

Central Bedfordshire Council

Audit Committee

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Tracking of Internal Audit Recommendations

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Purpose of this report:

This report summarises the high priority recommendations arising from Internal Audit reports and sets out the progress made in their implementation.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider and comment on the updates, as presented.

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

1. This report is not scheduled to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny, as this is the responsibility of the Audit Committee.

Background

2. One of the purposes of the Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment.
3. To further strengthen the Audit Committee's role in monitoring the internal control environment within the Council, Internal Audit has developed a system for monitoring and reporting progress against high priority recommendations arising from internal audit inspections.
4. This paper presents the regular summary of high priority recommendations made to date, along with the progress made against implementation of those recommendations, as at the end of May 2016.

Tracking High Priority Recommendations

5. At the time of the last Audit Committee only one high priority recommendation made prior to April 2012 remained outstanding. This related to the 2009/10 SAP Access and Security (including IT Disaster Recovery) audit. Internal Audit undertook a further audit review of IT Disaster Recovery during 2015/16. Three high priority recommendations were made, including the previous recommendation that a Disaster Recovery plan should be developed. Two remain outstanding and these are detailed in Appendix A (recs. 1-2). The Committee agreed at their April 2016 meeting that the Chief Information Assets Officer would be invited to attend the September Committee meeting to provide an update on the progress made in developing and approving the Information Technology Disaster Recovery Plan.
6. One high priority recommendation made during 2013/14 remains outstanding. This relates to the reconciliation of Housing Repairs expenditure held in QL to SAP. The current position is detailed at Appendix A (rec.5)
7. 4 reports containing high priority recommendations were issued during 2015/16, and 8 high priority recommendations were made. In addition the controls testing of the revised Comensura (Agency Staff recruitment) system processes introduced in late October 2015 resulted in 4 new high priority recommendations being made. These are summarised at Appendix B.
8. Wherever possible evidence has been obtained to verify the implementation of recommendations. However, in some instances, verbal assurance has been obtained. Where this is the case, further evidence will be obtained to support the assurances given.
9. Progress will continue to be monitored. The follow up of audit recommendations forms an integral part of the fundamental system audit reviews.

Future Monitoring

10. Officers responsible for the implementation of recommendations will be contacted regularly to provide updates on progress made. Evidence will be required to support progress made. Where recommendations are still being implemented these will continue to be monitored.

Council Priorities

11. An effective internal audit function will indirectly contribute to all of the Council's priorities.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

12. None directly from this report.

Financial Implications

13. Although there are no direct financial risks from the issues identified in the report, the outcome of implementing audit recommendations is for the Council to enhance internal control, and better manage its risks, thereby increasing protection from adverse events.

Equalities Implications

14. None directly from this report.

Conclusion and next Steps

15. Further work is required to ensure that the outstanding recommendations are implemented and to monitor additional recommendations made during the year.

16. This continuous tracking and reporting of progress on Internal Audit inspections to the Audit Committee ensures that the Committee has the means to monitor how effectively the high priority recommendations have been implemented.

Appendices

Appendix A – Details of recommendations made during 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 that remain outstanding

Appendix B – Summary of monitoring of High Priority Internal Audit recommendations - Reports issued during 2015/16 and 2016/17 to date

Background Papers

None