

14 June 2023**Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR – FINANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE &
IMPROVEMENT****ASSURANCE MAPPING ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23****Purpose of the Report**

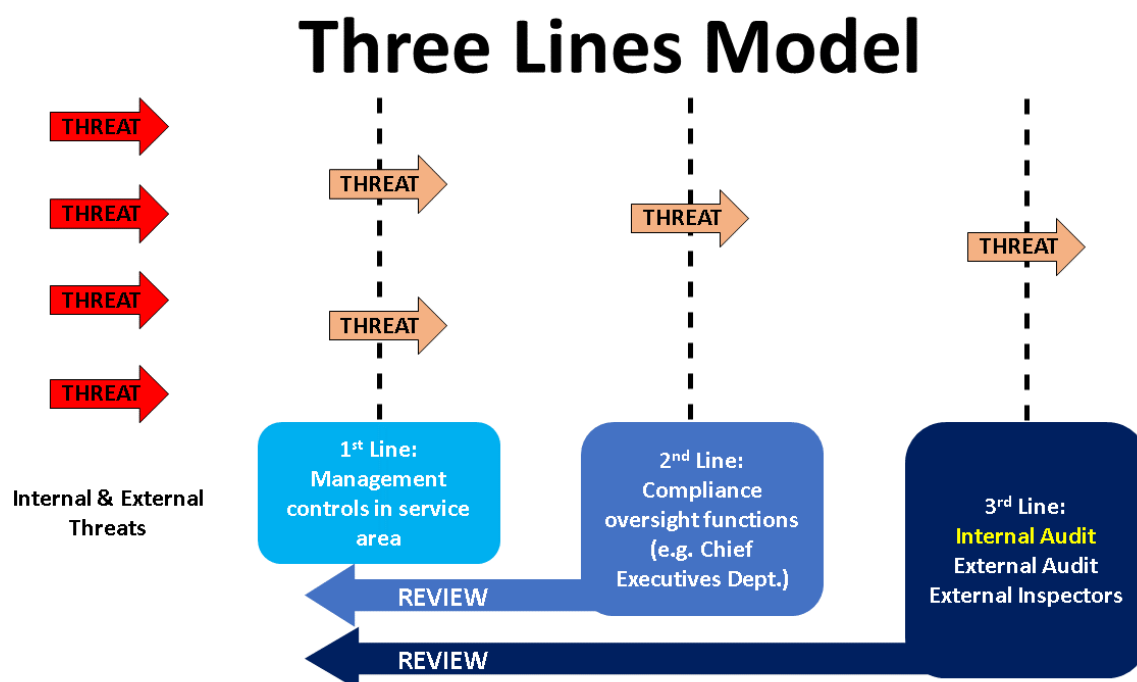
1. To present the outcomes from the assurance mapping work carried out during 2022-23, and to consider the approach for 2023-24.

Information

2. This is the fifth annual assurance mapping report. The benefits of undertaking an annual assurance mapping exercise are:
 - To provide annual assurance to the Council (both the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and the Governance & Ethics Committee) that effective governance arrangements are in place in the areas that matter most to the Council
 - To provide a sound and comprehensive basis for the Annual Governance Statement (AGS)
 - To identify any overlaps or gaps in assurance from all available sources, allowing improvements to be made in co-ordinating efforts in the coming year
 - To inform the Governance & Ethics Committee's work programme
 - To inform the Internal Audit Termly planning process..
3. The remit of the assurance mapping exercise includes the following eight areas:

• Financial management	• Performance management
• Risk management	• Asset management
• People management	• Information governance
• Commissioning and procurement	• Transformation and change

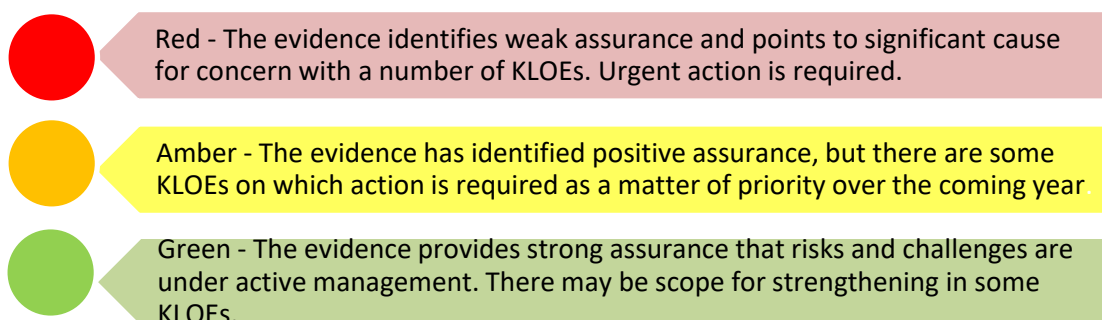
4. For each of these areas, Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) were determined and used to map the sources of assurance available to the Council across its Three Lines Model.



5. This fifth annual report covers the following elements:
- Reporting the evidence gathered from the assurance sources across the three lines model and assessing what assurance can be taken from it about the Council's arrangements for the eight areas of governance.
 - Proposing actions to be taken in 2023/24 to address any concerns identified.
 - Considering the progress made and consolidation of assurance areas for 2023/24.

Assurance mapping outcomes in 2022/23

6. **Appendix 1** presents details of the evidence gathered for each of the eight areas. The evidence for each KLOE is presented across the three lines model. A simple 'Red-Amber-Green (RAG)' rating has been applied, based around the following principles:



Appendix 1 shows the key evidence to support the three lines model and identifies the current status based on the above RAG rating, along with any developments and actions. The key conclusions that may be drawn from this evidence is presented below:

- The Council continues to be fully aware of financial pressures and takes appropriate and effective action to meet them
- There continues to be strong arrangements in place for the effective management of our people
- The Council have sound arrangements in place for commissioning and procurement
- The arrangements in place to manage property assets are sound
- The Council have sound arrangements for information management and information governance
- The approach to corporate risk management continues to be developed but resourcing remains a challenge.

Use of the outcomes from Assurance Mapping

7. One of the primary aims of assurance mapping is to provide annual assurance to the Council that effective governance arrangements are in place in the areas that matter most to the Council
8. Beyond this, the assurance assembled through this process can be put to effective use to inform and direct wider governance activity in the Council. The outcomes of this report have been used as set out below:
 - a) The Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2022/23 – the findings from this year's assurance mapping process have been used as a source of assurance for the statutory AGS.
 - b) Governance & Ethics Committee's work programme – this assurance mapping report provides an important steer for the Committee regarding the areas in which it may wish to seek further assurance in 2023/24.
 - c) Internal Audit Plans – assurance mapping has delivered a clear view of the relative areas of strength and weakness in the governance processes covered by the map. The Team has updated its approach to audit planning and incorporates intelligence gathered from assurance mapping to identify priority needs. The intelligence gathered from this assurance mapping exercise to inform future plans include:
 - considering performance monitoring in relation to the new Council Plan
 - development of the workforce models across all departments
 - delivery of action plans to ensure information management accreditation
 - delivery of objectives for transformation projects.

Proposals for assurance mapping in 2023/24

9. This report represents the fifth year of the assurance mapping exercise and during 2022/23, work on the eight assurance areas has been consolidated by gathering further evidence and representations to support the assurance mapping exercise. The 2022/23 exercise focused on continuing to gather evidence to support the assurance exercise, using the eight assurance areas previously agreed with members.

10. During 2023/24 consideration will be given to how existing and potentially additional assurance areas can be updated and reviewed. This review will take into account the current governance opinion requirements and build on the insight and assurance provided from the newly implemented and developed continuous assurance and risk management processes. Consultation will take place with members and senior officers and proposals for change will be brought back to this committee during the autumn.

Other Options Considered

11. Other options considered included discontinuation of the assurance mapping process. This was rejected as it would deny the Council the benefits of the approach highlighted in this report.

12. Another option considered was to retain the existing scope of the assurance map to cover the eight aspects of governance covered in 2022/23. This was rejected as it would preclude the measured widening of the scope to allow extended benefits to accrue.

Reasons for Recommendations

13. To recognise the benefits that the assurance mapping approach has brought to the Council, along with the improvements that may be made to it. Further, to consolidate the benefits of the approach to the current scope for the 2023/24 assessment.

Statutory and Policy Implications

14. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

15. The assurance map aims to deliver a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk and control framework. This will provide assurance relating to many of the considerations listed above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That the Committee endorse the continued use of assurance mapping process in 2023/24.
- 2) That committee endorse the consolidation of the of the scope of the assurance map for 2023/24 to focus on the existing eight assurance areas.
- 3) That progress against proposed actions to address the issues identified be reported to the Committee as part of quarterly update reports on the Annual Governance Statement.

Nigel Stevenson

Service Director – Finance, Infrastructure and Improvement

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:
Simon Lacey, Chief Internal Auditor**

Constitutional Comments (CH 18/05/2023)

16. Governance and Ethics Committee has the remit to receive and consider this report.

Financial Comments (XXX XX/XX/XXXX)

17. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All