

Internal Audit Benchmarking

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the Audit Committee with benchmarking information for Internal Audit, and thus draw attention to the position of Wiltshire's Internal Audit function in relation to other English unitary councils as a whole, and to a smaller group of unitaries comprising councils from the South West region and other former counties.

Background

2. Following the creation of Wiltshire Council on 1st April 2009, Internal Audit has become a member of the CIPFA Audit Benchmarking Club, in order to obtain a range of comparative information with regard to its unit costs, audit days, staffing levels etc. This report presents a sample of the latest available benchmarking information from CIPFA, based on both the 2009-10 actual outturn figures, and the 2010-11 budget and audit plan.

Main Considerations

3. Appendix A shows Internal Audit's position compared to other English unitary councils (excluding London and Metropolitan councils). Particular points to note are as follows:
 - That for both 2009-10 and 2010-11 the cost of Internal Audit in Wiltshire is significantly below the unitary average, both as a proportion of the Council's overall revenue spending, and in terms of the cost per chargeable audit day.
 - That chargeable audit days are below average in relation to revenue spending, whilst in terms of days per auditor they are at or slightly above the national average.
4. Appendix B compares Internal Audit with a smaller group of unitaries made up of councils from the South West region, together with three other former counties which became unitaries at the same time as Wiltshire. The main points to note are that within this smaller group Internal Audit costs in Wiltshire remain below the average, whilst chargeable days per auditor are significantly above average.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

5. No environmental impact arises from issues raised in this report.

Financial Implications

6. Whilst there are no additional costs arising from this proposal, it presents positive evidence of the current value for money provided by the Council's Internal Audit function.

Reasons for the Proposal

7. To present the Audit Committee with benchmarking information for Internal Audit, and thus draw attention to the position of Wiltshire's Internal Audit function in relation to other English unitary councils as a whole, and to a smaller group of unitaries comprising councils from the South West region and other former counties.

Proposal

8. The Audit Committee is asked to note the benchmarking information for Internal Audit in Wiltshire, and its position compared to other English unitary councils (excluding London and Metropolitan councils). Particular points to note are as follows:
 - That for both 2009-10 and 2010-11 the cost of Internal Audit in Wiltshire is significantly below the unitary average, both as a proportion of the Council's overall revenue spending, and in terms of the cost per chargeable audit day.
 - That chargeable audit days are below average in relation to revenue spending, whilst in terms of days per auditor they are at or slightly above the national average.
9. The Committee is also asked to note that we intend to maintain our membership of the CIPFA Audit Benchmarking Club, in order to ensure that updated benchmarking information will continue to be available, and may be presented to future meetings as members wish.

Chief Finance Officer

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Unpublished documents relied upon in the preparation of this Report:

None