Appendix A

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Internal Audit Service monitoring report: period ended 15 June 2026

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 The Internal Audit Plan for 2026-27 was approved by the Audit Committee in March 2026. This report details the progress to date in undertaking the agreed coverage.

2 Internal audit work undertaken

2.1 To date, four days have been spent this financial year on completion of the 2026-27 plan. The table in section 3 below provides a summary of the assignments that comprise the 2026-27 audit plan.

2.2 Work completed between 1 April and 15 June 2026 for the 2025-26 audit programme is included in the Head of Internal Audit's 2025-26 Annual Report.

2.3 The plan approved by the Audit Committee in March 2026 included the below two audits:

- **Health and Wellbeing** - review how established health and wellbeing arrangements are such as existing policies, training, wellbeing initiatives, and performance monitoring are operating in practice.
- **Contaminants** - review the effectiveness of the controls for managing contaminants, including policies, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and decontamination procedures, and oversight arrangements, checking that the approach to emerging risks like PPE contamination and firefighter cancers is robust, consistently followed, and aligned with current guidance.

  Following approval by the Audit Committee, the Director of Corporate Services advised that the contaminants review had already been covered through the ISO accreditation process. The Director also advised that due to capacity issues, the Health and Wellbeing review could not be progressed at this time.

  The Director of Corporate Services has proposed that these two reviews are replaced with the areas below:

- **Complaints Management Process -** review how complaints are recorded, managed, and responded to, ensuring consistency, fairness, and compliance with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. The review will evaluate controls for complaint logging, investigation, escalation, responses, and adherence to required deadlines across the entire process.
- **Protection** - Review of protection activity including the Risk Based Inspection Programme. The audit would assess whether Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service protection resources and inspection activity are risk-led, efficiently delivered, quality-assured, and effectively monitored to reduce fire risk.

Use of this report

2.4 This report has been prepared solely for the use of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority, and it would therefore not be appropriate for it or extracts from it to be made available to third parties other than the external auditors. We accept no responsibility to any third party who may receive this report, in whole or in part, for any reliance that they may place on it and, in particular, we expect the external auditors to determine for themselves the extent to which they choose to utilise our work.

Progress

Audit review	Audit days			Status	Assurance Opinion
	Planned	Actual	Variation		
Governance and business effectiveness					
Governance	5	0	5	Not started	
Service delivery and support					
Complaints Management Process	11	0	11	Not started	N/A
Protection	11	0	11	Not started	N/A
Business processes					
Accounts Payable	8	0	8	Not started	N/A
Accounts Receivables	8	0	8	Not started	N/A
General Ledger	6	0	6	Not started	N/A
Follow up audit activity					
Follow up activity	8	0	8	Not started	N/A
Other components of the audit plan					
Management activity	11	4	7	Ongoing	
National Fraud Initiative	2	0	2		
Total	**70**	**4**	**66**		

Appendix 1

Audit assurance levels and residual risks

Note that our assurance may address the adequacy of the control framework's design, the effectiveness of the controls in operation, or both. The wording below addresses all of these options and we will refer in our reports to the assurance applicable to the scope of the work we have undertaken.

- **Substantial assurance**: the framework of control is adequately designed and/ or effectively operated overall.
- **Reasonable assurance**: the framework of control is adequately designed and/ or effectively operated overall, but some action is required to enhance aspects of it and/ or ensure that it is effectively operated throughout.
- **Limited assurance**: there are some significant weaknesses in the design and/ or operation of the framework of control that put the achievement of its objectives at risk.
- **No assurance**: there are some fundamental weaknesses in the design and/ or operation of the framework of control that could result in failure to achieve its objectives.

Classification of residual risks requiring management action

All actions agreed with management are stated in terms of the residual risk they are designed to mitigate.

Extreme residual risk: critical and urgent in that failure to address the risk could lead to one or more of the following: catastrophic loss of the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LRFS) services, loss of life, significant environmental damage or significant financial loss, with related national press coverage and substantial damage to the LRFS reputation. Remedial action must be taken immediately.

High residual risk: critical in that failure to address the issue or progress the work would lead to one or more of the following: failure to achieve organisational objectives, significant disruption to the LRFS business or to users of its services, significant financial loss, inefficient use of resources, failure to comply with law or regulations, or damage to the LRFS reputation. Remedial action must be taken urgently.

Medium residual risk: failure to address the issue or progress the work could impact on operational objectives and should be of concern to senior management. Prompt specific action should be taken.

Low residual risk: matters that individually have no major impact on achieving the service's objectives, but when combined with others could give cause for concern. Specific remedial action is desirable.