<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</td></tr>
<tr><td>MEETING OF THE:</td><td colspan="3">AUDIT COMMITTEE</td></tr>
<tr><td>DATE:</td><td>30 JUNE 2026</td><td>REPORT NO:</td><td>DFP/03/2627</td></tr>
<tr><td>PRESENTING OFFICER</td><td colspan="3">DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT, MIKE REA</td></tr>
<tr><td>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</td><td>DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT, MIKE REA</td><td>REPORT AUTHOR:</td><td>DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT, MIKE REA</td></tr>
<tr><td>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</td><td colspan="3">STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT),
HEAD OF FINANCE, JAMES CAMPBELL,
HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT, CAROL MCDONNELL,
LEAD AUDIT MANAGER, HAYLEY DICKINSON MOORE</td></tr>
<tr><td>TITLE OF REPORT:</td><td colspan="3">2026/27 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN</td></tr>
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APPENDICES:	**APPENDIX A:** **APPENDIX B:**	**2026/27 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN** **INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE CHARTER**

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the proposed Internal Audit plan for 2026/27 and to seek Members comments and approval on the plan.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members:

   a) consider the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2026/27; and

   b) approve the Plan, subject to any agreed amendments.

Introduction and Background

3. The purpose of Internal Audit is defined as follows:

   "Internal auditing strengthens the organisation's ability to create, protect, and sustain value by providing the board and management with independent, risk-based, and objective assurance, advice, insight, and foresight." (Source: Global Internal Audit Standards).

4. The Authority has a statutory duty to maintain an adequate and effective system of Internal Audit covering its accounting records and control systems (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015). To fulfil this requirement, the Authority has entered into a contract with Liverpool City Council's Internal Audit Service (LCC IAS). LCC IAS operates in accordance with an Internal Audit Charter (IAC) and a Quality Assurance

and Improvement Programme (QAIP), ensuring compliance with the Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) and delivery of a high-quality service to the Authority.

5. Each year, Internal Audit submits a proposed work plan following consultation with the Strategic Leadership Team, including the Director of Finance and Procurement, the Head of Finance, and other key officers.

6. The plan is developed based on an assessment of risks, previous audit findings and coordination with External Audit work. The proposed plan is considered sufficient to support the Head of Internal Audit. The two main strategic areas of work are:

   a. a review of core financial systems and processes, and
   b. specific strategic reviews proposed by Internal Audit or requested by the Service.

7. The proposed 2026/27 internal audit plan is attached as Appendix A to this report. Members are asked to consider the plan and provide any comments or views. Subject to any amendments, Members are requested to approve the 2026/27 Internal Audit Plan.

8. Arrangements are in place to monitor progress against the plan throughout the year and to manage any ad hoc audit work requirements as they arise.

9. The Internal Audit Service Charter, attached as Appendix B, sets out the Internal Audit function's mandate, independence, organisational position, reporting relationships, skills, Audit Committee interaction, resourcing, quality standards and roles and responsibilities.

10. The Charter ensures that the Authority's Internal Audit function complies with the mandatory requirements of the Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS).

Equality and Diversity Implications

11. There are no equality and diversity implications contained within this report.

Staff Implications

12. There are no staff implications contained within this report.

Legal Implications

13. The Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that it maintains an adequate and effective system of Internal Audit covering its accounting records and control systems. (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015).

Financial Implications & Value for Money

14. The annual cost of the audit is £45,125 and is contained within the approved budget for audit services.

Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

15. There are no health & safety implications contained within this report. The scrutiny provided by Internal Audit as part of the work to be undertaken on the proposed plan, will assist the Authority in assuring itself any necessary procedures and risk management processes are already in place or will be implemented as a result of the audit.

Environmental Implications

16. There are no environmental implications contained within this report.

Contribution to Our Vision: To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.

Our Purpose: Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.

17. Internal Audit assists in the evaluation and enhancement of sound internal control arrangements that contribute towards ensuring the Authority's Vision and approved policies and plans continue to drive decision making within the service.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AGS	**A**nnual **G**overnance **S**tatement
CAE	**C**hief **A**udit **E**xecutive
IAC	**I**nternal **A**udit **C**harter
GIAS	**G**lobal **I**nternal **A**udit **S**tandards
LCC IAS	**L**iverpool **C**ity **C**ouncil's **I**nternal **A**udit **S**ervice
MFRA	**M**erseyside **F**ire & **R**escue **A**uthority
QAIP	**Q**uality **A**ssurance & **I**mprovement **P**rogramme
SLT	**S**trategic **L**eadership **T**eam