

Runnymede Borough Council

Internal Audit Progress Report for Outstanding Recommendations

2022-23

September 2022

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. This summary report provides the Standards and Audit Committee with an update on the progress in implementing the priority 1, 2 and 3 recommendations arising in previous internal audit reports.
2. This follow up review was carried out in August 2022. Since the previous follow up review was carried out (June 2022), 8 recommendations have reached their initial or revised target implementation date, and status updates have also been sought for the additional 6 recommendations previously reported as outstanding.

Key Findings & Action Points

3. The follow up review considered whether the management action taken addresses the control issues that gave rise to the recommendations. The implementation of these recommendations can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance against misstatement or loss. From the work carried out the following evaluations of the progress of the management actions taken to date have been identified.

Evaluation	Number of Recommendations
Implemented	6
Outstanding	8
No Longer Applicable	0
Not Implemented	0

4. For the six recommendations that have been confirmed as implemented, no further action is necessary and specific details have not been included in this report
5. For the eight recommendations classified as Outstanding, these will continue to be periodically monitored, and details relating to the specific recommendations in these cases have been included in the Detailed Findings section below.
6. Four of the outstanding recommendations relate to the previous Depot audit. As previously reported, it was confirmed that the new Head of Service for this area is making progress with implementing the recommendations, including obtaining recent agreement for the refurbishment and upgrade of the Depot prior to grounds maintenance and green spaces services being relocated and delivered in house from the depot premises in April 2023. However, as these recommendations are not yet fully implemented they continue to be included in the Detailed Findings section below. The Depot is subject to a separate, full follow up review during 2022/23 (currently scheduled to commence in October 2022) and therefore these recommendations will be considered as part of that review.



Scope and Limitations of the Review

7. The review considers the progress made in implementing the recommendations made in the previous internal audit reports and to establish the extent to which management has taken the necessary actions to address the control issues that gave rise to the internal audit recommendations.
8. The responsibility for a sound system of internal controls rests with management and work performed by internal audit should not be relied upon to identify all strengths and weaknesses that may exist. Neither should internal audit work be relied upon to identify all circumstances of fraud or irregularity, should there be any, although the audit procedures have been designed so that any material irregularity has a reasonable probability of discovery. Even sound systems of internal control may not be proof against collusive fraud.
9. For the purposes of this review reliance was placed on management to provide internal audit with full access to staff and to accounting records and transactions and to ensure the authenticity of these documents.

Release of Report

10. The table below sets out the history of this report.

Date final report issued:	September 2022
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Detailed Findings

Follow Up

11. Management representations were obtained on the action taken to address the recommendations and limited testing has been carried out to confirm these management representations. The following matters were identified in considering the recommendations that have not been fully implemented:

12. Depot

Audit title	Depot	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	1
Recommendation	The Depot create its own risk register to identify the key risks associated with the Depot and how these are being controlled and managed.				
Initial management response	<p>The recommendation raised in the previous report was for a separate risk register for the depot be 'considered'. This was then agreed by the then DSO manager with a target date of 1 July 2018. Follow up of this in Oct 2019 found this remained outstanding and it was subsequently brought to the attention of the new DSO manager in Dec 2019 with a revised date for action being agreed with the CHoES of April 2020. Revised further to April 2021 as a direct impact of Covid and awaiting the outcome of the 'depot feasibility study' commenced in Feb 2020 but also delayed for the same reason.</p> <p>New implementation date set to allow for outcome of on-going H&S risk assessments report.</p>				
Responsible Officer/s	DSO Manager /CHoES	Original implementation date	30/09/21	Revised implementation date	TBC
Latest Update	<p>It was advised by the Depot Manager that there have been no further developments since the previous audit due to unfilled vacancies (nearly 1/3 of the staff) within the office staff at the depot. Due to the limited amount of staff available to run and deliver the daily operations all the staff time has been devoted to ensuring the operations are run and delivered in continually difficult times.</p> <p>The Depot is subject to a separate, full follow up review during 2022/23 and therefore this recommendation will be considered as part of that review.</p>				
Status	Outstanding				

Audit title	Depot	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	2
Recommendation	The security at the Depot be reviewed and appropriate action taken to keep the site secure by use of both physical security measures (a working gate) and via adequate surveillance.				

Initial management response	These are both longstanding issues and indicative of a lack of regular maintenance and investment by the authority into what are ailing facilities. Both are included in the current depot feasibility study and require financial investment to rectify.					
Responsible Officer/s	DSO Manager / Corporate Head of Environmental Services	Original implementation date	Long term remedy dependent of the outcome of the feasibility study due to report in Sept 2021.	Revised implementation date	TBC	
Latest Update	It was advised by the Depot Manager that there have been no further developments since the previous audit due to unfilled vacancies (nearly 1/3 of the staff) within the office staff at the depot. Due to the limited amount of staff available to run and deliver the daily operations all the staff time has been devoted to ensuring the operations are run and delivered in continually difficult times. The Depot is subject to a separate, full follow up review during 2022/23 and therefore this recommendation will be considered as part of that review.					
Status	Outstanding					

Audit title	Depot	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	3	
Recommendation	Consideration be given to the purchase of the optimisation route package.					
Initial management response	Agreed. Finance was sought for this upgrade by the DSO but not forthcoming due to present financial pressures. A report to be made to the relevant committee requesting funding to upgrade the system.					
Responsible Officer/s	DSO Manager /CHoES	Original implementation date	30/09/21	Revised implementation date	TBC	
Latest Update	It was advised by the Depot Manager that there have been no further developments since the previous audit due to unfilled vacancies (nearly 1/3 of the staff) within the office staff at the depot. Due to the limited amount of staff available to run and deliver the daily operations all the staff time has been devoted to ensuring the operations are run and delivered in continually difficult times. The Depot is subject to a separate, full follow up review during 2022/23 and therefore this recommendation will be considered as part of that review.					
Status	Outstanding					

Audit title	Depot	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	3	
Recommendation	Detailed stock take procedures be documented and a re-order level established, where appropriate.					

Initial management response	Noted.				
Responsible Officer/s	DSO Manager /CHoES	Original implementation date	30/09/21	Revised implementation date	TBC
Latest Update	<p>It was advised by the Depot Manager that there have been no further developments since the previous audit due to unfilled vacancies (nearly 1/3 of the staff) within the office staff at the depot. Due to the limited amount of staff available to run and deliver the daily operations all the staff time has been devoted to ensuring the operations are run and delivered in continually difficult times.</p> <p>The Depot is subject to a separate, full follow up review during 2022/23 and therefore this recommendation will be considered as part of that review.</p>				
Status	Outstanding				



13. ICT – Mobile Device Security Management

Audit title	<u>Mobile Device Security Management</u>	Audit year	2018/19	Priority	2
Recommendation	A more regular review schedule be put in place for all policies and procedure documents relating to Mobile Device Management, with additional detail to be added to the current Mobile Device Management policies as per the report text.				
Initial management response	Agreed, the policies will be updated as the contracts come up for review moving forward but all will be done by the end of the calendar year.				
Responsible Officer/s	Infrastructure and Security Manager	Original implementation date	31.12.19 (subsequently March 2021, then March 2022, then June 2022)	Revised implementation date	31.10.22
Latest Update	It was advised that the policies have been written but require formal approval. The Chief Executive has requested for these to be reviewed via the Transformation Working Group, however agreed dates had not been received from the leader on the meeting. It was therefore suggested to move the implementation date to October 2022 as the policies cannot be rolled out until have been approved.				
Status	Outstanding			A revised target date has been set.	

Audit title	<u>Mobile Device Security Management</u>	Audit year	2018/19	Priority	2
Recommendation	Regular risk assessments of their mobile devices and installed software be implemented and scheduled.				
Initial management response	Whilst the recommendation is noted, it will be difficult to implement particularly for staff who have their own devices which they then have access to their work e-mails on. All staff sign up to the Council’s ICT protocol and the Member protocol has also been reviewed so everyone is aware of the risks around data security and loss. Management will consider how security can be improved without conducting onerous risk assessments on staffs’ personal devices.				
Responsible Officer/s	Infrastructure and Security Manager	Original implementation date	31.03.20 (subsequently March 2021, then March 2022, then June 2022)	Revised implementation date	31.10.22

<p>Latest Update</p>	<p>With regards to the risk assessments it was advised that new software for supporting remote management of devices (Intune) is installed on the majority of devices and this is an ongoing piece of work with staff working remotely to get them to have the software installed. The existing mobile phone contract is also being reviewed where the Council will be streamlining devices. This is due for renewal at the end of September.</p>	
<p>Status</p>	<p>Outstanding</p>	<p>A revised target date has been set.</p>



14. Procurement

Audit title	Procurement	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	2
Recommendation	Buying Managers be reminded of the need to comply with the Council’s Standing Orders in all cases. Where necessary, training needs be identified as part of the 1-2-1 / appraisal process.				
Initial management response	<p>1.Take to SLT as an agenda item- this needs to come from CLT.</p> <p>2.Email to all staff regarding Contract Standing Orders and Staff Pages for information on Procurement and offer of training.</p>				
Responsible Officer/s	1.Chief Executive 2.Corporate Procurement	Original implementation date	1.TBC Autumn 2021 SLT are carrying a number of posts vacant and therefore needs to be actioned once new postholders are onboarded. 2.Autumn 2021 once Staff Home issues have been resolved for Procurement Pages	Revised implementation date	30.09.22
Latest Update	<p>The timeframe had previously been revised to Q1 2022/23 due to the timing of new appointments to the posts of Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Head of Environmental Services.</p> <p>A Managers briefing slide set has been prepared to present to SLT and Buying Managers. As the Finance team also want to carry out a briefing regarding the Financial Regulations, it has been decided that it would be beneficial for these to be carried out at the same time, and this is likely to be September 2022.</p> <p>A training slide set has also been prepared based on the Briefing slide set above to be coordinated and consistent in message. It was advised that the communication of training sessions will commence from September 2022.</p>				
Status	Outstanding			A revised target date has been set.	

Audit title	Procurement	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	3
Recommendation	Procurement Strategy and associated policies be finalised at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the overall vision, direction and priorities for the Council's procurement activities are clearly communicated.				
Initial management response	Needs to be reflective of the Council's strategies for Climate Change, Prosperous Economy and Health and Wellbeing Corporate Themes that are being developed and drafted with deadline of Nov '21. Review and revise draft Procurement Strategy in light of these emerging strategies.				
Responsible Officer/s	Head of Business Planning, Projects and Performance	Original implementation date	Q1 2022/23	Revised implementation date	TBC
Latest Update	It was originally envisaged that this would be a task for a new Procurement Manager post. However, it was subsequently agreed in March 2022 that the new Procurement Manager post would be kept vacant during 2022 whilst options for the future provision of procurement is investigated. The task would therefore be completed by the Head of Business Planning, Projects and Performance however resource capacity is an issue. Recruitment to a permanent Procurement Officer post has failed three times and the Interim Procurement Officer was due to leave the Council in August. As a result, resource capacity in the team to deliver on ongoing procurements is stretched. It was advised that the Strategy review is underway but is taking longer due to resources. A revised timeframe for completion was not provided.				
Status	Outstanding			Implementation is in progress.	

