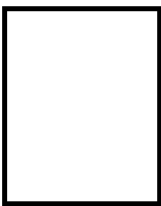
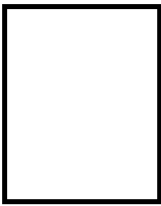
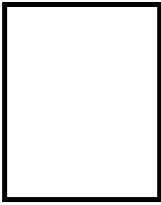
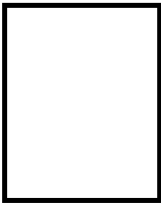
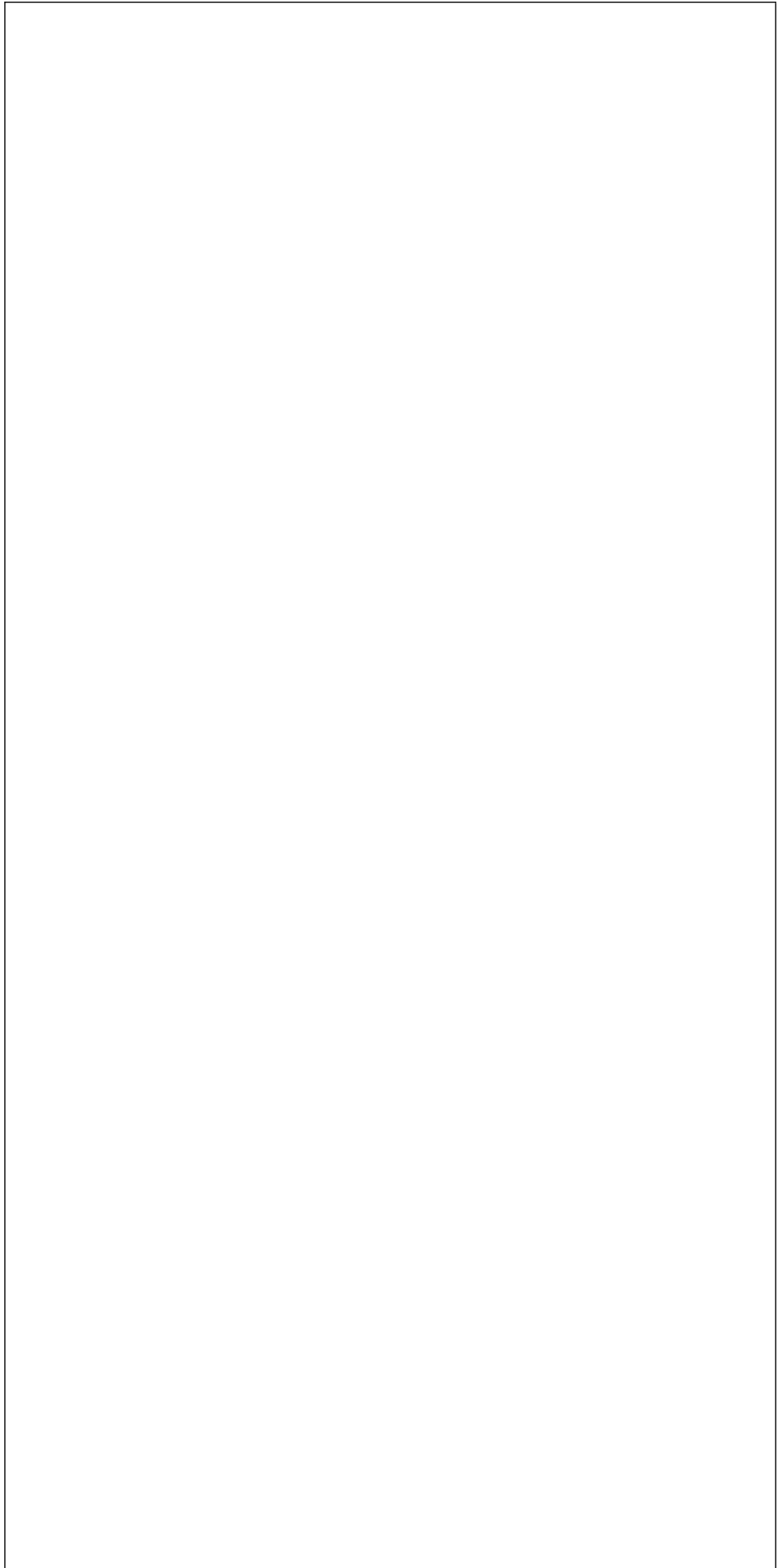
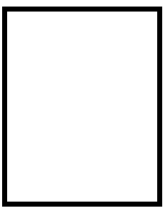
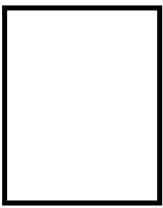
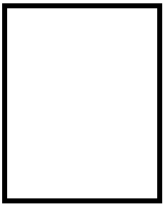
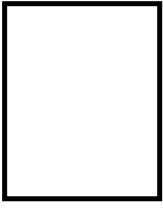
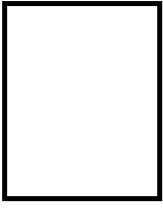


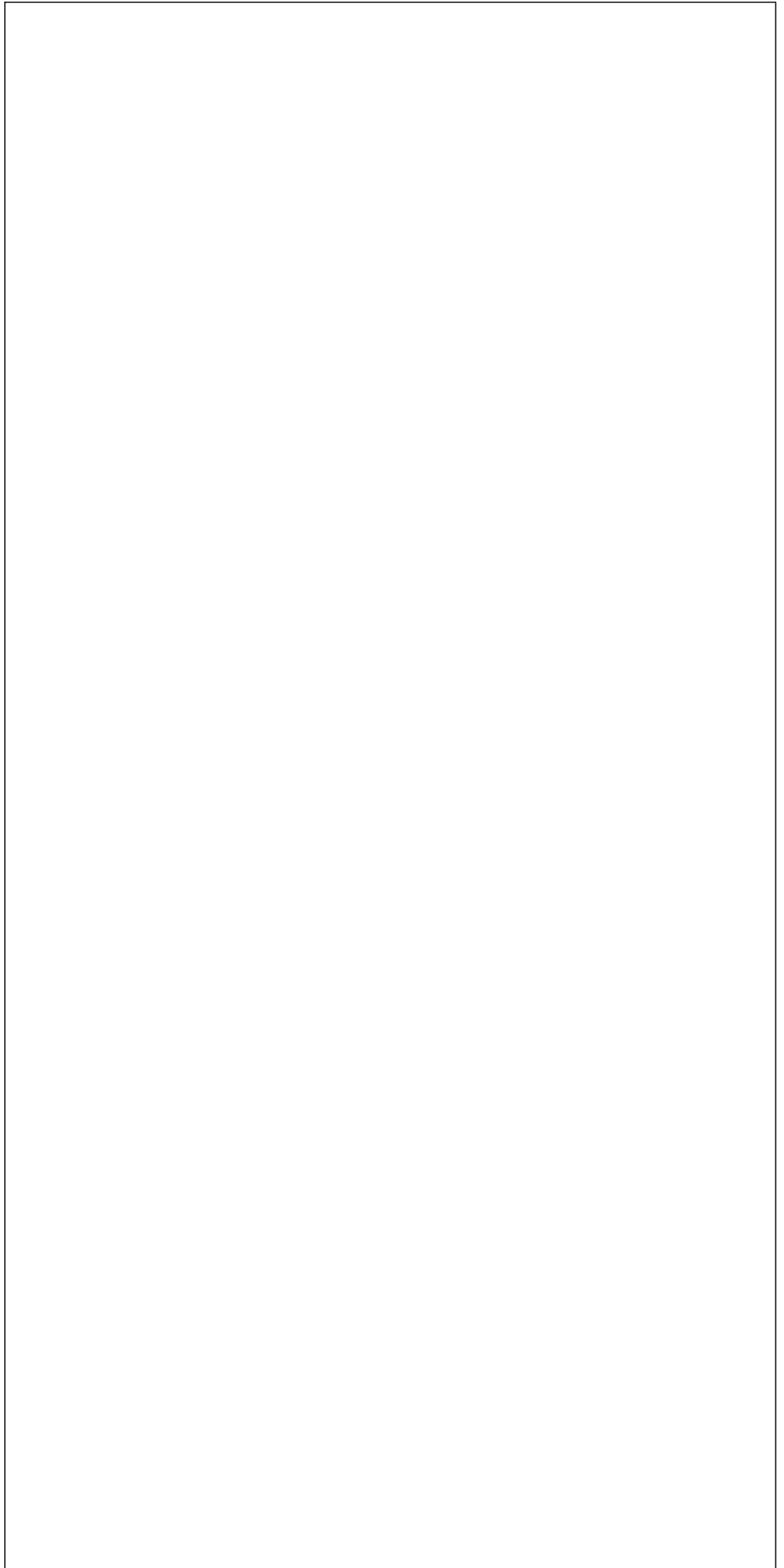
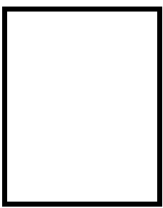
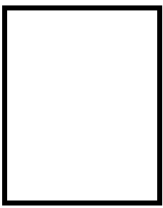
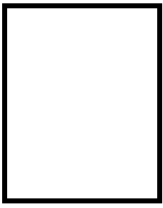
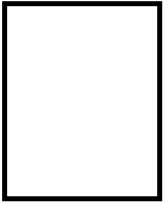
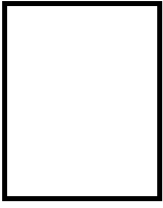
TO: Audit Committee

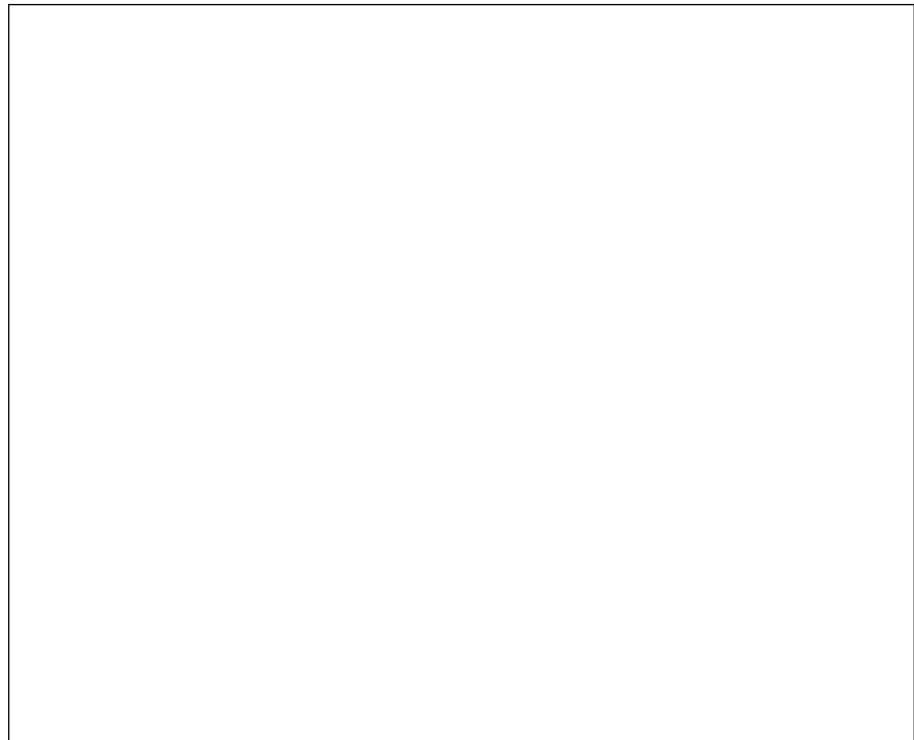
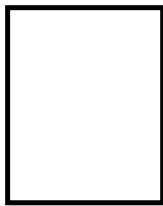
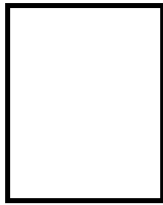
FROM: Head of Audit, Assurance & Procurement

DATE: 15 April 2014









PORTFOLIOS AFFECTED: All

WARDS AFFECTED: All

TITLE OF REPORT **Audit & Assurance Plan 2014/15 & Internal Audit Charter**

1. PURPOSE

To inform Members of the planned Audit & Assurance work for the new financial year and of the Internal Audit Charter.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked:

- to approve the 2014/15 Plan (as set out in Appendices A and B)
- to approve the revisions to the Internal Audit Charter (as set out in Appendix C)
- to note that reports dealing with both progress against the Plan and outcomes achieved will be submitted to each meeting
- to note that Plan changes will be reported during the year.

3. BACKGROUND

The Plan:

The Plan defines the scope and reasoning behind the approach being adopted. Overall, the objectives are:

- to fulfil Audit & Assurance's own statutory obligations;
- to provide assurance, support and advice to Directors on matters under their control;
- to support the Section 151 Officer's statutory obligations;

- to assist the Audit Committee in gaining independence assurance on the Council's risk management, governance and control arrangements;
- to report compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS); and
- to contribute, as part of the Resources & Transformation Directorate, to the development of corporate standards.

The Plan itself, as in previous years, is risk-based and the audit methodology is essentially risk-based auditing.

Consultations:

The Plan, as a whole, is also a product of consultations with Directors and their Departmental Management Teams (DMTs), which were undertaken in February/March.

Later in 2014/15 further consultations will be held to ensure that the Plan continues to meet the stated objectives. Any significant changes to reflect new developments and/or resources will be reported to this Committee.

Ongoing consultations will take place with Directors and Heads of Service to ensure that specific Terms of Reference are prepared for each planned audit to reflect the detailed risks within each area.

Resources:

Audit & Assurance has had to make adjustments to its staffing establishment to meet the demands currently placed upon the Council. Audit resources available are considered sufficient to deliver an effective Audit Plan.

The planned resources for the audit function for this year are 1,125 work-days. (In addition, there are 1,106 work-days for Benefit Fraud and for Risk Management/Insurance)

Internal Audit Charter:

The Internal Audit Charter is requirement of the Public Sector Internal Audit standards, which became mandatory from 1 April 2013. Some revisions to the existing charter are deemed necessary for 2014/15.

4. RATIONALE

The Plan and Charter define the scope and the rationale of the approach being followed. They allow Audit & Assurance, independently, to provide assurance to managers, the Executive Director Resources & Transformation, the Section 151 Officer and other stakeholders about the effectiveness of controls and the management of risk. To this Committee, with its responsibility to oversee the effectiveness of governance arrangements in the Council and in its partnerships, they allow Audit and Assurance to assist it in this process.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report begins the process that leads to the Annual Governance Statement for the new financial year. This process assesses the effectiveness of the Council's own management of its policy objectives.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising as a result of this report.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications arising as a result of this report.

9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

There are no equality or health implications arising as a result of this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

Directors

Contact Officer:

Paul Hankinson, Audit & Assurance Manager

Date:

4 April 2014

Background Papers:

A & A Planning papers; Risk Registers; 2013/14 Audit & Assurance Plan, Strategic Statement and Internal Audit Charter.