NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

5 MARCH 2015

INTERNAL CONTROL MATTERS FOR THE CENTRAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Report of the Corporate Director – Strategic Resources

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update to members of progress against the areas for improvement identified in the Central Services (CS) Directorate's Statement of Assurance.
- 1.2 To provide details of the latest Risk Register for the CS Directorate.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Audit Committee is required to assess the quality and effectiveness of the corporate governance arrangements operating within the County Council. In relation to the CS Directorate, the Committee receives assurance through the work of internal audit (detailed in a separate report to the Committee), details of the Statement of Assurance provided by the Corporate Director, together with the Directorate Risk Register.

3.0 STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

- 3.1 Management Board, the Chief Executive and each Corporate Director produce a Statement of Assurance (SoA) at the end of each financial year. In this statement the Corporate Director identifies those items that may give rise to internal control or performance risk issues for the Directorate in the coming financial year. These issues feed into the process to produce the Annual Governance Statement prepared for the County Council.
- 3.2 The SoA for the CS Directorate identified a number of areas for improvement during 2014/15 together with proposed actions. These areas were considered at the meeting of this Committee on 26 June 2014. The relevant part of the SoA is attached as **Appendix A** together with comments and updates on progress since that meeting.

4.0 DIRECTORATE RISK REGISTER

- 4.1 The Directorate Risk Register (DRR) is produced initially from a review of risks at Service Unit level, which are then aggregated via a sieving process to Directorate level. This end product similarly aggregates these Directorate level risks into the Corporate Risk Register.
- 4.2 The Risk Prioritisation System adopted to derive risk registers categorises risks as follows:

Category 1 and 2 are high risk (RED)

Category 3 and 4 are medium risk (AMBER) Category 5 is low risk (GREEN)

The DRR represents the principal risks that may materially impact on the performance and financial outcomes of the Directorate.

- 4.3 The latest summary DRR is shown at **Appendix B** illustrating key risks with existing and additional actions to avoid or minimise them.
- 4.4 Central Services covers a range of front line and support services as follows -

Frontline Services

- Libraries
- Archives, Registration and Coroners support
- Customer Services Centre

Support Services

- The Chief Executive and Unit
- HR
- Legal and Democratic Services
- Business Support
- Finance
- Property
- Technology and Change
- Communications
- Policy and Partnerships
- 4.5 The Risk Register reflects the range of the above services but also includes many Corporate initiatives given the leadership role of Central Services on such issues as the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme and production of the Budget / MTFS. Unsurprisingly there is a high degree of correlation between the Directorate Risk Register and the Statement of Assurance.
- 4.6 There are a number of areas which are included on the risk register but not on the Statement of Assurance and are worthy of reference
 - Customer blueprint staff within Central Services are provided some of the key leadership in driving forward the revised approach to customer as part of the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme. This inevitably involves great interaction with frontline services who have daily contact with the customer. Inevitably though there is a great deal of work required in order to develop locality approaches; modernise the website; deliver fit for purpose public access to buildings; get the right technology and systems to support ways of working; and probably most importantly ensuring that ways of working are aligned to customer needs.
 - SmartSolutions developing a more coherent approach to traded services within North Yorkshire and expanding to wider markets. Alongside this there is a wish to develop a more commercial and innovative culture across the councils workforce.

- Health and Safety ensuring a sound approach to health and safety remains a high priority although it is risks being overlooked in times of significant change. A new head of Health and Safety has been appointed and is carrying out a review of various aspects of the service with a view to improving the current approach.
- 4.7 It is worth noting that "Ensuring Legality" has consistently featured on the Central Services Risk Register in recent years. This is not necessarily because of a perceived increase of risk, although there may well be grounds to believe that is the case in the current environment, but it is more a reflection of some of the core and important responsibilities which rest pre-dominantly within Central Services and through the role of the council's statutory officers.

5.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 That the Committee:
 - Note the position on the Central Services Directorate Statement of Assurance;
 - ii) Note the Directorate Risk Register for the Central Services Directorate; and
 - iii) Provide feedback and comments on the Statement of Assurance and Directorate Risk Register and any other related internal control issues.

GARY FIELDING Corporate Director, Strategic Resources

5 March 2015

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2013/14 BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE – CENTRAL SERVICES

The County Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this accountability, all Members and senior officers of the County Council are responsible for putting in place proper risk management processes and internal controls to ensure the proper stewardship of the resources at its disposal.

As Chief Executive and member of the Central Services Management Team, I have corporate responsibility for maintaining a system of sound internal controls and risk management processes within the County Council and service management responsibility for maintaining a system of sound internal controls and risk management processes within Central Services Directorate that support the achievement of both Corporate and the Central Services objectives. I share these responsibilities with my colleagues on the Central Services Management Team, each of whom leads in their areas of particular responsibility.

The system of internal controls is based on an ongoing process designed to identify the principal risks to the achievement of these objectives, to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal controls is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve these objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

As Chief Executive, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control and risk management processes in Central Services Directorate. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal controls has taken into account the following:-

- adequacy and effectiveness of management review processes
- outcomes from the formal risk assessment and evaluation process (Central Services Risk Register)
- relevant self-assessments of key service areas within Central Services
- relevant internal audit reports and results of follow ups regarding implementation of recommendations
- outcomes from reviews of services by other bodies including Inspectorates, external auditors etc
- the framework of controls that operate in relation to individual partnerships where some aspects of the necessary controls are the responsibility of the partner to operate / apply

I confirm that Central Services Directorate have a full set of service continuity plans and that they will continue to be refreshed as and when necessary and at least on an annual basis.

I am satisfied that a sound system of internal control has been in place throughout the 2012/13 financial year and is on-going in Central Services. Nevertheless, during the year my review work has identified some areas for improvement and these are set out in the *attached schedule*. I propose to take steps to address the matters so identified which should enhance the system of internal controls. I will be monitoring to ensure their effective implementation and operation.

I also understand that this Statement of Assurance will be relied upon by those Members and Officers signing the Annual Governance Statement 2013/14 (the "Document") and by the Audit Committee reporting on the Document.

I therefore confirm that I am not aware of any material statement in, or omission from, the Document which would make the Document misleading. In respect of Central Services for which I am responsible I can confirm that I have made due and careful inquiry and that the statements, in particular those contained in Section 3 of the Document, fairly represent the key elements of the internal control environment within Central Services. I also confirm that there are no matters omitted from Section 7 of the Document which, in my view, merited inclusion.

The assurances given above are all based upon the information that has been made available to me.

Signed:
Chief Executive (Central Services)
Nate:

AREAS FOR	IMPROVE	MENT ID	ENTIFIED
CENTRAL	SERVICES	S DIRECT	ORATE

	tion taken to date / planned	Action proposed	Latest Position
A	Medium Term Financial Strategy		
	A Medium Term Financial Strategy was approved up to including 2015/16 and a further long term projection with high level outline savings was also approved taking	 a) On-going budget monitoring to ensure that the budget position for 2014/15 is on track, particularly those savings due to be delivered in year. 	a) Q budget monitoring regime in place and identified that savings are approximately £4.4m in advance.
	the Council up to 2018/19. There is a need to ensure that – a) The savings requirement in 2014/15	b) Further development and refinement of savings proposals as part of the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme to include firmer idea of value and timing of savings to be realised.	b) Budget as approved by County Council on 18 February included recalibration of savings plan with reduced proposals of £3,260k. This will continue to be reviewed on an on-going basis.
	 and any other spending pressures are accommodated with the 2014/15 budget. b) Detailed plans are firmed up to deliver the savings required as part of the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme for 2015/16 and beyond. c) Areas of investment are identified and provided for to reflect priorities of the Council and deliver of the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme. 	c) 2020 North Yorkshire Programme Governance arrangements to be embedded and routinely reviewed and, where necessary, changes made. This to include Management Board as Programme Board, reporting to the Executive, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Members en-masse. d) Re-calibration of the MTFS and longer term financial projection in the light of the further work from the 2020 North	 c) In place. Regular Member's Seminars on 2020 North Yorkshire and Overview and Scrutiny Committees etc. as outlined in paras 11.2 to 11.5 of the budget report. d) Done as part of the 2015/16 budget. e) Ditto
		Yorkshire Programme and considering the final Local Government Settlement for 2015/16. e) On-going review of MTFS / longer term	

_	tion taken to date / planned 4/15	Action proposed	Latest Position			
		financial projection in light of additional obligations and information. For example, incorporation of latest assessments on the impact of the Care Bill or developments relating to the Better Care Fund. (NB – no further spending review information is anticipated before the General Election in May 2015).				
В	Central Services act as a hub for the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme given the range of functions provided. It is recognised that for the Programme to be successful there needs to be strong programme management and governance alongside the necessary skills and capacity across the organisation.	entral Services act as a hub for the 20 North Yorkshire Programme given a range of functions provided. It is cognised that for the Programme to successful there needs to be strong ogramme management and vernance alongside the necessary ills and capacity across the				
		 Technology, Change and Project Management, HR, Legal, Communications and Procurement support. c) Ensure that all Members of the County Council are appropriately engaged in the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme through a range of communications 	interdependencies etc. so that relative prioritisation can take place. In addition, resources were identified and allocated as part of the 2014/15 budget monitoring approach (see agenda for Executive on 19 August 2014).			

	ion taken to date / planned 4/15	Action proposed	Latest Position
		including Members Seminar, Overview and Scrutiny Committees, regular updates and support to individual Members on Community Leadership. d) Lead development and implementation of the Stronger Communities initiatives and delivery of outcomes. This will involve working with partners across all sectors.	 c) Paragraphs 11.2 to 11.5 of the budget report to County Council on 18 February refer. d) Full team in place now for Stronger Communities. This involved Team Leader and 7 co-ordinators based loosely around districts. A budget of £1.5m is in place on a recurring basis to fund the team and to provide for recurring commitments. In addition £3m is available for pump priming grants to help local communities respond. Work is being done in conjunction with local communities and this inevitably takes in a wider range of partners. This is perhaps most developed with Selby as a result of the Better Together initiative.
С	Property As part of the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme the Council is committed to rationalising its property across the County. The current contract with Jacobs UK also comes to an end on the 31 March 2016 so the preparation	a) Update on strategy for property rationalisation with clear linkages to approaches on flexible working and deployment of technology. b) Distillation of services reviews across	a – c) Further work has been carried out as the thinking, particularly around service reviews, matures with the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme. At the early stages it has not been possible to bring forward a definitive master plan

Action taken to date / planned 2014/15	Action proposed	Latest Position
for the new contract will be a key activity within Central Services in 2014/15.	the Council in order to determine the property needs of the Council for the remainder of the decade. This information then to be used to set out the property needs of the Council. c) Review of the current arrangements for property (for example budget arrangements and responsibilities for services occupying corporate buildings). d) Determination of how the Council will seek to deliver the property services with effect from 1 April 2016. This will involve consideration of what services to contract for; what services to retain inhouse; and what services to bring back in-house (if any). This approach will require appropriate approvals through 2014/15.	for property but information has been collated to ensure that the key strands are developed including — • Role and responsibility for Corporate Property function and that of service as tenant. • How best to budget for property in order to facilitate optimisation. • Identify future requirements for front line operational buildings / service delivery • Identify Council requirements for office based need. • Align approach with changes to ways of working which also includes technology and the councils changing approach to customer. An outline plan is being considered by 2020 North Yorkshire Programme Board in March and the Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee are also engaging in this piece of work. Further detail will therefore be available later in the year. d) The current contract with Jacobs ends on the 31 March 2016. Procurement

	ion taken to date / planned 4/15	Action proposed	Latest Position
			has been planned for some time now and an OJEU advert was put out for a revised contract to cover highways design, building design and estates management early in January 2015. The deadline for submission of PQQs has now expired and evaluation is taking place. There has been strong engagement from the market thus far and there has been strong overall support for the revised arrangements which the County Council has put forward (after engaging with the market).
			The new approach sees a number of functions brought in-house in order to ensure that the council can operate as a more "intelligent" client. This means carrying out more feasibility work on property in order to ensure that value for money considerations are maximised.
D	Superfast North Yorkshire		
	The current contract with BT should result in circa 90% of North Yorkshire having Superfast Broadband coverage for the end of 2014. The challenge to	a) Pursuit of further external funding from Government, European Union etc. and identification of any matched funding	The contract with BT has continued to progress and the Council committed to £3.1m in order to extend the roll out of

	ion taken to date / planned 4/15	Action proposed	Latest Position
	the Council remains the 10% of the County where this is unlikely to be the case and further work is therefore required to reduce that gap.	required from the Council. b) Review of lessons from implementation of the BT contract and any subsequent technology options to determine the most effective way forward. c) On-going business engagement work, particularly with the LEP to support delivery of grant funded outcomes from ERDF and wider exploitation of broadband from local businesses.	Superfast Broadband (phase 2). The Executive considered further opportunity to match fund Government in order to increase the percent of coverage. However, the decision was taken to defer that opportunity given limitations in technology and the hire unit cost. Emerging technologies are being assessed and it is likely that further opportunity will therefore arise sometime in the near future. For that reason, the County Council has earmarked £4m which it is hoped will be match funded from Government. Business engagement continues and it is an essential requirement of European Funding. At this stage progress is good and on track.
E	 Information Governance Information Governance has been an area of significant activity for the Council over the last 2 years. However, with increased use of information the risk remains high and the potential costs of poor Information Governance equally remains high. There is therefore a need to ensure on-going 	 a) On-going review of the effectiveness of Information Governance from the Corporate Information Governance Group (CIGG) and the network of Directorate Champions. b) Implementation of an action plan in order to improve the Council's 	 a) Changes have been made to CIGG and the way in which it works. General consensus is that there is a more effective working relationship although this continues to be reviewed and amended as appropriate. b) The importance of Information

Action taken to date / planned 2014/15	Action proposed	Latest Position
vigilance.	performance on Information Governance and to mitigate some of the risks. This plan is constantly reviewed and key components include –	Governance is such that actions are amended on an on-going basis. The following however updates against those actions identified.
	 Further Information Governance sweeps by Veritau with disciplinary actions being taken against staff where appropriate. 	 As reported by the Head of Internal Audit, further information sweeps have taken place and have provided valuable information. Disciplinary proceedings have been taken against staff where appropriate.
	 A re-fresh of the training requirements for staff (which has been a mandatory course). 	 In progress and update to be taken to Management Board with suggested outline for who should do what training and the extent to which it is made compulsory.
	 Practical arrangements to help staff ensure data is secure such as easier access to lockable cabinets etc. Implementation of more secure systems and ways of working for transferring data securely between organisations. 	 In place. Central resource made available through business support to facilitate. Egress in place in order to ensure more secure information transfer. Work progressing well in relation to data sharing with other partners with NYCC leading.
	 On-going communications to staff on the importance of good Information Governance, including messages from the Chief Executive. 	 Regular updates to staff on the back of information sweeps and reminders that staff are being disciplined where appropriate. This will remain an on- going "campaign".

	ion taken to date / planned 4/15	Latest Position	
F	The Better Together initiative between the County Council and Selby District Council represents a real opportunity to improve outcomes for Selby residents and to realise efficiency savings for both Councils. It is recognised, however, that significant and often complex work needs to be undertaken in order to deliver many of the benefits.	 a) On-going oversight of the Better Together Programme by the Steering Group which involves the Chief Executives of the County Council and Selby District Council. b) On-going discussions at various joint council project teams which are charged with producing action plans in order to deliver improvements in discrete areas. c) Incorporation and integration of the Better Together Programme with the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme in order to ensure coherency and strategic alignment. 	 a) In place b) Discreet area of progress include Financial services Exploratory discussions relating to property (including highways depot) Exploratory discussions around sharing of ICT Web development Customer Relationship Management System Registration service delivered from Civic Centre. c) Better Together Programme now considered as a separate workstream within 2020 North Yorkshire in order to give key visibility. The approach also to be used as a platform for greater collaboration across North Yorkshire and partners therein.
G	Central Services Savings In additional to supporting the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme, Central Services also has to deliver its own savings	a) Refinement of savings proposals with firmer values and timelines b) Production of action plans to deliver	On track. A range of measures are in place - Cashable benefits log for Central

Action taken to date / planned 2014/15	Action proposed	Latest Position
requirements.	savings and monitoring there of c) Regular updates and accountability to 2020 North Yorkshire Programme Board and related governance.	Services. - Central Services Management Team meets in Programme Board mode and reviews progress. - Updates provided to 2020 North Yorkshire Programme Board on Central Services progress.
		The challenge of delivering savings whilst enabling others to make savings is a permanent live issue. This is leading to the need to prioritise support accordingly.

Central Services Directorate

Risk Register: month 6 (Jan 2015) – summary

Report Date: 3rd February 2015 (pw)

		Identity	P	erson							Classification									Fallback Plan	
Change	Risk Title	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Risk Manager	Prob	Ohi	1	re	Ren	Cat	RR RRs Next				Post bj Fin Serv Rep Ca		Cat	FBPlan	Action Manager		
4	15/161 - Information Governance	Ineffective information governance arrangements lead to unauthorised disclosure of personal and sensitive data, poor quality or delayed responses to Fol requests, and inability to locate key data upon which the Council relies resulting in loss of reputation, poor decision making, fine, etc	Chief Exec	CD SR	Н	М			Н	1		Action 31/03/2015				М	Н	2	Y	CD SR	
•	15/179 - Library Service Re- configuration as part of 2020 Stronger Communities Programme	Failure to successfully reconfigure the service by building on existing models of community ownership &/or co-production so that Library Services will be delivered through a community	Chief Exec	CSD AD LC&CS	М	L	М	Н	Н	2	8	7/02/2015	L	L	L	М	Н	3	Y	CSD ACE Selby	
•	15/11 - 2020 North Yorkshire Change Programme	Failure to adequately develop, plan for and commence implementation of new council ways of working resulting in inability to meet financial savings requirements, sub-optimal decision making and poorer quality of services.	Chief Exec	CSD SR AD T&C	М	Н	Н	Н	Н	2	12	31/03/2015	i L	Н	Н	Н	Н	3	Υ	All Mgt Board	
	15/151 - Superfast North Yorkshire (SFNY)	Failure to maximise the opportunity to provide high quality broadband services to North Yorkshire businesses and residents resulting in significant lost opportunities, community dissatisfaction, sub optimal procurement, criticism	Chief Exec	CEX NYnet	М	М	Н	М	Н	2	8	31/03/2015	i L	М	Н	М	М	3	Y	CEX NYnet	
	15/166 - Organisational Performance Management	Council does not operate a true performance management framework leading to misalignment of activities and services with Council mission and objectives, poorer service delivery, public dissatisfaction, criticism, suboptimal working and lost opportunities and reduced ability to meet savings requirements	Chief Exec	CD SR	М	М	М	Н	М	2	4	31/03/2015	i L	М	М	Н	М	3	Y	CD SR	





Central Services Directorate

Risk Register: month 6 (Jan 2015) – summary

Report Date: 3rd February 2015 (pw)

Identity				erson	Classification								Fallback Plan							
Chanas	Risk Title	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Risk Manager	Pre						RR	Post					FBPlan	Action		
Change	KISK IITIE				Prob	Obj	Fin	Serv	Rep	Ca	RRs	Next Action	Prob	Obj	Fin	Serv	Rep	Cat	rbrian	Manager
*	15/186 - Stronger Communities	Failure to develop and implement greater community capacity to provide sustainable local support and services, within the context of reduced government funding, resulting in further reduced services in the community, missed opportunities relating to community libraries, universal youth provision, community transport and prevention services for older and vulnerable adults	Chief Exec	CSD AD PP	М	L	Н	М	М	2	5	30/04/2015	5 L	L	Н	М	М	3	Y	CSD PP HoSC
♦	15/162 - Capacity and Skills	A lack of capacity and skills within Central Services leads to a significant decline in service quality &/or insufficient progress in carrying out required developments.	Chief Exec	CSD Mgt Team	н	М	L	М	L	2	5	30/06/2015	М	М	L	М	L	4	Y	CSD Mgt Team
♦	15/180 - Customer Blueprint	Failure to develop and implement the Customer Blueprint and reconfigure the Customer Services Centre such that our approach meets the needs and demands of our customers and supports the council's necessary service redesigns and budget reductions	Chief Exec	CSD ACE Selby	М	Μ	Μ	Н	м	2	6	28/02/2015	5 M	М	М	М	М	4	Y	CSD ACE Selby
	15/185 - SmartSolutions	Failure to successfully implement the SmartSolutions approach resulting in reduced financial benefits for Traded Services, poor customer feedback, missed opportunities and failure to adequately embed innovation within the Council workforce.	CD SR	AD SR (CYPS) & Prop	Н	L	М	М	м	2	9	27/02/2015	5 M	L	М	М	М	4	Y	AD SR (CYPS) & Prop
4	15/178 - Better Together	Failure to implement effective arrangements between NYCC and Selby District Council to ensure the most effective use of joint resources of the two organisations in providing services to the shared client base results in lost opportunities to improve the customers' experience and realise savings.	Chief Exec	CSD ACE Selby Chief Exec	М	L	М	М	Н	2	7	30/06/2015	5 L	L	М	М	М	5	Y	CSD Mgt Team





Central Services Directorate

Risk Register: **month 6 (Jan 2015) – summary** Report Date: 3rd February 2015 (pw)

Identity			P	erson							Classification								Fallback Plan	
Change	Risk Title	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Risk Manager	Prob	Obj		re Serv	Rep	Cat	RRs	RR Next Action	Prob	Obj		ost Serv	Rep	Cat	FBPlan	Action Manager
	15/177 - Property Service	Failure to operate an effective and efficient property service including carrying out the key tasks relating to Post 2016 arrangements and 2020 North Yorkshire property rationalisation leading to missed opportunities, less efficient management, maintenance and construction of property, criticism and lost financial opportunities.	CD SR	AD SR (CYPS) & Prop	L	М	М	М	Н	3	8	31/03/2015	L	М	М	М	Н	3	Υ	AD SR (CYPS) & Prop
4	15/183 - Health & Safety	Major Corporate Health and Safety failure resulting in injuries, claims, reputational and service delivery impact and possible prosecution	Chief Exec	CD SR	L	М	М	М	Н	3	6	31/03/2015	L	М	М	М	Н	3	Y	CSD SR HoHSRM
4	15/29 - Ensuring Legality	Failing to ensure that the Council acts lawfully in its operations resulting in challenge, non delivery of decisions, financial implications and loss of reputation particularly given service and statutory obligations	Chief Exec	CSD ACE LDS	М	L	М	М	М	4	7	31/08/2015	М	L	М	М	М	4	Y	CSD ACE LDS
4	15/184 - Central Services Savings Plan	Failure to deliver the Central Services savings plan for the duration of the Change Programme (up to 2019) resulting in inability to meet the budget, rationalise support services and enable the change programme	Chief Exec	CSD Mgt Team	L	М	М	М	М	5	4	31/08/2015	L	М	Μ	М	М	5	Y	Chief Exec

Key	
	Risk Ranking has worsened since last review.
V	Risk Ranking has improved since last review
4	Risk Ranking is same as last review
- new -	New or significantly altered risk



