

Committee: Audit and Scrutiny	Date: 7 December 2021
Subject: Internal Audit Progress Report 2021/22	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance & Resources) and Section 151 Officer	Public
Report Author/s: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance and Resources) and Section 151 Officer Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: Jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk	For Information

Summary

This report is intended to inform the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of progress made against the 2021/22 internal audit plan.

The following report has been finalised since the last Committee:

- Planning (Moderate/Substantial)

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. This report is intended to inform the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of progress made against the 2021/22 internal audit plan. It summarises the work internal audit have done, together with their assessment of the systems reviewed and the recommendations they have raised.
2. Their work complies with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. As part of their audit approach, they have agreed terms of reference for each piece of work with the risk owner, identifying the headline and sub-risks, which have been covered as part of the assignment. This approach is designed to enable them to give assurance on the risk management and internal control processes in place to mitigate the risks identified.
3. The Audit Committee approved the 2021/22 annual audit plan in March 2021. The progress against plan is reported at every Audit and Scrutiny Committee during 2021/22.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4. The following report has been finalised since the last Committee:
 - Planning (Moderate/Substantial)

The conclusion of the audit is as follows:

Planning (Moderate/Substantial)

5. Our testing found that the Council has effective processes in place for responding to and processing planning applications through the Uniform and iDocs systems. However, improvement in arrangements is required in relation to maintaining an up to date Planning Handbook for staff, requiring conflicts of interest to be logged by Planning Officers and recording further detail about the consultation process and responses received for each planning application.

Consequently, we conclude moderate assurance over the design of the Council's planning processes and substantial assurance over their operational effectiveness.

We have raised three medium priority recommendations

6. A Summary of outstanding Recommendations from previous audits are included in Appendix B – Follow up report.
7. This is regularly monitored by Senior Officers and will be followed up again ahead of the next Audit and Scrutiny Committee, along with other recommendations due by 31 January 2022..

Consultation

Not applicable.

References to Corporate Strategy

To ensure the Council is effective and efficient by delivering services that are value for money and meet the needs of our residents.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance & Resources) and Section 151 Officer.

Tel/Email: 01277 312500/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law & Governance) and Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director (Planning & Economy)

Tel/Email: 01277 312500/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

There are no direct economic implications arising from this report.

Background Papers

None

Appendices to this report

Appendix A: Internal Audit Progress Report

Appendix B: Internal Audit Follow Up Report