

Runnymede Borough Council

Follow Up Review – Depot

2022/23

October 2022

Executive Summary

Introduction/Background

1. This follow up review by TIAA established the management action that has been taken in respect of the recommendations arising from the Depot internal audit review carried out in 2020/21, which was given an overall assessment of Limited Assurance. The follow up review was carried out in October 2022.

It was advised that the DSO team has been under resourced since the end of 2019. Since the last audit a new Corporate Head of Environmental Services was appointed at the beginning of the financial year. A new Health and Safety Officer for the DSO team has recently been appointed, and a new Operations Manager for the DSO team has been appointed and is due to start in November 2022. In addition, the grounds maintenance function of the Council is due to form part of the DSO services shortly and therefore incorporation of these elements would need to form any future audits that were conducted.

With the DSO team being under resourced, the new Operations Manager due to start in November 2022, and the grounds maintenance function being incorporated as part of the DSO services a full audit was not considered feasible at this time, however a follow up review relating to the previous audit recommendations has been carried out.

Key Findings & Action Points

2. 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	-
Outstanding	5
Considered but not Implemented	-
Not Implemented	-

3. Very little progress has taken place to implement the recommendations made in the previous audit, which has been attributed to a lack of resources. However, over the next six months it is expected that considerable progress will be made, with revised implementation dates provided in all cases as highlighted in the Detailed Findings section below. The key issues identified are as follows:
- A separate risk register for the Depot has been created, however this is still work in progress;
 - Currently operatives do not undergo yearly training;
 - The optimisation route package for the Bartec system has not yet been purchased;
 - Detailed stock take procedures have not been documented.

Scope and Limitations of the Review

4. The review considered the progress made in implementing the recommendations made in the previous internal audit reports and established the extent to which management has taken the necessary actions to address the control issues that gave rise to the internal audit recommendations.
5. 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.
6. 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.

Disclaimer

7. The matters raised in this report are only those that came to the attention of the auditor during the course of our work and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all the improvements that might be made. This report has been prepared solely for management's use and must not be recited or referred to in whole or in part to third parties without our prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any other purpose. TIAA neither owes nor accepts any duty of care to any other party who may receive this report and specifically disclaims any liability for loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature, which is caused by their reliance on our report.

Release of Report

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

Date final report issued:	
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Detailed Findings

Follow Up

9. 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:

Audit title	Assurance Review of Depot	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	1
Finding	<p>It was noted in the previous audit review that the Depot did not have its own risk register, and a recommendation was raised in this respect. Given the nature of the work undertaken at the Depot, such as refuse collection/street cleaning, where aspects of this work could be classed as high risk, particularly with regard to health and safety, the associated risks should be considered. Discussions with the Depot Manager during this review confirmed that a risk register relating specifically to the depot is not yet in place.</p> <p>Discussions with the Corporate Head of Environmental Services confirmed that they are still in the process of evaluating the risks relating to the Depot, in particular relating to Health and Safety. A Covid Health and Safety risk assessment has been conducted as well as a Health and Safety Audit.</p>				
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 / Corporate Head of Environmental Services	Original implementation date	30/09/21	Revised implementation date(s)	30/04/2023
Latest Update	<p>A risk register for the Depot has been created, which is currently a work in progress.</p> <p>Individual risk assessment templates have been formulated by the new Health and Safety Officer and appropriate training on how these should be completed is due to be conducted.</p> <p>Once the risk assessments have been completed and an appropriate analysis of the risks conducted a comprehensive risk register will be developed.</p>				
Status	Outstanding			Implementation is in progress but the original target date has not been met.	

Audit title	Assurance Review of Depot	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	2
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Finding	<p>It was noted as part of the previous audit that induction training provided should become an annual training requirement for all operatives. Therefore it would take into account any changes during the year and act as a refresher. In addition a central record should also be maintained to record what training has been provided and when the training was given.</p> <p>Discussion with the Depot Manager during the review confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant training had not taken place during 20/21 due to the Covid Pandemic as social distancing while training is quite difficult, • In addition, no records were available of recent training prior to the pandemic, and it was advised that a training matrix is not yet in place, • The Direct Services Organisation (DSO) Procedure Manual currently does not outline the procedure relating to training. 				
Recommendation	<p>Operatives to undergo annual training to make sure they are aware of any changes to procedures and to eliminate any bad habits that might have developed over time, and a central training log be developed to provide a comprehensive record of all training given with evidence of competency and understanding. The procedure manual be updated to reflect the procedure and process relating to Training.</p>				
Initial management response	<p>Noted and agreed. Proposed new post of Depot compliance officer to cover all staff training requirements. However, this is subject to on-going recruit freeze.</p>				
Responsible Officer/s	DSO Manager / Corporate Head of Environmental Services	Original implementation date	30/04/22	Revised implementation date(s)	30/03/2023
Latest Update	<p>Induction training has been provided to all new starters. However, currently operatives do not undergo annual training.</p> <p>There has been a comprehensive training schedule developed. The schedule involves the following courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reversing assistant/banksman train-the-trainer course scheduled for 17 November 2022. • Terberg train-the-trainer course (how to load bins onto the lifting mechanism of the truck) scheduled for 16 November 2022. <p>In addition first aid training and lone working training courses are due to take place however, the dates for the courses are yet to be confirmed.</p>				
Status	Outstanding			Implementation is in progress but the original target date has not been met.	

Audit title	Assurance Review of Depot	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	2
Finding	<p>It was noted as part of the previous audit review that the main gate to access the Depot was broken and that though CCTV is in operation around the Depot, this required upgrading.</p> <p>Discussions with the Depot Manager during the review confirmed that, while ad-hoc repairs have been carried out, the infrastructure at the Depot is still very poor including the Intercom and CCTV as well as the entrance gate.</p>				
Recommendation	<p>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.</p>				
Initial management response	<p>These are both longstanding issues and indicative of a lack of regular maintenance and investment by the authority into what are ailing facilities.</p> <p>Both are included in the current Depot feasibility study and require financial investment to rectify.</p>				
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(s)	30/06/2023
Latest Update	<p>The main gate to access the Depot has been repaired and a key fob is required to access the Depot. Visitors are able to gain access by pressing a door bell.</p> <p>A refurbishment project relating to the Depot has been authorised and a budget allocated. Currently the project is being managed by the Assets and Regeneration Team.</p>				
Status	Outstanding			Implementation is in progress but the original target date has not been met.	

Audit title	Assurance Review of Depot	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	3
Finding	<p>It was noted as part of the previous audit review that the Waste Management System (Bartec) enables all vehicles to be accurately tracked and for important data for each round to be monitored from the depot.</p> <p>Discussions with the Depot Manager during the review confirmed that the Bartec system is currently being used to produce monitoring reports such as the number of garden waste bin subscribers, trade waste customers and list of clinical waste collections. (The monitoring reports could not be reviewed during testing though the information had been requested). However since the optimisation route package for the system is still to be purchased the system is only working at 60% efficiency, therefore the system needs further consideration as to its effectiveness.</p>				
Reqaest 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 / Corporate Head of Environmental Services	Original implementation date	30/09/21	Revised implementation date(s)	31/10/2025
Latest Update	The optimisation route package has not yet been purchased. The contract relating to the Bartec system is due for renewal in October 2025; the Bartec system as a whole will be reviewed at the time of renewal and the optimisation package purchased if appropriate.				
Status	Outstanding			Implementation is in progress but the original target date has not been met.	

Audit title	Assurance Review of Depot	Audit year	2020/21	Priority	3
Finding	<p>As per the Direct Services Organisation Procedure Manual stock checks of the various bins should be conducted every three weeks. The Bins stock check record for the period April to December 2020 were obtained and reviewed. It was noted that regular stock checks had occurred during that period relating to the various types and sizes of Bins. In addition all deliveries and the Annual Monthly Usage had been recorded.</p> <p>Discussions with the Administrative Assistant confirmed that there were no detailed Stock take Procedures as well as specifically identifiable re-order levels.</p>				
Recommendation	Detailed stock take procedures be documented and a re-order level established, where appropriate.				
Initial management response	Noted.				
Responsible Officer/s	DSO Manager /Corporate Head of Environmental Services	Original implementation date	30/09/21	Revised implementation date(s)	30/04/23
Latest Update	Detailed stock take procedures have not been documented. A review of all the policies and procedures relating to the Depot is due to be conducted by the new Health and Safety Officer and relevant stock take procedures will be documented. The re-order level for the main stock (which is the Bin Stock) has been established.				
Status	Outstanding			Implementation is in progress but the original target date has not been met.	