

For Decision	
Public/Non Public*	Public
Report to:	Audit and Scrutiny Panel
Date of Meeting:	24 February 2021
Report of:	Chief Finance Officer
Report Author:	Charlotte Radford
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Agenda Item:	08

INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN 2021-22

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To inform members of the proposed plan of work for 2021-22.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are requested to consider and approve the audit plan for 2021-22 attached at **Appendix A**.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 This complies with good governance and financial regulations

4. Summary of Key Points

4.1 The internal auditors have met with the OPCC and Force to agree the plan proposed at **Appendix A**. This plan for 2021-22 has been established based upon meeting statutory requirements for auditing key financial systems, the need to audit systems where there has been a significant change in year and other audit requests based upon risks within the strategic risk register and advisory audits required to ensure the smooth running of both legal entities.

5. Financial Implications and Budget Provision

5.1 None as a direct result of this report.

6. Human Resources Implications

6.1 None as a direct result of this report.

7. Equality Implications

7.1 None as a direct result of this report.

8. Risk Management

8.1 The risk register has been used in the production of this internal audit plan.

9. Policy Implications and links to the Police and Crime Plan Priorities

9.1 The work of internal audit supports all of the Police & Crime Plan priorities.

10. Changes in Legislation or other Legal Considerations

10.1 Legislative changes and potential risks associated with such changes have been considered in putting together this plan.

11. Details of outcome of consultation

11.1 The OPCC and Force were part of the process for producing this plan.

12. Appendices

12.1 **Appendix A** – Internal Audit Plan 2021-22



Police & Crime Commissioner for
Nottinghamshire & Nottinghamshire Police
Internal Audit Operational Plan 2021/22 and
Charter

Draft

Prepared by: Mazars LLP

Date: February 2021

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Statement of Responsibility

Disclaimer

This report ("Report") was prepared by Mazars LLP at the request of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire (OPCC) and terms for the preparation and scope of the Report have been agreed with them. The matters raised in this Report are only those which came to our attention during our internal audit work. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure that the information provided in this Report is as accurate as possible, Internal Audit have only been able to base findings on the information and documentation provided and consequently no complete guarantee can be given that this Report is necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist, or of all the improvements that may be required.

The Report was prepared solely for the use and benefit of the OPCC and to the fullest extent permitted by law Mazars LLP accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability to any third party who purports to use or rely for any reason whatsoever on the Report, its contents, conclusions, any extract, reinterpretation, amendment and/or modification. Accordingly, any reliance placed on the Report, its contents, conclusions, any extract, reinterpretation, amendment and/or modification by any third party is entirely at their own risk. Please refer to the Statement of Responsibility on the final page of this report for further information about responsibilities, limitations and confidentiality.



01

Section 01: **Introduction**



Introduction

An annual proposed Internal Audit Operational Plan has been prepared on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire and Nottinghamshire Police (the OPCC and Force) for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

As part of fulfilling the Joint Audit & Scrutiny Panel's (JASP) responsibilities, the JASP require assurance that it is focusing its attention on the key risks to the OPCC and Force and that it is receiving timely and effective assurance with regards the management of those risks. As Internal Audit is a one source of this assurance, Internal Audit have reviewed the OPCC / Force Risk Register with the aim of identifying where the OPCC / Force obtains this assurance and that the Internal Audit plan is suitably focused and aligned with other sources of assurance. The results of this exercise were considered when drawing the audit plan.

The purpose of this document is to provide the JASP with the proposed 2021/22 Plan for consideration and approval.

In considering the document, JASP is asked to consider:

- whether the balance is right in terms of coverage and focus;
- whether we have captured key areas that would be expected; and
- whether there are any significant gaps.

We are also seeking approval from JASP for the Internal Audit Charter in Section 04, which we request on an annual basis. There are no changes from the Charter presented for approval last year.

Scope and Purpose of Internal Audit

 **IA's Role**

The purpose of internal audit is to provide the Commissioner and Chief Constable, through the JASP with an independent and objective opinion on risk management, control and governance and their effectiveness in achieving the the OPCC and Force's agreed objectives

 **IA Plan**

Completion of the internal audits proposed in the 2021/22 Plan should be used to help inform the OPCC's and Force's Annual Governance Statement.

 **Objective**

Government accounting standards require Accounting Officers to make provision for internal audit in accordance with accordance with UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), as produced by the Internal Audit Standards Advisory Board. Within the OPCC and Force, the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable are the Accounting Officer and have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control in the respective organisations.

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. Internal Audit also has an independent and objective consultancy role to help line managers improve risk management, governance and control.

We have included our Internal Audit Charter in Section 04. The Charter sets out terms of reference and serves as a basis for the governance of the OPCC's and Force IA function, establishing our purpose, authority, responsibility, independence and scope, in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditor's (IIA) standards.





Preparing the Strategy Update and Operational Plan for 2021/22

As part of our approach, it is important we consider organisation's strategic priorities, as well as the key strategic risks identified, as we seek to align our risk-based approach accordingly.

In preparing the Strategy update we have undertaken the following:

- Met with the Deputy Chief Constable, the Chief Finance Office of the OPCC, the Chief Finance Officer of the Force and the Corporate Development Manager on 9 February 2020;
- Reviewed the outcomes of historic internal audit work;
- Reviewed the outcomes of 2020/21 internal audit work;
- Considered the latest assessment of risks facing both the OPCC and the Force as detailed in their respective risk registers;
- Considered areas which are not necessarily high risk (such as core operational controls), but where the work of internal audit can provide a tangible input to assurance; and
- Considered the results of internal audit across our wider client base.

The proposed 2021/22 Plan is included in Section 02. This also includes a proposed high level scope for each review and which will be revisited as part of the detailed planning for each review. Fieldwork dates for each of the audits, including presentation of finalised reports at future dates for JASP meetings have been proposed for discussion and approval with the OPCC and Force's management.

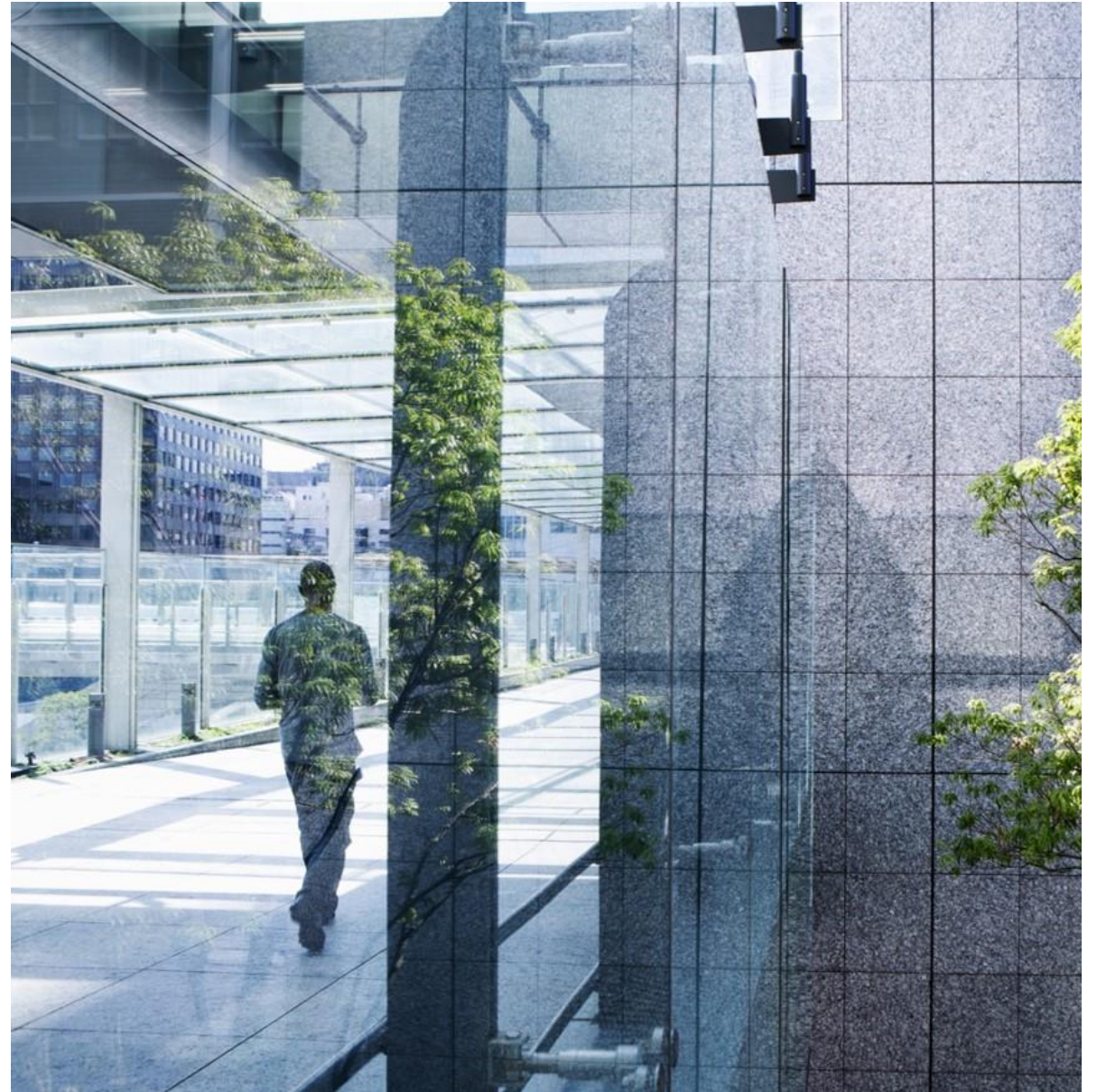
Preparing the Strategy Update and Operational Plan for 2021/22 (continued)

We have narrowed this list from a wider starting point, which will allow flexibility if there are changes required during the year; we have sought to prioritise against the key risks and for this reason, we can refer to the future considerations to discuss other potential internal audit areas for consideration within Section 02.

Prior to conducting each internal audit, we will undertake a more detailed planning meeting in order to discuss and agree the specific focus of each review. Following the planning meeting, we will produce Terms of Reference, which we will agree with key representatives at the Force and/or OPCC prior to commencement of the fieldwork.

The results of our work will be communicated via an exit meeting. A draft report will then be issued for review and management comments and in turn a final report issued. Final reports as well as progress against the plan will be reported to each JASP.

Following completion of the planned assignments and the end of the Financial Year, we will summarise the results of our work within an Annual Report, providing an opinion on the Fore and OPCC's governance, risk management and internal control framework.



02

Section 02:

Internal Audit Operational Plan 2021/22

Internal Audit Operational Plan 2021/22

An overview of the Internal Audit Operational Plan 2021/22 is set out below:

Proposed Summary Operational Plan for Approval				
Audit Area	Days	OPCC/Force Sponsor	Target Start Date	Target JASP
Risk Based Considerations				
Core Financials	27	Chief Finance Officers (Force & OPCC)	September 2021	February 2022
MFSS Transfer	8	Deputy Chief Constable	Each Quarter	Regularly
Seized Property	8	Deputy Chief Constable	Q4	May 2022
Health & Safety	8	Deputy Chief Constable	Q4	May 2022
Partnership	8	Chief Finance Officer / Chief Executive OPCC	Q3	November 2021
Procurement	8	Chief Finance Officer Force	Q2	November 2021
Workforce Planning	8	Deputy Chief Constable	Q3	February 2022
Firearms Licensing	8	Deputy Chief Constable	Q2	November 2021
Performance Management	8	Deputy Chief Constable	Q3	February 2022
Other Considerations				
Business Change*	8	Deputy Chief Constable	Q2	November 2021
OPCC Charities Account	3	Chief Finance Officer OPCC	Q2	November 2021
Follow Up Audits	5	Chief Finance Officers (Force & OPCC) / DCC	TBC	TBC
Information Technology				
Information Assurance	5	Deputy Chief Constable	Q3	February 2022
GDPR	5	Deputy Chief Constable	Q3	February 2022
Management and Reporting Activities				
Collaboration*	13	Chief Finance Officers (Force & OPCC)	Ongoing	May 2022
Management	16	Chief Finance Officers (Force & OPCC)	Ongoing	N/A
Contingency	8		As requested	As requested
Total	154*			

Internal Audit Operational Plan 2021/22

The rationale behind the inclusion of each of the areas identified within the Internal Audit Operational Plan 2021/22 is detailed below, alongside a indicative high-level scope. Please note that the detailed scope of each audit will be discussed and agreed with the relevant PSA sponsor prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

Core Financials

To provide assurance with regards the adequacy and effectiveness of the systems of internal control in operation to manage the core financial systems. The scope of the work will include, but not be limited to:

- Policies and procedures
- Access controls
- Amendments to standing data
- Reconciliations
- Authorisation routines
- Reporting

Similar to in previous years, the audit will include operations within the Multi-Force Shared Service (MFSS), although will focus more than last year on local operations.

Seized Property

Audits were carried out in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2020/2021 following which 'limited assurance' opinions were give. The audit will provide assurance that the Force has effective controls in place for the receipting, storage, management and disposal of seized and found property and it will follow up on previous recommendations raised.

MFSS Transfer

To provide assurance with regards to the Forces ongoing management of the transfer of services from MFSS to in-house provisions at the Force.
This work will be carried out on a quarterly basis to confirm the accuracy of information being produced in regards to the ongoing project.

Procurement

An audit of the area was last carried out in 2017/18 and during 2020/21 with the introduction of the MINT service for procurement this audit will provide assurance that the Force has effective processes in place in respect of procurement activities and these are being consistently applied.

Health & Safety

An audit of the area was carried out in 2018/19 following which a 'limited assurance' opinion was given and this was subsequently followed up in 2019/20 and a 'limited assurance' opinion was re-issued. It will provide assurance that the Force has effective processes in place in respect of health and safety and these are being consistently applied. It will follow-up on the recommendation raised following the 2019/20 audit.

Partnerships

A high risk on the OPCC risk register is that partnerships fail to deliver the strategic priorities for the Commissioner. This audit will provide assurance that the OPCC has controls in place to mitigate these risks and actions are in place to manage partnership outcomes.

Internal Audit Operational Plan 2021/22 (Continued)

Workforce Planning

The Force has received a number of actions from HMICFRS in regards to workforce planning in addition to audit recommendations raised as part of 20/21 internal audit.

Therefore the audit will provide assurance that appropriate actions have been taken and defective systems of control embedded.

Firearms Licensing

This area has undergone significant changes recently and therefore audit will provide assurance that an adequate control framework has been established and that it is operating effectively.

Performance Management

An audit of Performance Management was carried out in 2019/20 and a number of significant actions were raised. This audit will look to review the progress since the last audit and provide assurance that key controls are in place.

Business Change

Whilst the details of the scope will be agreed with management, the over-arching objective of the audit would be to provide assurance that the force has robust and effective arrangements in place for delivery of change throughout the business and that it is effectively aligned with the Strategic Planning process.

This audit is carried forward from the 2020/21 Plan.

OPCC Charities Account

Whilst the scope will be agreed with management this has been included at the request of the OPCC to ensure that the controls in place for the Charities Account are adequate and aligned with best practice.

Follow Up Audits

It is acknowledged that at the time of writing a number of the 20/21 Internal Audits have yet to be concluded. Therefore provision has been made for following up any areas that conclude with 'limited assurance' opinions in the 20/21 Internal Audit Plan

Internal Audit Operational Plan 2021/22 (Continued)

Collaboration

Resources have been allocated across each OPCC / Force in order to provide assurance with regards the systems and controls in place to deliver specific elements of regional collaboration. The intention would be to carry out audit reviews across the region.

Consideration will be given to assessing whether the area of collaboration is delivering against its original objectives and what arrangements are in place, from an OPCC / Force perspective, for monitoring and managing the service.

One of the three audits planned for 2020/21 is being carried forward (Workforce Planning).

The outline plan for the collaboration audits in 2021/22 as agreed by the regional CFO's are:

- Asset Management
- Savings Plans
- Lessons Learned (Covid-19)

Management

Resources for client and external audit liaison.

For example, preparation and attendance at JASP, strategic and operational planning, meetings with PSA directors/Chief Executive/Chair of JASP, preparation of the Internal Audit Opinion, Annual Internal Audit Plan and other reports to the JASP, etc

Contingency

Resources which will only be utilised should the need arise, for example, for unplanned and ad-hoc work requests by management and the JASP.

03

Section 03:

Future Considerations 2022/23 Onwards

Future Considerations 2022/23 Onwards

Audit discussed a wide range of possible audits for inclusion within the 2021/22 and through discussion with management agreed upon a priority based approach the audits that are presented in the 2021/22 Internal Audit Operational Plan. Whilst annually the plan will be reviewed audit have listed the audits that have been earmarked for future consideration:

Future Considerations	
Auditable Area	Commentary
Organisational Learning	<i>A review of how the Force have learned lessons from dealing with the challenges that the Covid-19 Pandemic has brought was discussed. However, the Force are working closely with HMICFRS in this area at present therefore this will be reviewed ahead of the 2022/23 IA Plan.</i>
Archives Management	<i>Linked to Risks SR4 and SR5 on Force Strategic Risk Register. Document Retention and handling information remains high risks. However audits of information assurance and GDPR are included, but this will be re-considered for the 22/23 plan</i>
Budgetary Control / MTFP	<i>Financial uncertainty remains high on the risk registers, however CIPFA have completed a review in this area and will also be doing a follow up review in 2021/22 therefore other sources of assurance are being provided.</i>
Cyber Security	<i>In light of remote working Cyber Security is of increasing risk across the sector. However, there should be other sources of assurance as well such as Interim National Accreditation. Independent oversight would be welcomed but given competing priorities this would be better completed in 2022/23.</i>
Fleet/Transport Management	<i>Significant changes have occurred within this area of the organisation and audit would add value in the future as the frameworks are established and embedded, therefore this will be considered for inclusion in 2022/23.</i>
Estates Management	<i>Given there are significant changes to the estates planned over the coming years assurance will be sought in this area at the appropriate time to add the most value.</i>

04

Section 04:
Internal Audit Charter

Internal Audit Charter

The Internal Audit Charter sets out the terms of reference and serves as a basis for the governance of the PSA Internal Audit function. It sets out the purpose, authority and responsibility of the function in accordance with the UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

The Charter will be reviewed and updated annually by the Engagement Lead for Internal Audit for the OPCC & Force ('Head of Internal Audit').

Nature and Purpose

The OPCC & Force are responsible for the development of a risk management framework, overseen by the JASP, which includes:

- Identification of the significant risks in the OPCC and Force's programme of activity and allocation of a risk owner to each;
- An assessment of how well the significant risks are being managed; and
- Regular reviews by the Senior/Executive Team and the JASP of the significant risks, including reviews of key risk indicators, governance reports and action plans, and any changes to the risk profile.

A system of internal control is one of the primary means of managing risk and consequently the evaluation of its effectiveness is central to Internal Audit's responsibilities.

The OPCC and Force's systems of internal control comprises the policies, procedures and practices, as well as organisational culture that collectively support each organisation's effective operation in the pursuit of its objectives. The risk management, control and governance processes enable each organisation to respond to significant business risks, be these of an operational, financial, compliance or other nature, and are the direct responsibility of the Senior/Executive Team. The OPCC and Force needs assurance over the significant business risks set out in the risk management framework. In addition, there are many other stakeholders, both internal and external, requiring assurance on the management of risk and other aspects of the OPCC and Force's business. There are also many assurance providers. The OPCC and Force should, therefore, develop and maintain an assurance framework which sets out the sources of assurance to meet the assurance needs of its stakeholders.

Internal Audit is defined by the Institute of Internal Auditors' International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF) as 'an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.'

Internal Audit carries out assurance and consulting activities across all aspects of the OPCC and Force's business, based on a programme agreed with the JASP, and coordinates these activities via the assurance framework. In doing so, Internal Audit works closely with risk owners, and the Senior/Executive Team.

In addition to providing independent assurance to various stakeholders, Internal Audit helps identify areas where the OPC and Force's existing processes and procedures can be developed to improve the extent with which risks in these areas are managed; and public money is safeguarded and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In carrying out its work, Internal Audit liaises closely with the Senior/Executive Team and management in relevant departments. The independent assurance provided by Internal Audit also assists the OPCC and Force to report annually on the effectiveness of the system of internal control included in the Annual Governance Statements.

Authority and Access to Records, Assets and Personnel

Internal Audit has unrestricted right of access to all OPCC and Force records and information, both manual and computerised, and other property or assets it considers necessary to fulfil its responsibilities. Internal Audit may enter business property and has unrestricted access to all locations and officers where necessary on demand and without prior notice. Any restriction (management or other) on the scope of Internal Audit's activities will be reported to the JASP.

Internal Audit is accountable for the safekeeping and confidentiality of any information and assets acquired in the course of its duties and execution of its responsibilities. Internal Audit will consider all requests from the external auditors for access to any information, files or working papers obtained or prepared during audit work that has been finalised, and which external audit would need to discharge their responsibilities.

Responsibility

The Head of Internal Audit is required to provide an annual opinion to the OPCC and Force, through the JASP, on the adequacy and the effectiveness of the OPCC and Force's risk management, control and governance processes. In order to achieve this, Internal Audit will:

- Coordinate assurance activities with other assurance providers as needed (such as the external auditors) such that the assurance needs of OPCC, Force and other stakeholders are met in the most effective way.
- Evaluate and assess the implications of new or changing systems, products, services, operations and control processes.

Internal Audit Charter continued

- Carry out assurance and consulting activities across all aspects of the OPCC and Force's business based on a risk-based plan agreed with the JASP.
- Provide the Board with reasonable, but not absolute, assurance as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the key controls associated with the management of risk in the area being audited.
- Issue periodic reports to the JASP and the Senior/Executive Team summarising results of assurance activities.
- Promote an anti-fraud, anti-bribery and anti-corruption culture within PSA to aid the prevention and detection of fraud;
- Assist in the investigation of allegations of fraud, bribery and corruption within PSA and notifying management and the JASP of the results.
- Assess the adequacy of remedial action to address significant risk and control issues reported to the JASP. Responsibility for remedial action in response to audit findings rests with line management.

There are inherent limitations in any system of internal control and thus errors or irregularities may occur and not be detected by Internal Audit's work.

When carrying out its work, Internal Audit will provide line management with comments and report breakdowns, failures or weaknesses of internal control systems together with recommendations for remedial action. However, Internal Audit cannot absolve line management of responsibility for internal controls.

Internal Audit will support line managers in determining measures to remedy deficiencies in risk management, control and governance processes and compliance to the OPCC and Force's policies and standards and will monitor whether such measures are implemented on a timely basis.

The JASP is responsible for ensuring that Internal Audit is adequately resourced and afforded a sufficiently high standing within the organisation, necessary for its effectiveness.

Scope of Activities

As highlighted in the previous section, there are inherent limitations in any system of internal control. Internal Audit therefore provides the Senior/Executive Team and the Board through the JASP with reasonable, but not absolute, assurance as to the adequacy and effectiveness of

PSA governance, risk management and control processes using a systematic and discipline approach by:

- Assessing and making appropriate recommendations for improving the governance processes, promoting appropriate ethics and values, and ensuring effective performance management and accountability;
- Evaluating the effectiveness and contributing to the improvement of risk management processes; and
- Assisting PSA in maintaining effective controls by evaluating their adequacy, effectiveness and efficiency and by promoting continuous improvement.

The scope of Internal Audit's value adding activities includes evaluating risk exposures relating to PSA's governance, operations and information systems regarding the:

- Achievement of the organisation's strategic objectives;
- Reliability and integrity of financial and operational information;
- Effectiveness and efficiency of operations and programmes;
- Safeguarding of assets; and
- Compliance with laws, regulations, policies, procedures and contracts.

Reporting

For each engagement, Internal Audit will issue a report to the appropriate senior management and business risk owner, and depending on the nature of the engagement and as agreed in the engagement's Terms of Reference, with a summary to the Senior/Executive Team and the JASP. The UK PSIAS require the Head of Internal Audit to report at the top of the organisation and this is done in the following ways:

- The annual risk-based plan is compiled by the Head of Internal Audit taking account of the OPCC and Force's risk management / assurance framework and after input from members of the Senior/Executive Team. It is then presented to the Senior/Executive Team and JASP annually for comment and approval.
- The internal audit budget is reported to the JASP for approval annually as part of the overall budget.
- The adequacy, or otherwise, of the level of internal audit resources (as determined by the Head of Internal Audit) and the independence of internal audit will be reported annually to the JASP.

Internal Audit Charter continued

- Performance against the annual risk-based plan and any significant risk exposures and breakdowns, failures or weaknesses of internal control systems arising from internal audit work are reported to the Senior/Executive Team and JASP on a regular basis.
- Any significant consulting activity not already included in the risk-based plan and which might affect the level of assurance work undertaken will be reported to the JASP.
- Any significant instances of non-conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards will be reported to the Senior/Executive Team and the JASP and will be included in the Internal Audit Annual Report.

Independence

The Head of Internal Audit has free and unfettered access to the following:

- Chief Officer Team
- Chief Finance Officers at the OPCC and Force;
- Chair of the JASP; and
- Any other member of the Senior/Executive Team.

The independence of the contracted Head of Internal Audit is further safeguarded as their annual appraisal is not inappropriately influenced by those subject to internal audit.

To ensure that auditor objectivity is not impaired and that any potential conflicts of interest are appropriately managed, all internal audit staff are required to make an annual personal independence responsibilities declaration via the tailored 'My Compliance Responsibilities' portal which includes personal deadlines for:

- Annual Returns (a regulatory obligation regarding independence, fit and proper status and other matters which everyone in Mazars must complete);
- Personal Connections (the system for recording the interests in securities and collective investment vehicles held by partners, directors and managers, and their immediate family members); and
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Internal Audit may also provide consultancy services, such as providing advice on implementing new systems and controls. However, any significant consulting activity not already included in the audit plan and which might affect the level of assurance work undertaken will be reported to the JASP. To maintain independence, any audit staff involved in significant consulting activity will not be involved in the audit of that area for a period of at least 12 months.

External Auditors

The external auditors fulfil a statutory duty. Effective collaboration between Internal Audit and the external auditors will help ensure effective and efficient audit coverage and resolution of issues of mutual concern. Internal Audit will follow up the implementation of internal control issues raised by external audit if requested to do so by the OPCC and Force.

Internal Audit and external audit will meet periodically to:

- Plan the respective internal and external audits and discuss potential issues arising from the external audit; and
- Share the results of significant issues arising from audit work.

Due Professional Care

The Internal Audit function is bound by the following standards:

- Institute of Internal Auditor's International Code of Ethics;
- Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles);
- UK PSIAS; and
- All relevant legislation.

Internal Audit is subject to a Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme that covers all aspects of internal audit activity. This consists of an annual self-assessment of the service and its compliance with the UK PSIAS, on-going performance monitoring and an external assessment at least once every five years by a suitably qualified, independent assessor.

A programme of CPD is maintained for all staff working on internal audit engagements to ensure that auditors maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills and audit competencies to deliver the risk-based plan. Both the Head of Internal Audit and the Engagement Manager are required to hold a professional qualification (CMIIA, CCAB or equivalent) and be suitably experienced.

Performance Measures

In seeking to establish a service which is continually improving, we acknowledge it is essential that we agree measures by which Internal Audit should demonstrate both that it is meeting the OPCC and Force's requirements and that it is improving on an annual basis. We will work to the measures outlined in the original Invitation to Tender, whilst we agree performance measures with the OPCC and Force.

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We take responsibility to the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire for this report, which is prepared on the basis of the limitations set out below.

The responsibility for designing and maintaining a sound system of internal control and the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities rests with management, with internal audit providing a service to management to enable them to achieve this objective. Specifically, we assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal control arrangements implemented by management and perform sample testing on those controls in the period under review with a view to providing an opinion on the extent to which risks in this area are managed.

We plan our work in order to ensure that we have a reasonable expectation of detecting significant control weaknesses. However, our procedures alone should not be relied upon to identify all strengths and weaknesses in internal controls, nor relied upon to identify any circumstances of fraud or irregularity. Even sound systems of internal control can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance and may not be proof against collusive fraud.

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the course of our work and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all improvements that might be made. Recommendations for improvements should be assessed by you for their full impact before they are implemented. The performance of our work is not and should not be taken as a substitute for management's responsibilities for the application of sound management practices.

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