Agenda Item 8

Chelmsford City Council Audit and Risk Committee

16th September 2026

Updated Internal Audit Plan 2026

Report by:
Audit Services Manager

Officer Contact:
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Purpose
This report presents the Updated Internal Audit Plan 2026 to Committee.

Recommendations
Committee are requested to note the Updated Internal Audit Plan 2026.

1. Background

1.1. The Council is responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate risk management processes, control systems, accounting records and governance arrangements. The purpose of Chelmsford City Council's Internal Audit section is to provide independent, objective assurance and consulting services to the Council (via the Audit & Risk Committee, Chief Executive, S151 Officer, External Audit and senior managers), relating to these arrangements, which are designed to add value and improve the Council's operations.

1.2. The Audit Services Manager is also responsible for the delivery of an annual audit opinion that can be used by the Council to inform its governance statement. The annual opinion will also conclude on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control.

1.3. In order to achieve this, Internal Audit have developed an internal audit plan for 2026 which is based on a prioritisation of the audit universe using a risk-based methodology, including input from the Council's 'Our Chelmsford Our Plan', Principal Risk Register, Fraud Risk Register, AGS Action Plan as well as discussions with Council staff, senior management, plus consideration of local and national issues and risks.

1.4. In line with our approach, where instead of a full twelve-month plan, we produce a 6-month rolling plan to ensure we continue to be aligned to reviewing the highest risks in the Council, this report outlines the suggested areas for Internal Audit review for October 2026 to March 2027.

1.5. Additional changes to the plan may be necessary to reflect changing priorities and risk environment and therefore as usual, a contingency has been set aside to cover requests from management for ad hoc, advisory type work on risk identification and subsequent control design (as well as urgent, unplanned reviews which may arise). A budget for follow up reviews of previous audit work has also been accounted for in the plan.

2. Conclusion

2.1. The Updated Internal Audit Plan 2026 is attached for Audit & Risk Committee to note.

List of appendices: Updated Internal Audit Plan 2026

Background papers: None

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: The Council has a duty to maintain an effective internal provision to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance (Regulation 5 (Part 1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015).

Financial: None

Potential impact on climate change and the environment: None

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030: None

Personnel: None

Risk Management: The scope of Internal Audit activities encompasses, but is not limited to, objective examinations of evidence for the purpose of providing independent assessments to the Audit & Risk Committee, management and outside parties (e.g. External Audit) on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management, and control process for Chelmsford City Council.

Equality and Diversity: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees: Noted by Management Team during August 2026

Relevant Policies and Strategies: None

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Appendix A

Internal Audit Draft Plan 2026 (October 2026 to March 2027)

Audit Title	Link to Corporate Plan	Link to Principal Risk	Fraud Risk Assessment	Indicative Scope
Cyber Security		**PRR001 Cyber Security**	**FRC01 Data theft and other cyber crime**	Review of 2025 Cyber Posture Review action plan progress and review the Council's arrangements for monitoring PSN and PCI compliance.
Planning Fees		**PRR 032 Budget and Financial Position**	**FRC 011 Income Collection**	Review of the Council's control framework for managing the collection of Planning Fees.
Business Continuity		**PRR 003 Business Continuity**		Review of the Council's control framework for Business Continuity.
Temporary Accommodation	**Fairer and Inclusive Chelmsford**	**PRR006 Homelessness**	**FRC03 Social Housing and Tenancy; FRC012 No Recourse to Public Funds; FRC05 Decision-making**	Review of the Council's arrangements for Temporary Accommodation, including procurement and monitoring of providers.
Garden Waste		**PRR 032 Budget and Financial Position**	**FRC 011 Income Collection**	Review of operational and financial arrangements relating to Garden Waste
Commercial Hires		**PRR 032 Budget and Financial Position; PRR 015 Safeguarding**	**FRC 011 Income Collection**	Review of the Council's control framework for managing commercial hires of Council venues
Safeguarding		**PRR 015 Safeguarding**		Review of the Council's arrangements and corporate approach to Safeguarding.
Landlord Rent Deposit Scheme		**PRR 006 - Homelessness**	**FRC3 Social Housing and Tenancy; FRC12 No Recourse to Public Funds**	Review of the control environment in relation to LRDS
Theatres	**Connected Chelmsford**	**PRR 032 Budget and Financial Position**	**FRC 011 - Income Collection; FRC 008 Theft**	Review of operational and financial arrangements for Theatres, including the Council's Cultural Strategy in relation to the Theatre and its framework for monitoring progress.

Audit Title	Link to Corporate Plan	Link to Principal Risk	Fraud Risk Assessment	Indicative Scope
Procurement & Contract Management		**PRR 032 Budget and Financial Position**	**FRC 004 - Procurement and contracting; FRC05 Decision-making**	Review of Council's control framework for Procurement and Contract Management, including supplier and creditor management.
Community and Business Grants	**Connected Chelmsford**	**PRR032 Budget and Financial Position**	**FRC018 Grants Received and Payable**	Review of the control framework in relation to the Council's Community and Business Grant funding schemes.
Arboriculture		**PRR014 Health and Safety**		Review of the Council's framework for managing the arboriculture service.
Insurance		**PRR 019 - Income & Financial Position**	**FRC019 - Insurance claims**	Review of the Council's arrangements for demonstrating its compliance with insurance policy requirements.
Building Control		**PRR037 Building Control**	**FRC05 Decision-making**	Review of the Council's arrangements for Building Control.