

Audit and Governance Committee



Date of meeting:	10 March 2026
Title of Report:	Internal Audit Charter 2026
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Northey (Interim Service Director for Finance)
Author:	Louise Clapton, Audit Manager
Contact Email:	Louise.clapton@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	AUD/LC
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) became mandatory for all UK public bodies from 1 April 2025, supported by the CIPFA UK Public Sector Application Note. One of the key requirements of these standards is that every organisation must formally define the purpose, authority, mandate, independence and responsibilities of its Internal Audit function through an approved Internal Audit Charter and Strategy.

The attached Internal Audit Charter 2026 has been updated to ensure:

- Full alignment with the GIAS mandatory requirements and Topical Requirements.
- Incorporation of statutory expectations under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (amended 2024).
- Explicit recognition of Internal Audit's strengthened role in supporting governance, risk culture, assurance, and organisational learning.
- Clear articulation of the responsibilities of the Audit Committee, senior leadership, and the Chief Audit Executive (Head of DAP).

It also sets out how Internal Audit will be delivered, developed, resourced, and assured, including how the annual audit opinion will be formed.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. It is recommended that the Audit and Governance Committee approves the Internal Audit Charter 2026.

Reason:

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require all authorities to maintain an effective system of Internal Audit. The Global Internal Audit Standards require the Charter to be reviewed and approved annually by the Audit Committee as those charged with governance.

Failure to do so would impact the Council's ability to demonstrate conformance with the Standards and good governance practice.

Alternative options considered and rejected

- I. None, - non-approval would result in non-compliance with GIAS and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Internal Audit supports the Council in delivering the Corporate Plan by:

- Providing objective assurance on governance and risk management.
- Supporting the proper stewardship of public funds.
- Helping services deliver efficient, effective and ethical operations.
- Strengthening transparency and public accountability.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Delivery of the audit plan assists the council in the provision of quality public services which also demonstrate value for money. It has also helped ensure an effective control environment is maintained in these financially challenging times.

Financial Risks

No direct implications.

Legal Implications

The Council is under a statutory duty to maintain an effective internal audit service under Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended 2024). Approval of an Internal Audit Charter is a mandatory requirement under the Global Internal Audit Standards (2025), which apply to all UK public bodies.

Failure to maintain an up-to-date and compliant Internal Audit Charter could compromise the Council's ability to demonstrate that it meets these statutory and professional obligations. This may expose the authority to legal and governance risks, particularly in relation to the robustness of its internal control, risk management and assurance arrangements.

Approval of the Internal Audit Charter 2026 ensures that the Council continues to operate in accordance with the relevant regulatory framework, professional standards and principles of good governance.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No impacts directly arising from this report.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

No impacts directly arising from this report. The work of Internal Audit forms a core component of the Council's risk management and governance framework.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	001a Internal Audit Charter 2026							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Northey, Interim Service Director for Finance (Section 151).

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes

Date agreed: 27/02/2026

Cabinet Member approval:

Date approved: 02/03/2026