

Cheltenham Borough Council

Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee –

28 January 2026

Internal Audit Update 2025/26

Accountable member:

Councillor Peter Jefferies, Cabinet Member for Finance & Assets

Accountable officer:

Claire Hughes, Monitoring Officer

Ward(s) affected:

N/A

Key Decision: No

Executive summary:

The Council must ensure that it has sound systems of internal control that facilitate the effective management of all the Council's functions. The work delivered by SWAP Internal Audit Services (SWAP), the Council's internal audit service, is one of the control assurance sources available to the Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee, the Executive Leadership Team and Service Leadership Team and supports the work of the external auditor.

The Annual Internal Audit Opinion presented to the Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee provides an overall assurance opinion at the end of the financial year. This Internal Audit Progress Report, however, is designed to give the Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee the opportunity to comment on the work completed by the partnership and provide 'through the year' comment and assurances on the control environment.

Recommendation:

- 1. That Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee considers the attached reports and makes comment on its content as necessary.**
-

1. Implications

1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications

There are no financial, property and asset implications arising from this report.

Signed off by: Claire Hughes, Monitoring Officer,
Claire.Hughes@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from the report and its recommendation.

Monitoring the implementation of Internal Audit recommendations assists the Council to minimise risk areas and thereby reduce the prospects of legal challenge.

Signed off by: One Legal legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

1.3 Environmental and climate change implications

None arising from the report agreed actions

Signed off by: Maizy McCann, Climate Officer, Maizy.McCann@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Quality homes, safe and strong communities
- Reducing Inequalities, supporting better outcomes
- Taking care of your money

1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

No implications arising from the report agreed actions.

1.6 Performance management – monitoring and review

Regular monitoring reports are provided to this Committee and, in the interim period regular meetings are held between Internal Audit and the Deputy Chief Executive. New and emerging risks are discussed, and the impact of the recommendations made by Internal Audit are discussed.

2 Background

2.1 The Audit Plan for 2025/26 was approved by this Committee in April 2025. The progress report enables the Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee to monitor the work of the Internal Audit Service and ensure that it remains effective. It also provides the Committee with assurance opinions over areas reviewed within the reporting period, details of audit recommendations and the outcome of follow-up reviews conducted on previous audit recommendations.

2.2 We continue to follow up all agreed actions. A report (Annex B) showing all open agreed actions and those that have been actioned during 2025/26 has been included for Members information.

3 Reasons for recommendations

3.1 This report highlights the work completed by Internal Audit and provides comment on the assurances provided by this work.

4 Alternative options considered

4.1 None

5 Consultation and feedback

5.1 None

6 Key risks

6.1 That weaknesses within the control framework, identified by the Internal Audit Activity, continue to threaten organisational objectives, if agreed actions are not implemented.

Report author:

Lucy Cater, Head of Internal Audit

Assistant Director, SWAP Internal Audit Services, Lucy.Cater@swapaudit.co.uk

Appendices:

Appendix A – Internal Audit Progress Report, January 2026

Appendix B – Open Agreed Actions

Background information:

N/A

