



Report Reference Number: A/20/22

To: Audit and Governance Committee
Date: 27 January 2021
Authors: Ed Martin; Audit Manager – Veritau
Daniel Clubb; Counter Fraud Manager – Veritau
Rebecca Bradley; Assistant Director –
Information Governance – Veritau
Lead Officer: Karen Iveson; Chief Finance Officer

Title: Internal Audit, Counter Fraud and Information Governance
Progress Report 2020/21

Summary:

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the delivery of the internal audit work plan for 2020/21. The report also updates the committee on counter fraud and information governance work undertaken so far in 2020/21. Due to Covid-19, work on the annual audit plan was delayed so this report updates members on the plans for completion of work over the remainder of 2020/21.

Recommendation:

To note progress on delivery of internal audit, counter fraud and information governance work and the plans for work to be completed in 2020/21.

Reasons for recommendation:

To enable the committee to fulfil its responsibility to review the outcomes of internal audit and counter fraud work, including any issues arising, and action being taken.

1. Introduction and background

1.1 The provision of Internal Audit is a statutory requirement (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015).

1.2 The Audit and Governance Committee approved the Internal Audit, Counter Fraud and Information Governance plans for 2020/21 at the meeting held on 29 July 2020.

- 1.3** The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of the progress in delivering the 2020/21 plans, and on the plans for completion of work over the remainder of 2020/21.

2. The Report

- 2.1** Details of internal audit, counter fraud and information governance work undertaken in 2020/21 are included in the reports at appendices A to C respectively.

Internal Audit

- 2.2** Veritau carries out internal audit work in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).
- 2.3** Internal audit provides assurance on corporate governance arrangements, internal control and risk management to the Council's management team and this committee.
- 2.4** Work is ongoing on 11 audits for 2020/21. All of these are expected to be completed and reported to the committee in the next progress report.
- 2.5** Further audits will be agreed with managers to take place in quarter 4 and will be reported to this committee in due course. A plan for remaining work will be agreed with the Chief Finance Officer (s151 officer) to manage this process. It will be a significant challenge to complete all work to expected deadlines. Continued assistance and prioritisation by officers from now until the end of April 2021 is essential to help us complete our plan of work.

Counter Fraud

- 2.6** Veritau delivers a counter fraud service to the Council. The counter fraud team aims to prevent, detect and deter any fraud committed against the council. Veritau supports the Council's section 151 officer in delivering the Council's counter fraud strategy.
- 2.7** There has been disruption to normal working practices as the team have moved to Covid secure methods of working. Interviews and visits usually conducted in person have had to be replaced with new procedures.
- 2.8** The counter fraud team have continued to support the council with Covid-19 grant payment processes and post payment assurance work. Four grant payment investigations have been completed to date and £30k of incorrect payments have been prevented. In addition, the counter fraud team have detected further £8.4k of loss to the council and achieved £8k in actual savings for the council. There are currently 14 investigations ongoing. A summary of counter fraud work carried out during 2020/21 is included at appendix B.

Information Governance

- 2.9 Information Governance provides advice and assurance on compliance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. This includes the Information Asset Register, Privacy Notices, Data Protection Impact Assessments and project specific advice.
- 2.10 Action is ongoing to address the outstanding areas of the Information Asset Register and other areas of GDPR compliance. A new action plan has been provided to the council and CIGG (Corporate Information Governance Group). This is now being utilised fully to keep track of work.
- 2.11 Veritau worked with the council to respond to Covid-19. A new privacy notice for the Self-Isolation Payment for Covid-19 has been finalised and published. The main Covid-19 privacy notice has also been amended.
- 2.12 Information security incidents continue to be reported to Veritau and investigated. Veritau has provided advice on the completion of data protection impact assessments and is providing support in respect of surveillance and law enforcement processing. Training sessions will be held with council officers on data protection rights and principles, and records management. These will be held online.
- 2.13 A detailed summary of information governance activity and arrangements is included in Appendix C.

3. Implications

- 3.1 There are no legal, financial, policy and risk, corporate plan, resource or other implications from this report.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Delays in starting the 2020/21 audit plan and the ongoing impact of Covid poses significant challenges to the completion of audit work to expected deadlines. Plans to enable this to be done will be agreed with the Chief Finance Officer and the continued assistance and prioritisation by officers from now until the end of April 2021 will be essential to help us complete our plan of work.
- 4.2 The counter fraud team continue to help deliver the aims and objectives of the Council's counter fraud strategy. Fraud reported to the team is investigated and progress is regularly reported to the committee.
- 4.3 An action plan is in place to deliver information governance work on behalf of Selby District Council; this is overseen by the council's CIGG.

Regular liaison takes place with the council's Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) and regular updates are reported to this committee.

Background Documents

Internal Audit, Counter Fraud and Information Governance Plans 2020/21

Appendices:

Appendix A - Internal audit progress report – January 2021

Appendix B - Counter fraud progress report – January 2021

Appendix C - Information governance progress report – January 2021

Contact Officers:

Ed Martin - Audit Manager - Veritau

ed.martin@veritau.co.uk

01904 552932 / 01757 292281

Daniel Clubb - Counter Fraud Manager – Veritau

Daniel.clubb@veritau.co.uk

01904 552947 / 01757 292281

Rebecca Bradley - Assistant Director - Information Governance - Veritau

Rebecca.bradley@veritau.co.uk

01609 535034