

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

11 DECEMBER 2015

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - USE OF CONSULTANTS

Recommendation

- 1. The Chief Financial Officer recommends that:**
 - (a) the results of the internal audit on the use of consultants attached as an Appendix be noted; and**
 - (b) a further audit be undertaken during 2016/17.**

Background

2. At its meeting on 27 June 2014, the Committee considered the results of an audit of the use of consultants (Minute no 306 refers). A further audit was subsequently requested and included in the agreed 2015/16 internal audit plan. This report outlines the results of that follow up audit.
3. The audit concludes that the County Council has very good clear documented and detailed processes relating to the engagement and management of consultants. Since the last Internal Audit review was conducted, the processes that need to be followed when engaging external consultants have been extensively publicised to managers by a number of different methods including news bulletins on the Intranet, emails from the Chief Executive, reminders at Wider Leadership Team meetings and a step by step guide is also provided on the procurement pages of the intranet. The overall control framework is therefore strong but the key issue arising from the audit is the continued non-compliance with that framework by managers across the organisation. There also remains some ambiguity over the Council's definition of consultancy and hence a lack of consistency in interpretation. The definition should therefore be reviewed.
4. The full audit report, which is attached as an Appendix for consideration by the Committee, includes a detailed action plan outlining the audit recommendations, management responses and target date for implementing the agreed actions to address the issues identified.

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Supporting Information

- Appendix: Internal Audit Report – Use of Consultants.

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Chief Financial Officer) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda papers and Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 27 June 2015.