

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Audit and Governance Committee
Date of Meeting:	23 November 2022
Subject:	Management Assurance Statements 2021/22
Report of:	Head of Corporate Services
Head of Service/Director:	Head of Corporate Services
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Corporate Governance
Number of Appendices:	7

Executive Summary:

As part of the Council's response to the impact of COVID-19, the Internal Audit team remained deployed to the Business Cell for 2021/22. This was to support the continued administration of business grants. As reported to the Audit and Governance Committee over the course of the pandemic, due to internal audit work being suspended, no independent assurance could be given to the Committee on the adequacy of the Council's internal control environment. Taking a similar approach to 2020/21, each Head of Service has produced a management assurance statement to demonstrate that the Council's internal control environment remained relatively sound for 2021/22. Whilst this is not independent assurance as provided by the Internal Audit team, it is an additional layer of assurance and one which informs the Annual Governance Statement. The individual assurance statements can be found at Appendices 1-7.

Recommendation:

To CONSIDER the assurance given by each service area, and overall for 2021/22, it can be concluded that the management of the Council's internal control environment was satisfactory.

Financial Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

Legal Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

Resource Implications (including impact on equalities):

None directly arising from this report.

Safeguarding Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

Impact on the Customer:

None directly arising from this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 As part of the Council's response to the impact of COVID-19, the Internal Audit team remained deployed to the Business Cell for 2021/22. This was to support the continued administration of business grants. As reported to the Audit and Governance Committee over the course of the pandemic, due to internal audit work being suspended, no independent assurance could be given to the Committee on the adequacy of the Council's internal control environment. Taking a similar approach to 2020/21, each Head of Service has produced a management assurance statement to demonstrate that the Council's internal control environment remained relatively sound for 2021/22. Whilst this is not independent assurance as provided by the Internal Audit team, it is an additional layer of assurance and one which informs the Annual Governance Statement. The individual assurance statements can be found at Appendices 1-7.

2.0 SERVICE ASSURANCE STATEMENTS

2.1 The statement template is designed to capture the key elements of the Council's governance and internal control framework. The statements do not offer full assurance that everything was effective for 100% of the time but, more generally, management arrangements have been satisfactory over the year. It is also recognised that the statements have not been independently assessed.

3.0 OVERALL CONCLUSION

3.1 Whilst some of the questions may have been responded to with a 'partial' response this should not be unexpected. The Council has a complex array of systems, processes and procedures and, as acknowledged within the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), it would be unrealistic that these operate 100% effectively, 100% of the time. From the responses received, the overall conclusion is that despite resources being deployed to the Council's COVID-19 response, a satisfactory system of internal control has been maintained.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 Corporate Governance Group.

5.0 ASSOCIATED RISKS

5.1 None directly arising from this report.

6.0 MONITORING

6.1 None other than now the Internal Audit team is operational consideration will need to be given as to whether such statements are required for 2022/23.

7.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITIES/COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

7.1 Council Plan 2020-2024 – good internal control and governance supports delivery of actions within the Council Plan.

Background Papers: None

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Community Services Assurance Statement
Appendix 2 – Corporate Services Assurance Statement
Appendix 3 – Democratic Services Assurance Statement
Appendix 4 – Development Services Assurance Statement
Appendix 5 – Finance and Asset Management Assurance Statement
Appendix 6 – Garden Communities Assurance Statement
Appendix 7 – One Legal Assurance Statement