Internal Audit Strategy

The Global Internal Audit Standards Standard 9.2 requires auditors to develop and implement an Internal Audit Strategy. The Strategy should set the medium-term direction for internal audit, support organisational objectives and align with Audit Committee and senior management expectations. It should set out:

- The service's vision
- Its strategic objectives and
- Initiatives for how the objectives will be achieved.

The Strategy is distinct from the Annual Plan, which covers a shorter period and specific engagements supporting the Annual Opinion.

Read SWAP's Business Plan
At This Link

How SWAP Addresses the Strategy Requirement

SWAP's **Five-Year Business Plan (2025-2030)** satisfies the Standards requirement for an Internal Audit Strategy. This plan outlines our strategic vision and details how we intend to develop and provide internal audit and assurance services throughout the five-year timeframe, including key objectives and the initiatives necessary to accomplish them. The Business Plan received unanimous approval from our Owner-Partners in December 2025.

Alignment to Dorset Council's Strategic Objectives

We designed our Business Plan around partner priorities and risks. In general, the Business Plan supports delivery of strategic objectives by aligning audit coverage, insight and capability to those priorities, for example:

SWAP Objective	How this supports Dorset's Strategic Priorities
Anticipatory Service Offer	Keeps assurance focused on Dorset's biggest emerging risks across housing, economy, communities and climate priorities
Partnership Benefits	Strengthens engagement and reporting so audit work stays aligned to Dorset's four priorities and delivery programmes
Standards-Conforming Work	Improves consistency and confidence in assurance over governance and controls underpinning Dorset's priority outcomes
Data-Driven Decisions	Enables insight-led planning and clearer reporting on risk and performance supporting Dorset's delivery of priorities
Well-Governed Controls	Provides assurance that core controls support safe, compliant and efficient delivery of Dorset's housing, economy, communities and climate aims

Monitoring the Business Plan

We monitor Business Plan delivery through SWAP's governance. Oversight by an Executive Leadership team led by SWAP's Chief Executive, regular reporting and challenge by our Board and biannual Owners' meetings including representatives from every Partner organisation to review progress and agree material updates.