

**INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2025/26**  
**WDA/30/26**

**Recommendation**

That Members

1. Note the progress report in respect of the 2025-26 Audit Plan attached at Appendix 1 and the Actions Tracker attached at Appendix 2.

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**INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2025-26**  
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**Report of the Director of Finance**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 Internal Audit plan their work annually to provide assurance about governance arrangements at the Authority. A progress report in respect of the 2025-26 Audit Plan is attached at Appendix 1.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The Authority is required to maintain an adequate and effective Internal Audit both to comply with statutory requirements and to provide assurance that its governance arrangements are as robust as they should be. The Authority's Internal Audit is provided by St Helens Council as a part of the annual Service Level Agreement.
- 2.2 Each year Internal Audit reviews the risk environment at the Authority and identifies the key areas where an independent review is required to confirm the adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements in place and to make recommendations for improvements where appropriate. The Internal Audit Plan for 2025-26 was approved by the Authority on 27 June 2025 and results are summarised in this report with further detail included at Appendix 1.

**3. Internal Audit Plan 2026-27**

- 3.1 For 2025-26, the workplan approved by members on 27 June 2025 comprised:
- Contract Management Waste Management & Recycling Contract (high risk)
  - IT Cyber Security (high risk)
  - Future Waste Services Procurement (medium risk)
  - Procurement System (medium risk)

3.2 The results are summarised as follows:

<b>Audit</b>	<b>Date of Report</b>	<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	
Contract Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waste Management &amp; Recycling Contract</li> </ul>	July 2025	Substantial Assurance	Critical	0
			High	2
			Medium	3
			Low	1
Procurement System	February 2026	Reasonable Assurance	Critical	0
			High	2
			Medium	3
			Low	1
Future Waste Services Procurement	April 2026	Reasonable Assurance	Critical	0
			High	0
			Medium	3
			Low	0
IT Cyber Security	Draft report under review by Management	Limited Assurance	Critical	0
			High	2
			Medium	2
			Low	1

3.3 There are no Critical or High recommendations that remain outstanding from previous reports. A list of outstanding recommendations and those completed since the previous meeting is included at Appendix 2 to this report.

#### **4. Risk Implications**

4.1 An adequate and effective Internal Audit is a statutory requirement which also provides assurance to Members that governance arrangements are in place and working effectively. Without a risk-based audit plan to direct Internal Audit's work they may not contribute to the Authority's governance arrangements effectively, so it is important that a plan is approved by the Authority prior to the commencement of substantive Internal Audit work.

**5. HR Implications**

5.1 There are no HR implications

**6. Environmental Implications**

6.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

**7. Financial Implications**

7.1 The budget for the Internal Audit work was included in the budget approved by the Authority for both 2025-26 and 2026-27. There are no other financial implications.

**8. Legal Implications**

8.1 The responsibility to maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Authority's system of internal control, in accordance with proper internal audit practices, rests with the Director of Finance of MRWA under Section 73 of the Local Government Act 1985 and the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (Part 2 section 5). This report shows Members how the responsibility was discharged during 2025-26.

**9. Conclusion**

9.1 Members are requested to note the progress report for 2025-26.

## **10. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Progress Report 2025-26

Appendix 2: Outstanding Actions Tracker

The contact officer for this report is: Chris Kelsall

7th Floor, Number 1 Mann Island, Liverpool, L3 1BP

Email: [chris.kelsall@merseysidewda.gov.uk](mailto:chris.kelsall@merseysidewda.gov.uk)

Tel: 0151 255 2542

Fax: 0151 227 1848

There are no background documents to this report are open to inspection in accordance with Section 100D of The Local Government Act 1972.