



STAFFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Internal Audit Progress Report

22 February 2023

This report is solely for the use of the persons to whom it is addressed.
To the fullest extent permitted by law, RSM UK Risk Assurance Services LLP will accept no responsibility or liability in respect of this report to any other party.



Contents

- 1 Key messages 3
- 2 Reports 4
- Appendix A – Progress against the internal audit plan 2022/23 6
- Appendix B – Other matters 7
- Appendix C - Key performance indicators (KPIs)..... 8

1 Key messages

The internal audit plan for 2022/23 was approved by the Ethics, Transparency and Audit Panel (ETAP) at the 25th May 2022 meeting. This report provides an update on progress against that plan and summarises the results of our work to date.

We have issued two final reports since the last ETAP which are in relation to:



- Freedom of Information (Substantial Assurance)
- Financial Controls – Pension Arrangements (Substantial Assurance)



Regular catch-up meetings have been held between RSM and management in order to provide updates in relation to changes within the organisation, impact to operations and also to discuss sector wide issues that may have an impact on the internal audit plan.





We have shared with management a number of briefings which are outlined in Appendix B below.

2 Reports

2.1 Summary of final reports being presented to this committee

This section summarises the reports that have been finalised since the last meeting.

| Assignment | Opinion issued | Actions agreed | | |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|---|---|
| | | L | M | H |
| Freedom of Information | Substantial Assurance | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| <p>There is an appropriate controls framework in place for the logging and managing of FOI requests. Areas of improvement have been noted which has resulted in the agreement of two 'low' priority management actions.</p> | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| Financial Controls – Pension Arrangements | Substantial Assurance | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| <p>The Service has a robust control framework in place regarding the administration of member pensions and subsequent pension contributions. This includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The review of pension spreadsheets from Stoke-on-Trent City Council to ensure member details reconcile to the Service's Pension Accounts to confirm accurate pension contributions are submitted to WYPF;• The timely payment of invoices to WYPF as per the requirements set out within the Contract; and | | | | |
|  | | | | |



Assignment

Opinion issued

Actions agreed

L M H

- The review of WYPF’s performance as per their Contract obligations via monthly reports which are received by the Service from WYPF

Appendix A – Progress against the internal audit plan 2022/23

| Assignment | Status / Opinion issued | Actions agreed | | | Target ETAP as per IA plan | Actual ETAP |
|--|---|----------------|----------|----------|---|----------------------|
| | | L | M | H | | |
| Procurement – PFI | Final Report / Substantial Assurance | 1 | 1 | 0 | October 2022 | October 2022 |
| Governance - Immediate Detriment Framework | Final Report / Substantial Assurance | 0 | 0 | 0 | October 2022 | October 2022 |
| Governance - Community Safety Plan | Final Report / Substantial Assurance | 1 | 0 | 0 | December 2022 | October 2022 |
| NFI Data Matching | Work completed | | - | | Not Applicable | Not Applicable |
| Framework for Compliance with Legal and Regulatory Requirements: Freedom of Information | Final Report / Substantial Assurance | 2 | 0 | 0 | October 2022 (will now be February 2023) | February 2023 |
| Financial Controls – Pension Arrangements | Final Report / Substantial Assurance | 1 | 0 | 0 | February 2023 | February 2023 |
| Cyber Security | Draft report issued | | - | | February 2023 (will now be May 2023) | |
| Framework for Compliance with Legal and Regulatory Requirements: Data Protection | Scoping meeting to be arranged | | - | | May 2023 | |
| Financial Controls – Payroll | Work in Progress | | - | | May 2023 | |
| Follow Up of Previous Internal Audit Management Actions | Work in Progress | | - | | May 2023 | |



Appendix B – Other matters

Changes to the audit plan

Our approach to working with you is to respond to your changing assurance needs. By employing an ‘agile’ or a ‘flexible’ approach to our service delivery, we are able to change the focus of audits / audit delivery. There have not been any changes to the audit plan since the last ETAP meeting.

Annual Opinion 2022/23

The ETAP should note that the assurances given in our audit assignments are included within our Annual Assurance report. In particular, the ETAP should note that any negative assurance opinions will need to be noted in the annual report and may result in a qualified or negative annual opinion. To date we have not issued any negative assurance opinions from the reports that have been finalised.

Quality assurance and continual improvement

To ensure that RSM remains compliant with the IIA standards and the financial services recommendations for Internal Audit we have a dedicated internal Quality Assurance Team who undertake a programme of reviews to ensure the quality of our audit assignments. This is applicable to all Heads of Internal Audit, where a sample of their clients will be reviewed. Any findings from these reviews being used to inform the training needs of our audit teams.

The Quality Assurance Team is made up of; the Head of the Quality Assurance Department (FCA qualified) and an Associate Director (FCCA qualified), with support from other team members across the department. This is in addition to any feedback we receive from our post assignment surveys, client feedback, appraisal processes and training needs assessments.

Post assignment surveys

We are committed to delivering an excellent client experience every time we work with you. Your feedback helps us to improve the quality of the service we deliver to you. Currently, following the completion of each product we deliver we attach a brief survey for the client lead to complete. The results of these surveys will be shared at each ETAP.

Client Briefings

Since the last meeting we have issued the Emergency Services Briefing for December 2022. This has been circulated to members.

Appendix C - Key performance indicators (KPIs)

| | Delivery | | | Quality | | | |
|--|----------|--------|-------------|--|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| | Target | Actual | Notes (ref) | | Target | Actual | Notes (ref) |
| Audits commenced in line with agreed timescales | Yes | Yes | | Conformance with PSIAS and IIA Standards | Yes | Yes | |
| Draft reports issued within 10 days of debrief meeting | 10 days | 5 days | | Liaison with external audit to allow, where appropriate and required, the external auditor to place reliance on the work of internal audit | Yes | N/A | |
| Final report issued within 3 days of management response | 3 days | 1 day | | Response time for all general enquiries for assistance | 2 working days | 1 working day | |
| | | | | Response for emergencies and potential fraud | 1 working days | N/A | |
| Notes | | | | | | | |



For more information contact

Dan Harris, Head of Internal Audit

Daniel.Harris@rsmuk.com

Tel: 07792 948767

rsmuk.com

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the course of our review and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all improvements that might be made. Actions for improvements should be assessed by you for their full impact. This report, or our work, should not be taken as a substitute for management's responsibilities for the application of sound commercial practices. We emphasise that the responsibility for a sound system of internal controls rests with management and our work should not be relied upon to identify all strengths and weaknesses that may exist. Neither should our work be relied upon to identify all circumstances of fraud and irregularity should there be any.

Our report is prepared solely for the confidential use of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue and solely for the purposes set out herein. This report should not therefore be regarded as suitable to be used or relied on by any other party wishing to acquire any rights from RSM UK Risk Assurance Services LLP for any purpose or in any context. Any third party which obtains access to this report or a copy and chooses to rely on it (or any part of it) will do so at its own risk. To the fullest extent permitted by law, RSM UK Risk Assurance Services LLP will accept no responsibility or liability in respect of this report to any other party and shall not be liable for any loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature which is caused by any person's reliance on representations in this report.

This report is released to you on the basis that it shall not be copied, referred to or disclosed, in whole or in part (save as otherwise permitted by agreed written terms), without our prior written consent.