

Runnymede Borough Council

Internal Audit Progress Report for Outstanding Recommendations

2022-23

November 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 October 2022. Since the previous follow up review was carried out (August 2022), five recommendations have reached their initial or revised target implementation date, and status updates have also been sought for the additional four recommendations previously reported as outstanding.
3. A separate follow up review has been carried out as part of the 22/23 internal audit plan in relation to the previous Depot audit. Progress on the outstanding recommendations have been reported separately, therefore these have not been included in this report.

Key Findings & Action Points

4. 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 | 4 |
| Outstanding | 5 |
| No Longer Applicable | 0 |
| Not Implemented | 0 |

5. For the four recommendations that have been confirmed as implemented, no further action is necessary and specific details have not been included in this report
6. For the five 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.

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.

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|----------------------------------|--|
| Date final report issued: | |
|----------------------------------|--|

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. Business Continuity

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|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Audit title | Business Continuity | Audit year | 2021/22 | Priority | 3 |
| Recommendation | The debrief report be finalised and the recommendations implemented in a timely manner in order to ensure appropriate risks are being mitigated. | | | | |
| Initial management response | <p>Formal reporting took place to Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee in July 2020. No amendments were proposed by Members, so this document became the final Debrief Report. The Council continues to refine its responses to emergency situations on an on-going basis alongside moving into a “Living with covid” phase that may require different responses to that at the height of the pandemic. Where appropriate, recommendations have been implemented, for example the Mayor’s Thank you sessions for volunteers who supported residents during the pandemic. Other lessons learnt have been incorporated into the iterative process of reviewing our Emergency response and Business continuity plans.</p> <p>An officer group is being set up to ensure there is a forum for this continuous review and update of policies so that the recommendations from the review and lessons learnt are embedded into future processes.</p> | | | | |
| Responsible Officer/s | Head of External Projects and Climate Change | Original implementation date | Terms of reference for new group to be agreed by 30/09/22 | Revised implementation date | 30/11/22 |
| Latest Update | It was advised by the Head of External Projects and Climate Change that there has been a slight delay due to unforeseen events. A workshop to kickstart the review and update of polices, and consideration of scenarios and responses, including the establishment of the Officer Group and its terms of reference has been diarised for 16 November 2022 with a view to finalising the terms of reference by the end of November 2022. | | | | |
| Status | Outstanding | | | A revised target date has been set. | |

13. ICT – Mobile Device Security Management

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|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 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, then October 2022) | Revised implementation date | 31.12.22 |
| Latest Update | <p>It was previously advised that the policies had been written but required formal approval. The Chief Executive had 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 could not be rolled out until they had been approved.</p> <p>A further update was provided during this review that the policies have now been scheduled for the December Service Transformation Working Group meeting.</p> | | | | |
| Status | Outstanding | | | A revised target date has been set. | |

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|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|----------|
| 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 | Revised implementation date | 31.01.23 |

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| | | | March 2022, then June 2022, then October 2022) | |
| Latest Update | <p>With regards to the risk assessments it was previously advised that new software for supporting remote management of devices (Intune) was installed on the majority of devices and this was an ongoing piece of work with staff working remotely to get them to have the software installed. The existing mobile phone contract was also being reviewed where the Council would be streamlining devices. This was due for renewal at the end of September 2022.</p> <p>A further update was provided during this review that all devices will have moved to Intune by December. There is also a mobile phone penetration test and software review schedule by MTI starting on 31st October. It was therefore considered that the recommendation on mobile phones would be fully implemented by January 2023.</p> | | | |
| Status | Outstanding | | A revised target date has been set. | |

14. Procurement

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| 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 | <p>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 left 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.</p> <p>A further update was provided during this follow up review that the team has been short by 1.0FTE during September and October. An offer has been made to a candidate for the Procurement Officer post and waiting on acceptance. If accepted, it is likely that the post will be filled from January 2023.</p> <p>A specific revised timeframe for completion of the Strategy was not provided.</p> | | | | |
| Status | Outstanding | | | | |

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|------------------------------------|---|-------------------|---------|-----------------|---|
| Audit title | Procurement | Audit year | 2020/21 | Priority | 3 |
| Recommendation | Procurement to liaise with Heads of Service to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly understood. This could be incorporated into the Procurement Strategy, or documented separately as part of a Procurement Charter or roles and responsibilities matrix. | | | | |
| Initial management response | <p>Work with a range of stakeholders to develop a roles and responsibility matrix.</p> <p>Take a proposal to SLT as an agenda item for approval.</p> <p>Add to the Procurement Toolkit.</p> <p>SLT are carrying a number of posts vacant and therefore needs to be actioned once new postholders are onboarded.</p> | | | | |

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| Responsible Officer/s | Head of Business Planning, Projects and Performance | Original implementation date | Q2 2022/23 | Revised implementation date | TBC |
| Latest Update | It was advised by the Head of Business Planning, Projects and Performance that resource capacity issues in the team mean this is unlikely to be progressed during Q2 or Q3. A specific revised timeframe was not provided. | | | | |
| Status | Outstanding | | | | |
