

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAM 2020-2021

OVERVIEW

The Internal Audit Program for the 2020/2021 financial year takes a systematic risk-based approach to determine the effectiveness of organisational controls and processes for managing the High-Risk Events of non-compliance and fraud and corruption identified in the Strategic Risk Register. It is intended that the findings of this evaluation will inform improvements to the effectiveness of risk management, internal controls, and governance processes.

The Program comprises a set of prioritised audits which cover compliance, fraud and corruption and other risks in selected high-risk focus areas.

APPROACH

Focus areas which make up the scope of the risk-based Internal Audit Program were identified from an analysis of the Town of Victoria Park's Strategic Risk Register (current as at June 2020), addressing the following elements of the Register:

- a) Risk Events
- b) Risk Impact Category
- c) Inherent Risk Rating
- d) Risk Treatment Actions

Inherent High Risk Event	Risk Treatment Action
Non-compliance with Council's	Develop and implement internal audit on compliance and
governance obligations under	performance
the Local Government Act	
Failure to prevent occurrences of	Conduct a regular internal audit on fraud and corruption
fraud and corruption	Conduct regular audits against findings by integrity bodies
	like the CCC, PSC and OAG

The design and approach is based on extensive research, including, but not limited to, the following references:

- a) WA Local Government Operational Guidelines: The operation, function and responsibilities of Audit Committees
- b) Key Western Australian Office of Auditor General (OAG) reports on Fraud Prevention and Information Systems
- c) Public Sector Commission (PSC) WA Integrity Framework
- d) Corruption and Crime Commission (CCC) reports and findings (Western Australia and interstate counterparts)
- e) Industry and international best practice standards, guidance material and articles

SCOPE AND CRITERIA

The scope covers cross-functional audits to be undertaken in the following high-priority focus areas for the 2020-2021 financial year:

- (a) Conflicts of Interest
- (b) Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality
- (c) Misuse of Information
- (d) Information Security
- (e) Reporting of Fraud and Corruption



The Internal Audit Program proposes minimum internal audit criteria for each focus area audit to enable evidence-based assessment of the extent to which the focus areas are being effectively managed by the Town, in compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements, and in alignment with best practice.

AUDIT PLANS

A detailed Audit Plan will be developed for each focus area. The internal audit criteria are subject to review and updates as part of detailed planning for each specific audit, taking into consideration emergent risks, internal and external trends and identified issues as they arise. A responsive, proactive and agile approach to audit planning will ensure currency and relevance, through environmental scanning, research and networking to keep abreast of industry and sector developments and changes in the regulatory environment.

REPORTING AND MONITORING

In line with the Terms of Reference of the Audit and Risk Committee, the findings of each audit will be presented at the first Audit and Risk Committee meeting following the completion of the audit.

Progress against internal audit recommendations will be tracked and a report presented to the Audit and Risk Committee at each quarterly meeting of the Committee.

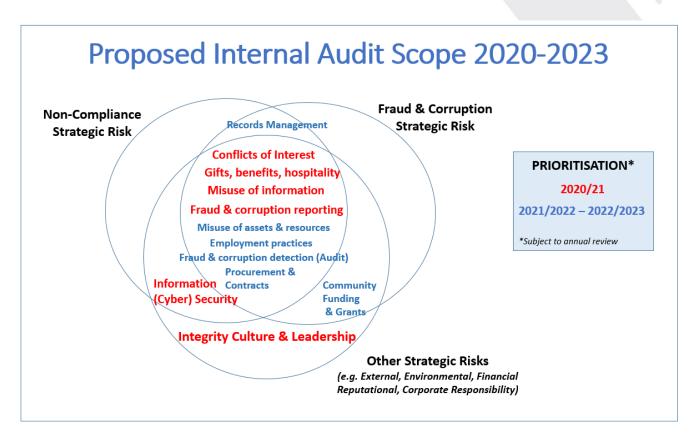
PROBITY

To ensure the probity and integrity of the Internal Audit function, it is recommended that:

- (a) The Internal Audit Program includes an out-sourced independent internal audit of the Internal Audit function in future years.
- (b) Where it is identified that the performance of an internal audit would create a conflict of interest for the Internal Audit function, an out-sourced independent auditor be appointed.

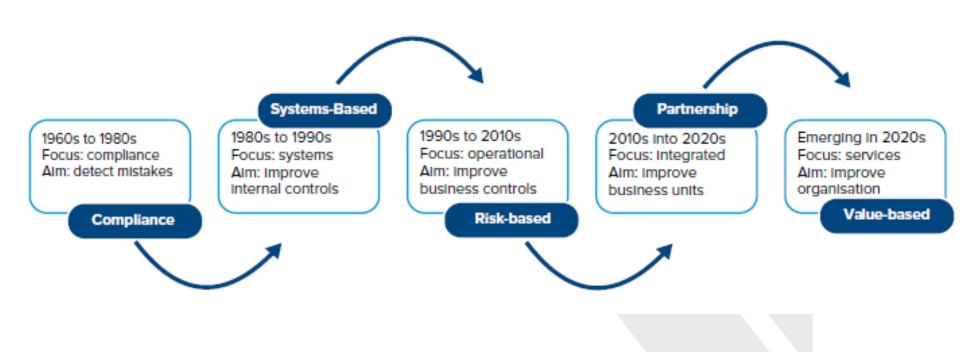
LOOKING FORWARD

While the scope of this Program focuses on 2020-2021 priorities, a multi-year view of internal audit should be considered, with a rolling three-year program (reviewed annually) which proposes future focus areas to be audited for the second and third years. Scope selection in terms of focus areas will be based on assessments of the risk and threat environments undertaken through the strategic risk management function, with the Strategic Risk Register as a starting point.





It is intended that as the Town's internal audit model matures, it will evolve in line with the contemporary view of internal audit as outlined in the Institute of Internal Audit's factsheet "Evolution of Internal Audit", developing accretionally from a compliance-based function to one that helps to drive enterprise-wide value.





SUMMARY INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Schedule	Risk Events Addressed (Strategic Risk Register)	Risk Impact Category (Strategic Risk Register)	Inherent Rating (Strategic Register)	Risk Risk	Focus Area		Description (including rationale and risk drivers)	Suggested Minimum Internal Audit Criteria (Best Practice and Compliance)	Specific References and Legislation
Nov-20	 Failure to detect and prevent occurrences of fraud and corruption Non-compliance with Council's governance obligations under the Local Government Act 	 Financial Reputation Legislative compliance 	HIGH		Conflicts Interest	of	 A conflict of interest (actual, potential or perceived) which is not properly identified, declared or managed, provides opportunities for corruption, placing the Town's finances, reputation and compliance at risk. The need to identify, declare and manage conflicts of interest is central to an effective integrity framework. Common risk areas include: Procurement processes, tenders and contracts Private sector sponsorships Allocation of grants for community-based services Dual roles as a public officer Boards and Committees with representative members Gifts, benefits and hospitality Recruitment Secondary employment. Planning and development applications 	 Compliance with relevant legislation, including the Local Government Act 1995 and Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007 A clear policy position and guidelines on conflicts of interest, which is consistent with legislative provisions and operating environment, with specific guidance on identifying, declaring and managing conflicts of interest. Inclusion of Conflicts of Interest clauses in Code of Conduct which applies to elected members, employees and independent Council Committee members Clear guidance on how to manage conflicts of interest in identified common high-risk functions and activities including procurement and recruitment. Requirement for elected members, employees, independent Council Committee members, consultants and contractors to identify and declare conflicts of interest An actively maintained central conflicts of interest register, which is monitored by a designated officer and/or by the Audit and Risk Committee. Management of conflicts of interest is documented and follow best practice. Inclusion of Conflicts of Interest guidance in Induction programs for elected members, employees and independent Council Committee members. An ongoing integrity-based education, training and awareness program for elected members and employees which addresses conflicts of interest. 	Conflicts of Interest Guidelines for the Western Australia Public Sector Fraud Prevention in Local Government 2019-2020, OAG Public Sector Management Act 1994 Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985 (FAAA) State Supply Commission Act 1991 Local Government Act 1995 and associated Regulations: Regulations: Regulation 11 of Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007 Division 6 of the Local Government Act 1995 'Disclosure of financial interests and gifts'



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							• Regulation 34 (C)(1) Local Government Act (Administration) Regulations 1996
20/21FY Nov-20	Failure to detect and prevent occurrences of fraud and corruption Non-compliance with Council's governance obligations under the Local Government Act	 Financial Reputation Legislative compliance 	HIGH	Gifts, benefits & hospitality	The acceptance of gifts, benefits and hospitality can create perceptions of conflicts of interest and that an employee's integrity has been compromised. This is recognised in the Local Government Act.	with relevant provisions of the Local Government Act and associated regulations and the DLGSC Gifts Policy Position	DLGSC Local Government Act Review Gifts Policy Position Fraud Prevention in Local Government 2019-2020, OAG S.5.87A, 5.87B, 5.89A of the Local Government Act 1995 'Disclosure of financial interests and gifts' Regulation 34B of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996



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						 employee is likely to make decisions, including current or prospective suppliers. Prohibition of the acceptance of monetary gifts or gratuities by elected members and employees regardless of their value. Central monitoring and oversighting of gifts, benefits and hospitality registers, including oversight by the Audit and Risk Committee, to identify potential trends and patterns, including possible vulnerabilities in relation to particular individuals and organisations. Gifts, benefits and hospitality registers are publicly available, in the interests of transparency and accountability. Breaches are documented, reported and managed appropriately. Escalations, controls, feedback loops and remedial actions are recorded and documented. Value thresholds are actively monitored, with alerts in place before thresholds are reached. The topic of gifts, benefits and hospitality is included in a corporate integrity-based education, training and awareness program for elected members and employees. 	
20/21FY Feb-21	Failure to detect and prevent occurrences of fraud and corruption Non-compliance with Council's governance obligations under the Local Government Act	 Financial Reputation Legislative compliance 	HIGH	Misuse of Information	 Information misuse, i.e. unauthorised information access and disclosure, is highlighted as a risk in fraud and corruption prevention policies and plans. High risk vulnerable areas for unauthorised information access and disclosure include: Information made under Council Information	 Established policies and procedures are in place relevant to the appropriate use of information and information systems, including policies on information management, confidentiality and privacy. A stand-alone information security policy which addresses confidentiality, integrity and unauthorised access to sensitive information. Providing guidance on the appropriate use of council information and information systems, and/or the importance of privacy and 	Regulation 6 of Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007 – Use of Information



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					levels of access to information, such as system administrators or IT specialists). • Procurement • Human Resources • Planning and development applications	 confidentiality in employee codes of conduct. Elected members and staff are made aware of, and formally acknowledge their obligations and due of care regarding sharing and disclosure of sensitive and confidential information, as part of an induction program and annual integrity training. New employees are required to sign information confidentiality agreements when they commence employment with the council. Members of tender evaluation panels or contractors and consultants who are engaged to evaluate or supervise contracts are required to sign confidentiality agreements. Contractors must understand their obligation to maintain confidentiality of council information, and to comply with the council's privacy policy and the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003. Requiring employees involved in activities which involve access to information and have a heightened risk of corruption, such as procurement, to formally acknowledge they understand and comply with confidentiality obligations. Processes are in place to detect, report and manage breaches and misconduct relating to the misuse of information. Processes include escalations and remedial actions. 	
20/21FY Feb-21	Failure to detect and prevent occurrences of fraud and corruption	FinancialReputationLegislative compliance	HIGH	Information Security	Information security and cyber risk is an increasing risk area in public organisations due to: • Changes in the threat landscape • Rapid changes in technology	 The Town's cybersecurity risk assessment, processes, and controls, are reviewed, using industry standards as a guide, with recommendations for improvements Assessment of implementation of revised security models, such as 	OAG Information Systems Audit Report - State Government entities, April 2020 Australian



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					 Changing regulatory environments Social change impacting on employee work behaviours Capabilities and techniques used by hackers The OAG conducts an annual Information Systems Audit of State Government entities and recommends that entities: Ensure good security practices are implemented, up-to-date, regularly tested, and enforced for key computer systems. Conduct ongoing reviews and monitoring of user access to information to ensure they are appropriate at all times Develop and implement mechanisms to continually raise information and cyber security awareness and practices among all staff. The OAG also recommends that In the current pandemic environment, controls around remote IT access infrastructure will also need to be an area of priority as entities increasingly support staff to work in more flexible ways in response to current public health measures for the COVID-19 virus. 	multilayered defences, enhanced detection methods and encryption of data leaving the network Implementation of a robust employee training and education program Assessment of third-party security providers to determine the extent and adequacy of their demonstrated cyber risk management capability, policies and controls.	Government Information Security Manual AS/NZS ISO/IEC 27000 series – Information Security Management
20/21 FY May-21	Failure to detect and prevent occurrences of fraud and corruption	FinancialReputationLegislative compliance	HIGH	Fraud and Corruption Detection (Reporting) In conjunction with Integrity Leadership soft	integrity frameworks include mechanisms to help councils prevent and detect potentially corrupt conduct in a timely	Comprehensive protected disclosure/whistleblowing policy and procedures, consistent with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003 and Public Sector Commission (PSC) guidelines and Corruption and Crime Commission (CCC) findings.	Public Interest Disclosure Guidelines for Public Authorities PID Officers Code of Conduct, PSC August 2014



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				audit	management policies, corruption and fraud control frameworks, and policies and procedures in relation to identified corruption risks to form an integrity framework. Detection mechanisms include effective reporting procedures for employees and others (including members of the public and suppliers) and strong auditing practices.	 Relevant policies and procedures outline both internal and external channels for employees to report suspected fraud and corruption (including employees' ability to report to CCC directly. Reporting processes are well advertised, and include anonymous options. Broad application of the council's whistleblowing /protected disclosure procedures to include employees, elected members, volunteers, contractors, consultants and independent Council Committee members. Examples of corrupt and improper conduct provided in relevant policies and procedures to help employees better understand the types of conduct that should be reported and may be assessed as a protected disclosure. Appointment of a welfare officer to support disclosers or a person who is the subject of the disclosure. Centralised reporting system which can only be accessed by authorised employees to ensure confidentiality and minimise the risk of reprisals. Clear statement of the responsibility of the council CEO to mandatorily report suspected corrupt conduct to CCC, in relevant policies and procedures. 	Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003 Integrity Strategy for WA Public Authorities 2020- 2023 Victorian IBAC reports and findings
20/21 FY May-21	Failure to detect and prevent occurrences of fraud and corruption (Prevention)	 Financial Reputation Legislative compliance 	MEDIUM-HIGH	Integrity Leadership & Culture (Soft integrity audit / WA Integrity Snapshot Tool) In conjunction with Fraud and Corruption	against fraud and corruption risks. Without good ethical leadership, corrupt behaviours and practices can be rationalised and engrained into the culture of the organisation with no regard for adverse consequences. Likewise, poor	 Statements from the CEO are included in employee codes of conduct to emphasise the importance of understanding and complying with the code, and using it to guide ethical decision making. Promotion of an ethical organisational culture, including a zero tolerance approach to breaches of conduct in relation to fraud, corruption, bullying, 	



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				Detection (Reporting) audit	conduct. An important element of integrity education is to ensure that all employees understand what constitutes corrupt conduct and are aware of corruption risks, as well as how to report suspected corrupt conduct. Transparency of the Town's code of conduct and service delivery standards ensures that the community is aware of these standards and expectations, in order to hold all Town personnel accountable, and to discourage external attempts to engage and implicate employees in corrupt conduct. This also encourages community reporting of corruption.	organisation to have overall responsibility for fraud and corruption control, including reporting to the executive team and Audit and Risk Committees. Nomination of senior officers to be responsible for protected disclosures and welfare management in the organisation.	
TBC (Post 20/21 FY)	Failure to detect and prevent occurrences of fraud and corruption Non-compliance with Council's governance obligations under the Local Government Act	 Financial Reputation Legislative compliance 	MEDIUM	Employment Practices	Employment practices are vulnerable to corruption including recruitment compromised by nepotism, conflicts of interest and inadequate pre-employment screening. This can result in the recycling of employees with problematic discipline and criminal histories. Councils are required under the Local Government Act to ensure employment decisions are based on merit and that employees have avenues of redress against unfair or unreasonable treatment.	compliance with relevant provisions of the Local Government Act and regulations. Pre-employment • A range of pre-employment screening checks, particularly for high risk positions, including police checks, working with children checks, reference checks, verification of qualifications, currency of professional memberships and proof of eligibility to work.	Public Sector Standards in Human Resource Management s.21 Public Sector Management Act 1994



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			Register)			and another for a selection 12.1	
						are applying for positions which are	
						considered high risk. Considering	
						additional pre-employment screening processes for high risk positions such as	
						bankruptcy checks, credit history checks	
						and psychometric screening.	
						Selection	
						Recruitment panel members are	
						required to withdraw from a panel	
						where a conflict of interest, either	
						personal or professional in nature, exists	
						or is perceived to exist.	
						Maintaining confidentiality of council	
						information, particularly where an	
						employee's secondary employment may	
						be with an organisation that interacts	
						with the council.	
						Secondary employment and conflicts	
						Clear articulation in policy or guidelines	
						that secondary employment can create a	
						conflict of interest and therefore	
						approval is required to undertake	
						external employment; failure to do so	
						may result in disciplinary action.	
						Prohibiting council employees from working for the council under contract	
						working for the council under contract	
						arrangements (i.e. employees cannot act as staff and suppliers simultaneously).	
						CEO and Executive employment	
						An advisory committee (with an	
						independent chair) advising council on	
						matters of CEO performance, contract	
						extensions remuneration matters and	
						recruitment.	
						Extension of Executive and Senior	
						Management contracts is subject to	
						performance-based criteria,	
						independently assessed.	
TBC (Post	Failure to detect and	Financial	MEDIUM	Community	Funding providers have to ensure	Clear policies and guidelines governing	The Administration
20/21 FY)	prevent occurrences of	 Reputation 		Funding	& due diligence and probity in the	the lifecycle of the grants administration	of Government
	fraud and corruption	 Legislative 		Grants	administration of grants and other		Grants: Inquiry into
		compliance			funding and sponsorships. This is	disbursement and review.	<u>Auditor-General's</u>
	Non-compliance with Council's				an area which is vulnerable to		Reports (2019-20)



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	governance obligations under the Local Government Act				conflicts of interest and corruption risks, as evidenced by the Federal Parliamentary inquiry into the administration of government grants relating to poor accountability and transparency in the decision-making for granting of funds to community and non-profit organisations.	clear terms of reference	
TBC (Post 20/21 FY)	Failure to detect and prevent occurrences of fraud and corruption Non-compliance with Council's governance obligations under the Local Government Act	 Financial Reputation Legislative compliance 	MEDIUM	Misuse of Assets & Resources		 appropriate use of council assets and resources including policies on the use of motor vehicles, fuel cards, corporate credit cards, management and disposal of assets. There is a range of controls to mitigate the risk of misuse of motor vehicles, fuel cards and corporate credit cards. 	CCC report on Misconduct Risk in Local Government Procurement



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TBC (Post 20/21 FY)	Failure to detect and prevent occurrences of fraud and corruption Non-compliance with Council's governance obligations under the Local Government Act		(Strategic Ris	Detection & Reporting (Audit) Note: Must be outsourced to avoid conflicts of interest	While reporting mechanisms are essential to provide opportunities for employees, community members and others to advise councils of	 Ensuring all decisions regarding asset disposal are documented, even if assets are disposed via donation to not-for-profit organisations or charities. The internal audit program is strategically integrated with fraud and corruption controls and planning, and is reviewed and updated regularly annually to ensure audit plans cover a range of fraud and corruption issues. 	
						responsibility for corruption prevention and how that responsibility will be given effect.	



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TBC (Post	Failure to detect and	 Financial 	HIGH	Procurement	Poor procurement practices that	 Good procurement policies and 	OAG Report into
20/21 FY)	prevent occurrences of	 Reputation 		Note:	ignore principles of probity,	guidelines,	Local Government
	fraud and corruption	 Legislative 		Operational	accountability and transparency		<u>Procurement</u>
		compliance		Review 2020	expose the organisation to	 Appropriate training is provided to staff 	CCC report on
	Non-compliance with Council's				procurement risks and jeopardise	 Controls over raising and approving 	Misconduct Risk in
	governance obligations under				the delivery of good outcomes for	purchase orders	Local Government
	the Local Government Act				ratepayers. When procurement	~ ~	<u>Procurement</u>
					processes are not followed, or	services when receiving them	OAG Report into
					local governments are seen not to	 Appropriate segregation of duties 	Local Government
					be acting in the best interests of	,	Contract Extensions
					their communities, they face	well documented and justified.	and Variations and
					reputational damage and expose	 Recording of tender processes and 	Ministerial Notice
					themselves to the risk of fraud and	conflict of interests	Not Required, May
					misconduct.	 Supplier credentials are checked, 	<u>2020</u>
					The OAG report into Local	particularly for high-risk or high value	
					Government procurement	purchases, including:	
					highlighted weaknesses in	 Confirm ABN 	
					procurement controls, processes	 Confirm directors are not 	
					and documentation.	bankrupt or disqualified.	
TBC (Post		 Reputation 	LOW	Records	To be completed	 To be completed 	
20/21 FY)	Non-compliance with Council's	 Legislative 		Management			
	governance obligations under	compliance		Note: Internal			
	the Local Government Act			audit performed			
				in 2017			



RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1995 and associated regulations

- Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996
- Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007
- Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996
- Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996
- Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019 Consolidated

REFERENCES

<u>Terms of Reference - Audit and Risk Committee</u>

<u>Strategic Risk Register</u>

Risk Management Framework

Public Sector Commission

- Integrity Strategy for WA Public Authorities 2020-2023
- Integrity Snapshot Tool for WA Public Authorities

WA Office of Auditor General (OAG)

- Report on Fraud Prevention in Local Government, August 2019
- Information Systems Audit Report State Government entities, April 2020
- Report into Local Government Procurement, October 2018

WA Corruption and Crime Commission (CCC)

- Report into misconduct risks with access to confidential information in the Office of the Auditor General, April 2020
- Review of an inadequate investigation by the Department of Communities into allegations of bribery, April 2020
- Review of recommendations made following unauthorised release of confidential information from the Public Transport Authority, February 2020
- Review of recommendations made to Department of Transport arising from three reports, October 2019
- Report into how conflicts of interest undermine good governance A report on the Chief Executive Officer of the Shire of Halls Creek, August 2018
- Report into Allegations of Serious Misconduct by Councillors of the City of Perth between 21 and 24 October 2017
- Report on Matters of Serious Misconduct in the Shire of Exmouth. May 2017
- Report on a Matter of Governance at the Shire of Dowerin, October 2016
- Report on City of Perth Lord Mayor (gifts and travel contributions), October 2015
- CCC report on Misconduct Risk in Local Government Procurement, February 2015

WA Local Government Accounting Manual – Section 7 Internal Control Framework

WA Local Government Operational Guidelines: The operation, function and responsibilities of Audit Committees

Internal Audit in Australia, Institute of Internal Auditors



Victorian Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC)

- Local Government Integrity Frameworks Review March 2019
- Controlling fraud and corruption: a prevention checklist

Queensland Department of Local Government guidance on IA and Audit Committees

NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Internal Audit Guidelines for Local Councils

Institute of Internal Audit

- Internal Audit in Australia
- Effective Internal Auditing in the Public Sector A Good Practice Guide
- International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing
- International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF)
- <u>Factsheet: Evolution of Internal Audit</u>

KPMG

- Top 10 Internal Audit considerations in 2020
- Internal Audit: Understanding the audit universe and the journey to risk maturity
- ICAS Risk Maturity Matrix with Audit Tests

PWC

• The 8 Attributes of Successful Internal Audit Functions

Australian Standard AS 8001-2008 Fraud and Corruption Control (the Standard

