Warwickshire County Council

Environmental Management System

Internal Environmental Audit Process
EMP 08

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Prepared by	Issue	Date	Page 1 of 5
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Approved by Steve M. Smith	Head of Property Services – Resources Group	Review Date Sept 2018	

1. Purpose and Scope

This procedure has been generated to provide assurance that WCC's Internal Environmental Auditing system is robust, covers applicable WCC activities and conforms to the requirements of both the Environmental Management Policy and the ISO14001 standard.

2. Legislation

Evaluation of compliance with legal and other compliance obligations is a key function of the Internal Environmental Audit programme. Legislation applicable to the service or activity being audited can be found within the Environmental Legislation Matrix which is available on the intranet and is cross referenced on the internal environmental audit schedule.

3. Introduction

WCC carries out internal environmental audits with the following objectives:

- To evaluate compliance with applicable environmental legislation and other compliance obligations, including corporate requirements;
- To evaluate compliance to the ISO14001 standard;
- To identify areas for environmental improvement;
- To identify good practice which can be shared with other relevant groups;
- To identify instances of nonconformity and relevant corrective and / or preventive actions required to address the issues raised;
- To help determine the root cause(s) for issues raised; and
- To determine if the methods in place for monitoring and measuring environmental performance are satisfactory.

WCC has a robust internal environmental audit programme in place which is managed by the EMS Manager. Audits are facilitated and carried out by the WCC Internal Environmental Audit Team. The Audit Team is multi-disciplined and has experience of various WCC operations. Auditors are selected to ensure objectivity and impartiality. Where required expertise from outside the internal audit team will be engaged to support the audit process.

Results of audits and compliance status are reported to Heads of Service in the quarterly environmental briefing / management review.

4. Definition of Terms

Environmental Aspect – an element of the activities or services of WCC that can interact with the environment, and where WCC has an ability to minimise

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the risk. Environmental aspects can be either direct or indirect.

Direct Aspect – an environmental issue arising from an activity undertaken by the organisation over which it has complete control.

Indirect Aspect – an environmental issue arising from an activity undertaken by the organisation over which it does not have complete control (e.g. subcontracted activities).

Environmental Impact - any change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, that takes place as a result of WCC activities or services.

Internal Audit - 'systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining audit evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the environmental management system audit criteria set down by the organisation are fulfilled.' (ISO14001 definition)

Audit Schedule – a programme to ensure that the complete audit cycle provides a representative sample of the activities undertaken by the organisation.

Audit Criteria – the areas identified against which performance is measured in an audit.

Nonconformity - This is usually one of the following:

- a deliberate/accidental breach/disregard of legal or other requirements
- a failure to manage an environmental risk
- a deliberate/accidental breach/disregard of policy or procedures

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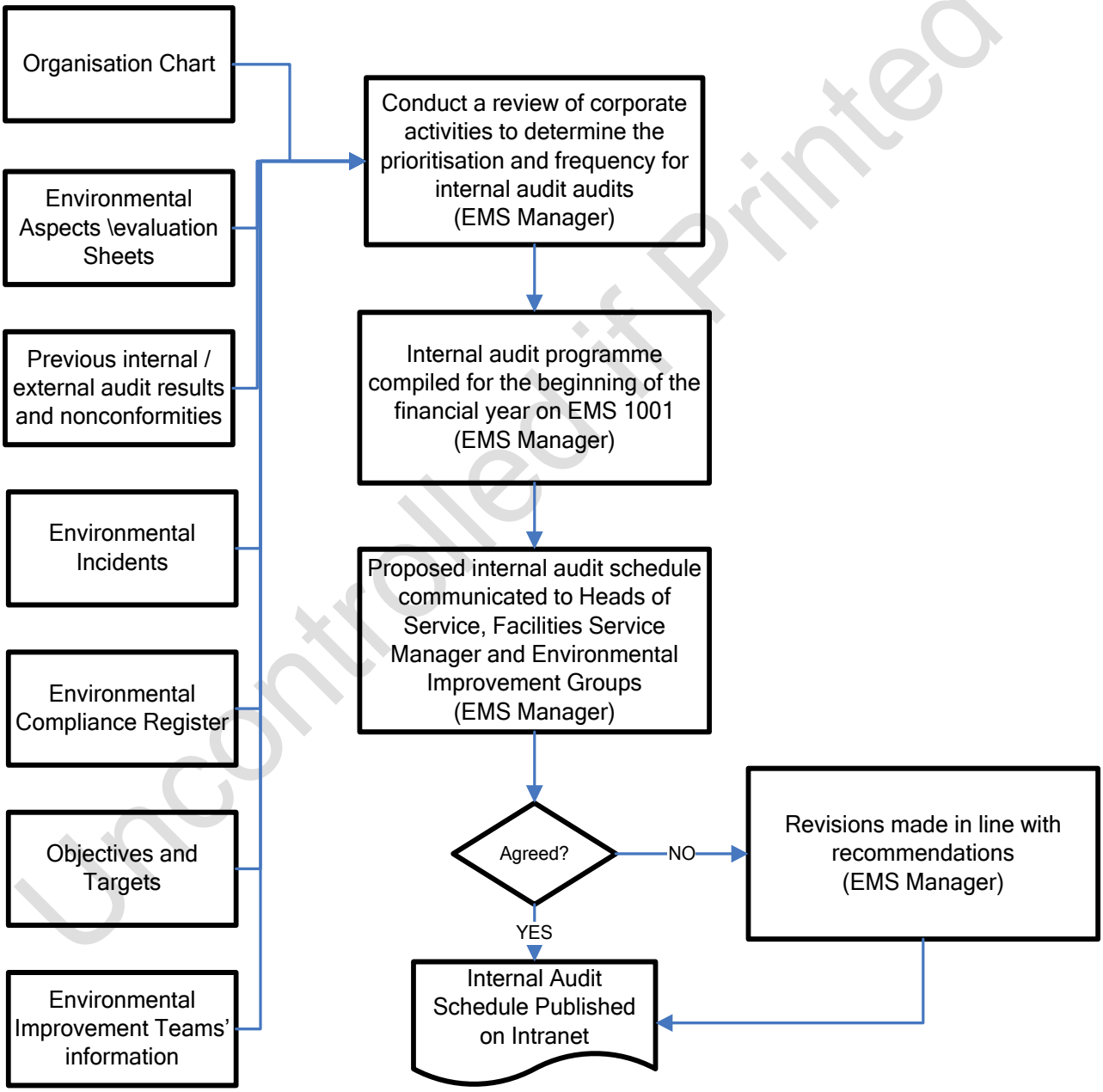
5. Procedure

The following flowcharts detail the processes regarding Internal Environmental Auditing.

5.1- Internal audit planning – Determining the internal audit programme



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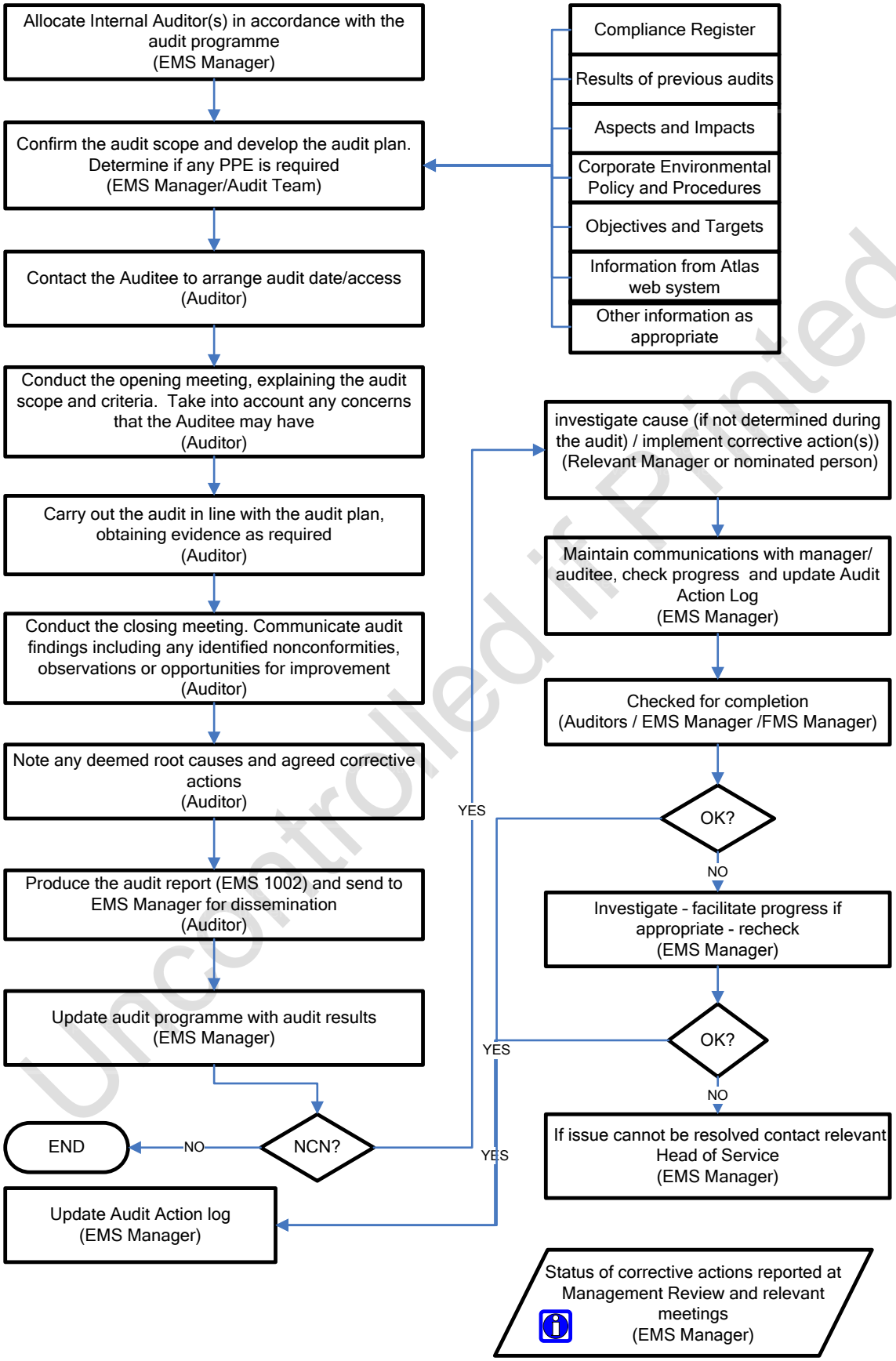
The internal audit programme is a 'live' document which is revised according to the needs of the organisation throughout the audit cycle.

5.2 Internal Audit Execution – Conducting the audit and progressing corrective actions



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