

Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Plan 2026/27 - first half year plan proposal

Audit	Indicative Days	Assurance or Consultancy	Service Area	Link to Strategic Risk Register (Inc Code)	Link to Strategy Priorities	Rationale for inclusion and High Level Scope
Temporary Accommodation Billing, Arrears and Debt Recovery Follow Up	8	Assurance	Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services and Revenues and Benefits	10. Sustained or increasing levels of Housing Need (12)	Direct link to housing outcomes and efficient services.	Rationale: A follow-up is required after the 2024/25 audit received Limited Assurance in relation to Billing, Arrears and Debt Recovery Procedures. Temporary Accommodation remains a key operational and financial pressure area for the Council. High-Level Scope: Confirm that agreed management actions have been implemented effectively, or that alternative controls now suitably mitigate previously identified risks.
Risk Management	12	Assurance	Authority Wide	Inherent Risk	Effective governance enabling efficient services.	Rationale: Implementation of the updated Risk Management Strategy was delayed, and assurance was postponed in 2024/25. Robust risk management underpins effective governance and informed decision-making. High-Level Scope: Assess the design and early operation of the new strategy, including consistency of risk identification, scoring, escalation, and reporting arrangements.
Assurance Mapping	12	Consultancy	Authority Wide	Inherent Risk	Sharper oversight improves effectiveness and efficiency.	Rationale: An assurance map has not been completed recently. A refreshed corporate view of assurance sources will support improved oversight and reduce duplication. High-Level Scope: Map existing sources of assurance for a defined risk area or service and identify gaps, overlaps, and opportunities to strengthen coordinated assurance arrangements.
Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery - IT recovery capabilities.	12	Assurance	Central Services	9. Business Continuity and Emergency Planning (16) 8. Cyber Security (20)	Protects service continuity across critical functions.	Rationale: Recent BCP exercises highlighted the need for a stronger approach to technology-based recovery and prioritisation of services. Resilience is essential for continuity during major incidents. High-Level Scope: Review preparedness, virtual/technical recovery arrangements, system resilience, and cross-service coordination to ensure continuity plans are practical and aligned to critical service needs.
Legacy IT Systems	12	Assurance	Central Services	8. Cyber Security (20)	Resilient tech underpins efficient council operations.	Rationale: Legacy systems present risks relating to obsolescence, security, supportability, and business continuity. These risks have increasing operational and cyber security implications. High-Level Scope: Evaluate governance and controls around legacy systems, including lifecycle management, resilience, patching, supplier support and migration planning.
Customer Services - Contact Centre	12	Assurance	Central Services	Inherent Risk	Faster, simpler access to services; supports local economy.	Rationale: The service has undergone significant transformation with increasing reliance on first-contact resolution. No recent internal audit coverage exists. High-Level Scope: Assess accessibility, responsiveness, compliance and data controls across all channels. Review performance reporting, customer experience, and the robustness of core processes including complaints handling and financial transactions.
Contract Management (Authority Wide)	12	Assurance	Authority Wide	14. Contract/Contractor Procurement (6) 15. Local Government Reorganisation (20)	Better VFM; supports supply chain and local SMEs.	Rationale: Effective contract management is essential, especially ahead of Local Government Reorganisation. Weaknesses could have significant financial and continuity impacts. High-Level Scope: Review whether contracts are centrally recorded, compliant, monitored, and managed through the full lifecycle, including contract pipeline oversight and key performance monitoring.
Parks, open space & playground maintenance.	12	Assurance	Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services	7. Health & Safety (15)	Supports efficient, secure services; enables innovation economy.	Rationale: This is a high-visibility area with reputational and health & safety implications. There has been limited recent audit coverage. High-Level Scope: Assess inspection regimes, maintenance standards, contractor management, and the adequacy of health and safety arrangements for public spaces and play areas.

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Core Financial Controls/Financial Procedures inc Purchase Orders	14	Assurance	Finance	12. Financial position/budget deficit (12) 15. Local Government Reorganisation (20) 4. Achievement of savings/Transformation Strategy (20) 14. Contract/Contractor Procurement (6)	Underpins efficient council and investment capacity. Improves efficiency and budget control.	Rationale: Core finance processes underpin financial integrity, transformation, savings delivery and LGR readiness. A high proportion of invoices continue to be processed without POs. High-Level Scope: Review control design and operation across income, expenditure, payroll, reconciliations, and reporting. Evaluate PO usage and the potential for strengthening controls via a “no PO, no pay” policy.
Environmental safety - Contaminated Land	12	Assurance	Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services	7. Health & Safety (15)	Remediation enables safe development and environment.	Rationale: A statutory function with public health implications and no recent internal audit coverage. Reliable regulatory processes are essential for safe development. High-Level Scope: Assess statutory compliance, risk-based inspection processes, investigation and remediation arrangements, partnership working, record-keeping and performance monitoring.
Project Management Approach	10	Assurance	Executive Services	Inherent Risk	On-time, on-budget projects improve outcomes.	Rationale: A new project management framework has been introduced. Sound project governance is critical to delivering strategic outcomes. High-Level Scope: Review the adequacy of the framework’s design, including roles, stage-gates, risk management and reporting, and assess consistency in its early application.
Licensing	12	Assurance	Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services	Inherent Risk		Rationale: The service has undergone structural change, with historical reliance on individual expertise and outstanding actions from previous licensing audits. High-Level Scope: Review the end-to-end licensing process, governance, compliance with legislation and policy, and management oversight. Scope may focus on a particular licensing area if appropriate.
Follow up of recommendations raised. (Ongoing throughout year)	10	Follow Up	Authority Wide	Inherent Risk	Effective governance enabling efficient services.	Rationale: Ensuring implementation of audit recommendations promotes continuous improvement and strengthens governance and internal control. High-Level Scope: Verify progress and completion of management actions and assess whether controls are now effective.

Internal Audit

Audits 1st half plan 2026/27 150

Audit days remaining for 2nd half plan 2026/27 93

243**Counter Fraud**

Proactive fraud activity 146

Investigations 170

316**Management Resource****135****TMBC Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Plan Total****694****Kent Intelligence Network
KIN Investigation resource**

180

874