the developments do not achieve value for money; additional housing is not achieved; reputational damage to the Council regarding delivery of schemes.	Reviewed in 2022/23 and 2023/24. Included in Strategic Plan for review in 2025/26.

A2.2 Areas requested by Council officers which have not been included in the 2024/25 plan

Area	Reason for non-inclusion in the plan
Waste management	Included in Strategic Plan for review in 2025/26
Section 106 agreements	Included in Strategic Plan for review in 2025/26

Appendix B – Strategic audit plan 2022-2027

Ref.	Audit	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Corporate						
1	Governance arrangements	-	✓	-	-	-
2	Risk management (included in HOIAO work annually)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	National Fraud Initiative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Financial Ledger and Reporting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	IT Audit – Cyber Security	✓	-	-	-	✓
6	IT Audit (IT Healthcheck)	-	-	-	✓	-
7	Capital disposals (as and when required)	✓	-	-	-	-
Chief Executive						
8	Creditor Payments	✓	-	-	✓	-
9	Payroll	✓	✓	-	✓	-
10	Member Induction	-	✓	-	-	-
11	Human Resources – Recruitment	-	✓	-	-	✓
12	Human Resources - Sickness Absence	-	-	✓	-	-
Head of Corporate and Environment						
13	Performance Management	-	✓	-	-	-
14	Business Continuity	-	-	✓	-	-
15	Emergency Planning	-	-	✓	-	-
16	Procurement	-	-	-	✓	-
17	Contract Management	-	-	✓ (leisure services)	-	-
18	Partnerships	-	-	-	✓	-
19	Safeguarding	-	-	-	✓	-
20	Community Safety	✓	-	-	-	-
21	Complaints Management	✓	-	-	✓	-
22	Cemeteries	✓	-	-	-	✓

Ref.	Audit	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
23	Car parking	✓	-	-	-	✓
24	Building Control	-	-	-	✓	-
25	Democracy and Elections	✓	-	-	-	✓
26	Facilities Statutory Compliance	✓	-	-	-	✓
27	Waste Management	✓ (collections)	-	-	✓	-
Chief Finance Officer (\$151 Officer)						
28	Benefits	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
29	Revenues (Business Rates and Council Tax)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30	Key Financial Systems (cyclical basis)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
31	Grant Certifications	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Head of Regeneration and Development						
32	Brewhouse income	-	✓	-	-	-
33	Shared Prosperity Fund (Ward Enhancement Programme)	-	-	✓	-	-
34	Housing Allocations	-	✓	-	-	-
35	Stronger Towns Fund	✓	✓	-	✓	-
36	Section 106 Agreements	-	-	-	✓	-
37	Homelessness	✓	-	-	-	-
Head of Legal and Regulatory Services						
38	Commercial Property Management	✓	✓	-	-	-
39	Premises and Alcohol Licensing	-	✓	-	-	-
40	Selective Licensing	✓	-	-	-	-
41	Food Safety	✓	-	-	-	-
42	Taxi Licensing	-	-	✓	-	-

Appendix C – High Level Audit Universe

The Internal Audit Universe aims to ‘give a more detailed indication of the range of activities that an internal audit plan may include’. This list is not meant to be exhaustive and should not be used as a checklist; rather that the universe gives an idea of the issues that may be considered when the internal audit plan is being discussed.

Internal Audit	Coverage in 5 year strategic plan
Corporate	
Risk management	Annual part of HOIAO
Financial Ledger and Reporting	Annual
IT Audit – Cyber Security	2022/23 & 2026/27
IT Audit (IT Healthcheck)	2025/26
Capital disposals (as and when required)	
Head of Corporate and Environment	
Performance Management	2023/24
Business Continuity	2024/25
Emergency Planning	2024/25
Procurement	2025/26
Contract Management (leisure services)	2024/25
Partnerships	2025/26
Safeguarding	2025/26
Facilities Statutory Compliance	2022/23 & 2025/26
Community Safety	2022/23
Complaints Management	2022/23
Cemeteries	2022/23 & 2026/27
Car parking	2022/23 & 2026/27
Waste Management – collections	2022/23 & 2025/26
Building Control	2025/26
Democracy and Elections	2022/23

Internal Audit	Coverage in 5 year strategic plan
Chief Executive	
Creditor Payments	2022/23 & 2025/26
Payroll	2022/23, 2023/24, 2025/26
Member Induction	2023/24
Human Resources - Recruitment	2023/24 & 2025/26
Human Resources - Sickness Absence	2024/25
Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer)	
Benefits	Annual
Revenues (Business Rates and Council Tax)	Annual
Key Financial Systems (cyclical basis)	Annual
Grant Certifications (including Disabled Facilities Grant and others identified with the Council)	Annual, as required
Head of Regeneration and Development	
Brewhouse income	2023/24
Housing Allocations	2023/24
Stronger Towns Fund	2022/23 & 2023/24
S106 Agreements	2025/26
Homelessness	2022/23
Shared Prosperity Fund	2024/25
Head of Legal and Regulatory Services	
Commercial Property Management	2022/23 & 2023/24
Premises and Alcohol Licensing	2023/24
Selective Licensing	2022/23
Food Safety	2022/23

Appendix D – 360 Assurance Charter 2024/25

This Charter sets out the purpose and authority of, and responsibility for, internal audit, consistent with the Core Principles for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, Definition of Internal Auditing, the Code of Ethics, and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (April 2017). This Charter should be read in conjunction with our Service Level Agreement/Contract.

Definitions

Internal auditing

Internal audit is an independent and objective assurance and consulting activity that is guided by a philosophy of adding value to improve the operations of the organisation. It helps the organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic and disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, control, and governance processes.

Standards

The Standards are principles-focused, mandatory requirements applicable to the planning, management and delivery of our internal audit services to each client. 360 Assurance has specific quality processes to ensure compliance with all detailed requirements set out in the standards and any additional local quality requirements agreed with the client.

Council

The highest level of governing body charged with the responsibility to direct and/or oversee the activities and management of the organisation. Typically, this includes Councillors as members.

Senior Management

The most senior staff of the organisation reporting to the accounting or accountable officer.

Chief Audit Executive/Head of Internal Audit

This is the Director of 360 Assurance.

Purpose and mission

The purpose of internal audit is to provide independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the organisation's operations. The mission statement for internal audit per the PSIAS is "to enhance and protect organisational value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice and insight".

Standards of professional practice

360 Assurance's provision of internal audit to each client will follow the principles set out in the Code of Ethics contained in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards 2017 (PSIAS). Our staff are required to follow the rules of conduct laid down in the Code of Ethics as well as related 360 Assurance guidance and professional requirements of any professional body to which the auditor belongs. 360 Assurance applies ongoing processes to prevent and detect breaches of the Code of Ethics; any identified breaches will be referred by the Director of 360 Assurance to the Audit Committee.

The Standards are principles-focused, mandatory requirements applicable to the planning, management and delivery of our internal audit services to each client. 360 Assurance has specific quality processes to ensure compliance with all detailed requirements set out in the standards and any additional local quality requirements agreed with the client, ensuring the principles of integrity, objectivity, confidentiality and competency are applied and upheld.

Authority

The director of 360 Assurance is ultimately responsible for the delivery of the client's audit plan in line with the service level agreement. To achieve this they are assisted by a designated client lead. The director of 360 Assurance and client lead will be suitably qualified and experienced. Any change of client lead will be discussed with the Audit Committee/ Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer). Other internal audit staff will be suitably qualified and/or experienced, in line with agreement regarding skill mix through the service level agreement/contracting process.

360 Assurance will have unrestricted access to communicate and interact with Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) and Chair of the Audit Committee, including in private meetings without management present.

360 Assurance will work with the whole of the executive team who will support us in delivering the Internal Audit Plan and work from the Plan will be reported directly to the Audit Committee.

Authority is granted by the client for full, free and unrestricted access by 360 Assurance to any and all of its records, physical properties and personnel relevant to any function under review, for example care records and staff information. All client employees will assist internal audit in

fulfilling its function. 360 Assurance will not be responsible or liable if information material to our task is withheld and concealed from us or wrongly represented to us.

The Council has agreed the objectives for the Internal Audit function. These are expressed through the Audit Committee Terms of Reference.

The Audit Committee Terms of Reference state the following in relation to Internal Audit:

To consider the annual report and opinion from the Internal Audit Function (currently provided by CW Audit), and a summary of internal audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance it can give over the Council's corporate governance arrangements.

To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.

To consider reports dealing with the management and performance of Internal Audit.

To consider a report from the Internal Audit Function (currently provided by CW Audit) on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.

(Constitution: Functions of the Audit Committee Part 3E, December 2023)

The size of the internal audit programme will be based on the organisation's risk appetite. The Internal Audit Plan and its content are owned by the Audit Committee.

Independence and Objectivity

360 Assurance will seek to ensure the independence and objectivity of our personnel engaged in the provision of the services. You will be made aware of any relationships that, in our professional judgement, may reasonably be thought to impinge on our independence and the objectivity of the personnel involved in the provision of the services. This is essential in order to reach impartial and unbiased judgements in the reporting of the services.

The head of internal audit will disclose to the Audit Committee any interference and related implications in determining the scope in internal auditing, performing works and/or communicating results.

Scope of internal audit activity

The scope of internal audit encompasses the examination and evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's governance, risk management processes, systems of internal control and the quality of performance in carrying out assigned responsibilities to achieve the organisation's stated goals and objectives. PSIAS recommend it includes:

- reviewing the reliability and integrity of financial and operating information and the means used to identify, measure, classify, and report such information
- reviewing the systems established to ensure compliance with those policies, plans, procedures, laws, and regulations which could have a significant impact on operations and reports and whether the organisation is in compliance
- reviewing the means of safeguarding assets and, as appropriate, verifying the existence of such assets
- reviewing and appraising the economy and efficiency with which resources are employed
- reviewing operations or programmes to ascertain whether results are consistent with established objectives and goals and whether the operations or programmes are being carried out as planned
- reviewing specific operations at the request of the Audit Committee or management, as appropriate
- monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the organisation's risk management system.

Documents and information given to internal audit during a review will be handled in the same prudent and confidential manner as by those employees normally accountable for them.

Responsibility

Annually, the client lead will submit to senior management and the Audit Committee a Plan for the forthcoming year. The annual planning process will identify strategic risk-based and key internal control systems reviews for consideration and will be aligned to the objectives and priorities of the organisation, any reviews not prioritised will be identified. Any significant deviation from the formally approved Plan will be communicated to senior management and the Audit Committee for approval.

360 Assurance will work with the whole of the executive team who will support us in delivering the Plan, and will report on work from the Plan directly to the Audit Committee.

On an operational basis the client lead will report to the client's lead contact, normally the Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer).

Audit work is carried out for the client only unless it is agreed during the planning stage that the audit will involve third parties.

360 Assurance will ensure all Plan engagements are completed, including the establishment of objectives and scope, the assignment of appropriate and adequately supervised resources and the documentation of work programmes and testing results. Following the conclusion of each audit we will confirm our findings in writing which will be issued by the client lead. Management have an opportunity to formally respond to each report and detail the corrective action taken, or to be taken, in regard to the specific findings and recommendations raised; responses should include allocated responsibility and timeframes for anticipated completion of each action and an explanation for any recommendations not addressed.

The client will be responsible for notifying 360 Assurance of any reasons for delays in planned work with sufficient notice and also ensuring that information requested is provided in a timely manner. Other than in exceptional circumstances, clients should provide requested information, evidence and responses to audit enquiries within 5 working days.

Follow up arrangements are in place to ensure that management implement corrective actions within specified timeframes. 360 Assurance shall be responsible for providing assurance over the appropriateness of management's monitoring of actions to address recommendations.

Individual assurance assignments provide audit opinions based upon a sound methodology and using accepted best practice. Where, in the opinion of 360 Assurance, an issue arises which requires the urgent attention of the client, the matter will be reported to the Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) without delay.

Our risk matrix, audit review and overall Head of Internal Audit opinions are available to view in full on [our website](#).

Consulting services

Internal audit services to the organisation may consist of Assurance services and/or Consulting services. Assurance services involve the internal auditor's objective assessment of evidence to provide an independent opinion or conclusions regarding an entity, an operation, a function, a process, system, or other subject matter. The results of Assurance reviews will be regularly reported to the Audit Committee. Consulting services are advisory in nature and are generally performed at the specific request of the client. 360 Assurance will seek approval from the Audit Committee *prior* to the commencement of any significant Consulting services. Work is considered significant if it exceeds 20% of the annual audit fee.

Any Consulting services will, in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, be limited to reviews that aim to improve governance, risk management and control. When performing Consulting services, the internal auditor will maintain objectivity and will not take on management responsibility. We will apply appropriate management arrangements to ensure that any conflict is avoided if we were to undertake any non-internal audit activities and these will be dealt with in an open and transparent manner.

External Audit liaison

360 Assurance will liaise with the client's current external auditors and will provide information, explanations and working papers that support our reports to assist them in their evaluation of the work carried out. This liaison with the external auditors enables the client to maximise the value of the total audit effort. This close liaison will provide the client's external auditors the opportunity to:

- comment on the overall Annual Internal Audit Plan
- comment on the scheduling of reviews
- examine audit working papers/files and associated draft and final reports for individual reviews.

Any external auditor or other reviewer of work undertaken as part of the services will need to draw their own conclusions from the work as it will have been undertaken and concluded on by 360 Assurance for its own purposes.

Performance of Internal Audit service

Performance of the service provided will be assessed in line with the agreed key performance indicators, which are included within the service level agreement/contract.

360 Assurance undertakes a programme of quality monitoring to ensure that audits are delivered in line with the Audit Manual, which reflects extant professional requirements.

360 Assurance will engage in an independent review in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and notify the client of any quality assurance and improvement programme developed as a consequence.

Role of Internal Audit in fraud related work

360 Assurance will have sufficient knowledge to evaluate the risk of fraud and the manner in which it is managed by the organisation. The potential for the occurrence of fraud and how the organisation manages fraud risk will be considered. There is a protocol in place with the client's Counter Fraud provider to review internal audit requirements where a fraud has arisen or to report any potential fraud issues to Counter Fraud where such issues arise.

Appendix E – East Staffordshire Borough Council Corporate Plan and Strategic and Corporate Risk Registers

Corporate Plan

The Councils 2024/25 Corporate Plan was agreed in March 2024 setting out targets designed to manage the performance of the Council in delivering its corporate priorities over the 2024/25 financial year, including:

1. Improving Local Democracy
2. Creating a Prosperous East Staffordshire
3. Developing a Green New Deal for East Staffordshire
4. Protecting Our Heritage
5. Standing up for our Communities

Strategic risks on the Strategic Risk Register *(source: Cabinet papers March 2024 – Outturn Report Quarter 3)*

Link to Corporate Priority	Strategic Risk Register Reference / Risk Description	Owner	Inherent Risk Score	Current Risk Score
2.	S1. The risk of not delivering the Towns Fund: the developments do not achieve value for money; additional housing is not achieved; reputational damage to the Council regarding delivery of schemes.	Head of Regeneration & Development	20 (L4, I5)	20 (L4, I5)

Corporate risks on the Corporate Risk Register *(source: Cabinet papers March 2024 – Outturn Report Quarter 3)*

Link to Corporate Priority	Corporate Risk Register Reference / Risk Description	Owner	Inherent Risk Score	Current Risk Score
1.	C1. The risk that the Government's Asylum Seeker Dispersal Programme creates unacceptable issues for the Council to deal with.	Head of Regeneration & Development	15 (L3, I5)	15 (L3, I5)
All	C2. The risks associated with the economic and wider geo-political circumstances which may have the potential for operational and service delivery disruption and wider financial impacts.	Chief Financial Officer & S151	20 (L4, I5)	20 (L4, I5)
All	C3. There are inherent risks associated with the volatility emanating from the Business Rates Retention Scheme.	CFO & S151	25 (L5, I5)	25 (L5, I5)
All	C4. There are still risks associated with Covid - 19 which could impact on the borough and on service delivery.	Head of Corporate & Environment Services	20 (L4, I5)	20 (L4, I5)

Link to Corporate Priority	Corporate Risk Register Reference / Risk Description	Owner	Inherent Risk Score	Current Risk Score
All	C5. There are risks associated with the uncertainties of the levels of Central Government Funding	CFO & S151	25 (L5, I5)	25 (L5, I5)
3.	C6. There are risks associated with the Council working to achieve the Climate Change Action Plan	Head of Legal & Regulatory Services & Monitoring Officer	15 (L3, I5)	15 (L3, I5)
All	C7. There are significant financial risks associated with the commitments to the Pension Scheme	CFO & S151	12 (L3, I4)	12 (L3, I4)
All	C8. There are risks associated with how the Council reacts to the Government's initiative for the Homes for Ukraine scheme	Head of Corporate & Environment Services	6 (L3, I2)	6 (L3, I2)
All	C9. There are risks associated with unauthorised access to the Council's ICT systems.	Head of Corporate & Environment Services	20 (L4, I5)	20 (L4, I5)
All	C10. There is the risk that the Council could face litigation over a range of issues.	Head of Legal & Regulatory Services & Monitoring Officer	15 (L3, I5)	15 (L3, I5)
All	C11. There is the risk that Budget assumptions made within the MTFS may not be realised	CFO & S151	25 (L5, I5)	25 (L5, I5)
All	C12. There is the risk that if the levels of Supported Housing providers continues to grow then the cost to the Council could be financially unsustainable.	CFO & S151 and Head of Regeneration & Development	20 (L4, I5)	20 (L4, I5)
All	C13. There is a risk that through our Treasury Management approach, the counter parties we use fail to deliver the anticipated benefits.	CFO & S151	15 (L3, I5)	15 (L3, I5)
All	C14. There is a risk that unforeseen Environmental issues could adversely impact Council services.	Head of Corporate & Environment Services	15 (L3, I5)	15 (L3, I5)
All	C15. There is a risk that unforeseen health related issues could adversely impact Council services.	Head of Corporate & Environment Services	15 (L3, I5)	15 (L3, I5)
All	C16. There is an ongoing risk of the impact of the Government's Welfare Reforms on the Council's financial standing.	CFO & S151	16 (L4, I4)	16 (L4, I4)
All	C17. There is an ongoing risk of wider Public Sector Funding Reductions	CFO & S151	16 (L4, I4)	16 (L4, I4)
All	C18. Floods, fire, chemical, major disaster, terrorism	Head of Corporate & Environment Services	20 (L4, I5)	20 (L4, I5)

Key 360 Assurance contacts		
Leanne Hawkes, Director		
leanne.hawkes@nhs.net	07545 423040	
Tracey Barnard-Ghaut, Assistant Director		
Tracey.Barnard-Ghaut1@nhs.net	07545 502397	
Ruby Deo, Client Lead		
Ruby.Deo@nhs.net	07545 502399	