P central midlands audit partnership

Ashfield District Council – Audit Progress Report

Audit Committee: 28 November 2022





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Our Vision

Through continuous improvement, the central midlands audit partnership will strive to provide cost effective, high quality internal audit services that meet the needs and expectations of all its partners.

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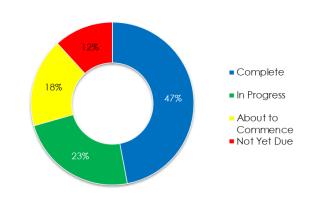
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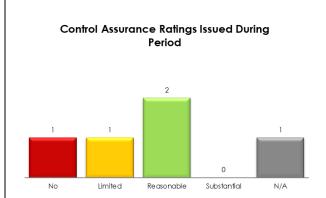
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AUDIT DASHBOARD

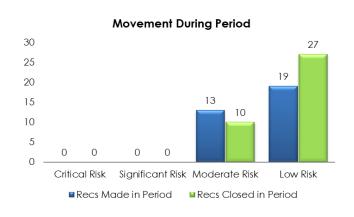
Plan Progress



Assurance Ratings



Recommendations



Recommendations



Recommendations



Customer Satisfaction



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AUDIT PLAN

Progress on Audit Assignments

The following table provides the Committee with information on how audit assignments were progressing as of 15 November 2022.

2022-23 Jobs	Status	% Complete	Assurance Rating
Anti-Fraud & Corruption 2022-23	In Progress	15%	
Organisational Culture and Ethics 2022-23	Not Allocated		
General Ledger – Data Analytics 2022-23	Allocated		
Treasury Management 2022-23	Final Report	100%	Reasonable
IT Asset Inventory 2022-23	Final Report	100%	Limited
Estates 2022-23	Allocated	5%	
Licencing 2022-23	Final Report	100%	Reasonable
Section 106 2022-23	In Progress	45%	
Leisure Centre 2022-23	Allocated	5%	
Future High Streets Fund 2022-23	Not Allocated		
Housing – Data Quality 2022-23	Final Report	100%	No
Climate Change & Sustainability 2022-23	Draft Report	95%	
Health & Safety 2022-23	In Progress	60%	
Homes England Grant	Complete	100%	N/A
B/Fwd Jobs	Status	% Complete	Assurance Rating
Accounting Systems	Final Report	100%	Substantial
Corporate Credit Cards 2021-22	Final Report	100%	Reasonable
Planning	Final Report	100%	Reasonable

Audit Plan Changes

None to report.

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AUDIT COVERAGE

Completed Audit Assignments

Between 12 July 2022 and 15 November 2022, the following audit assignments have been finalised since the last progress update was given to the Audit Committee.

		R	Recommenda	tions Made		~ 5
Audit Assignments Completed in Period	Assurance Rating	Critical Risk	Significant Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk	% Recs Closed
Housing Data Quality 2022-23	No	0	0	9	2	9%
Homes England Grant 2022-23	N/A	0	0	0	0	n/a
Treasury Management 2022-23	Reasonable	0	0	1	2	67%
Licensing 2022-23	Reasonable	0	0	1	5	33%
IT Asset Inventory 2022-23	Limited	0	0	2	10	0%
TOTALS		0	0	13	19	16%

Housing Data Quality 2022- 23	Assurance Rating			
Control Objectives Examined	Controls Evaluated	Adequate Controls	Partial Controls	Weak Controls
The property components and attributes are up to date and accurate, when compared to other records in repairs and planned maintenance.	8	0	2	6
The Council has the tenant profiling data available, and this can be extracted.	3	0	0	3
TOTALS	11	0	2	9
Summary of Weakness		Risk Rating	Agreed A	Action Date
Components were not automatically updated in the Capita Housing System following repairs and maintenance work tickets being completed. The manual process had led to instances of inaccuracy and inconsistency in the data sets maintained in the System.			sk 31/0	03/2023
Testing identified that windows component data was not always being updated, updated completely and accurately, in the Capita Housing System following conroutine planned maintenance works.		Moderate Ris	sk 31/0	03/2023
The data in the component fields within the Capita Housing System did no reflect the details of the Gas Servicing Certificates. The spreadsheets use		Moderate Ris	sk 30/	11/2022

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alternative to the System contained blank fields and therefore were not a reliable audit trail for the gas servicing process.		
There were three different components for electrical testing within the Capita Housing System, all containing inconsistent information and possible errors.	Moderate Risk	31/10/2022
Data Matching and testing identified that the smoke detector component fields within the Capita Housing System do not accurately reflect the true status of the smoke detectors in Council properties.	Moderate Risk	30/11/2022
The three components in the Capita Housing System relating to boilers and flue types contained information that was inconsistent for the majority of the Council's properties.	Moderate Risk	30/11/2022
There were sets of data stored outside of the Capita Housing System which were required to ensure the Council could provide complete and accurate property status reports.	Low Risk	31/03/2023
Address data was not held in an appropriate format in the Capita Housing System; records were inconsistent, not all property had a Unique Property Reference Number and data had been overwritten.	Low Risk	31/12/2022
The personal and sensitive data stored in the Capita Housing System, may be out of date as it was obtained at the point of tenancy application and not refreshed thereafter.	Moderate Risk	31/03/2023
Access to the various Excel spreadsheets used to record component works such as checks, installations and replacements, had not been appropriately restricted.	Moderate Risk	31/10/2022
Access to confidential database reports containing personal and sensitive data (including special category data) on Council tenants had not been appropriately restricted.	Moderate Risk	Implemented
were inconsistent, not all property had a Unique Property Reference Number and data had been overwritten. The personal and sensitive data stored in the Capita Housing System, may be out of date as it was obtained at the point of tenancy application and not refreshed thereafter. Access to the various Excel spreadsheets used to record component works such as checks, installations and replacements, had not been appropriately restricted. Access to confidential database reports containing personal and sensitive data (including	Moderate Risk Moderate Risk	31/03/2023 31/10/2022

Homes England Grant Certification 2022-23

Assurance Rating - Not Applicable

The Council was required to appoint an independent auditor to carry out compliance audits for two capital grants. The first scheme was to demolish the Poplars Community Centre and build affordable housing on the site. This was a follow-on from an audit carried out in 2021/22. The second scheme was to demolish garages at Chatsworth Drive and erect a block of four flats.

CMAP were asked to undertake the role of independent auditor and carry out the audit of the Poplars and Chatsworth Drive Affordable Homes schemes and submit our findings in line with Homes England requirements. Audit findings are not permitted to be shared with the Council, only Homes England. Homes England will report to the Council prior to 31 March 2023 and the findings will be shared with the Audit Committee.

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Treasury Management Limited 2022-23 ۶ Assurance Rating Controls Adequate Weak **Partial Control Objectives Examined Evaluated Controls** Controls Controls There are appropriate and approved treasury management strategy, policy and procedures in place which are regularly reviewed and 6 6 0 0 maintained. Treasury Measurement transactions are authorised and promptly recorded, and controls are in place to ensure that interest is 8 7 1 0 received/recovered or paid/repaid in a timely manner. Effective forecasting and monitoring systems have been established to ensure that movements of cash are appropriately managed and cash-5 3 2 flow statements are produced to support treasury management decisions. There are measures in place to maintain the appropriate levels of data 3 0 4 1 **TOTALS** 23 19 3 1 **Agreed Action Date Summary of Weakness Risk Rating** The Council's calculations of interest did not equal the amount of interest paid for 3 of 18 Low Risk Implemented interest payments tested and there was no evidence that the differences had been investigated. Long-term cashflow projections were not being calculated, potentially inhibiting the ability Moderate Risk 31/03/2023 to make long-term investment decisions. Low Risk 31/10/2022 Access to the various Excel spreadsheets used to record and control Treasury

Management activities had not been appropriately restricted.

Licensing 2022-23	Assurance Rating			c. lostarital
Control Objectives Examined	Controls Evaluated	Adequate Controls	Partial Controls	Weak Controls
The Licensing service area are using processes that are effective and efficient at ensuring regulations are adhered to.	6	1	4	1
The income generated from licensing fees is accounted for appropriately.	5	4	1	0
TOTALS	11	5	5	1
Summary of Weakness		Risk Rating	Agreed A	Action Date
The acupuncture, ear piercing, tattooing and electrolysis licences were not being recorded on the Civica App system. Therefore, this was not consistent with the recording of all other licences.			Low Risk 30/4/2023	
There was no evidence that the Licensing service area had made the required notifications historically and advertised the premises licence applications on the Council's website for the consultation process.		Low Risk	Imple	emented
Controls over the delivery of safeguarding and driver knowledge tests were not sufficient to detect instances where an imposter could take the tests on behalf of the licensing applicant. There were also instances where current drivers had not completed the delayed testing process and had received a number of reminders.			01/0	4/2023
There was a lack of robust controls regarding the receipt of documents and document verification checks for licensing applications.		Low Risk	30/0	4/2023
Access to supporting documentation containing personal and sensitive data on licensing applicants had not been appropriately restricted.		Moderate Risk	i Imple	emented
There was some confusion over what communications had taken place between the Licensing Manager and Finance section regarding the movement of monies, to ensure that income is ring-fenced to the service.			31/1	0/2022

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IT Asset Inventory 2022-23 Assurance Rating **Controls** Adequate **Partial** Weak **Control Objectives Examined Evaluated Controls Controls Controls** Review and evaluate policies and procedures for controlling the procurement and movement of IT hardware including desktops and 16 4 0 12 laptops. **TOTALS** 16 4 0 12 **Summary of Weakness Risk Rating Agreed Action Date** There was no dedicated ICT asset management policy, and other policies did not address Low Risk 31/12/2022 all requirements of an effective asset management process. Evidence of management approval could not be provided for 3 applications for new Low Risk 31/12/2022 laptops submitted by non-managerial personnel. Important information such as device location, warranty status, and overall lifecycle (that Moderate Risk 31/12/2022 is, when equipment was no longer eligible for supplier support) was not being recorded for all assets in the inventory. 31/01/2023 A visual inspection of desktops reported to be in 3 office locations as per the Councils Low Risk asset management inventory records, highlighted that the inventory was inaccurate in 30% of cases sampled. There was no standard operating procedure or policy requirement that defined how often Low Risk 31/12/2022 stock checks should take place, and by who. 31/01/2023 The process for retrieving, re-imaging and redistributing devices used by former Low Risk employees was not comprehensive. The process tor investigating inactive and disconnected computer devices was ad-hoc and Moderate Risk 31/01/2023 not comprehensive. Current device transfer and upgrade procedures were not comprehensive, leading to Low Risk 28/02/2023 officers holding onto unused duplicate equipment. Evidence of data erasure and wiping process completion (both internal and external) was Low Risk 28/02/2023 not being attached to the asset record in Snipe-IT. Minor vulnerabilities and opportunities for improvement were noted with generic Paxton Low Risk 28/02/2023 access cards, and with the current process for protecting physical keys that granted access to ICT storage and communications rooms.

Paxton access cards had not always been deactivated for a sample of recent leavers.	Low Risk	28/02/2023
A network discovery scan found devices in active use that had not been recorded as deployed assets in the asset management database.	Low Risk	28/02/2023

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RECOMMENDATION TRACKING

Final Report	Audit Assignments with Open	en		ommendations C	
Date	Recommendations	Assurance Rating	Action Due	Being Implemented	Future Action
14-Feb-19	Risk Registers	Reasonable	1	0	0
24-Apr-18	ICT Performance Management	Reasonable	0	2	0
16-Aug-19	Fire Safety	Reasonable	0	1	0
12-Mar-19	Treasury Management & Banking Services	Reasonable	0	1	0
03-Dec-19	Data Quality & Performance Management	Reasonable	0	1	0
31-Jan-20	Information Governance	Reasonable	0	2	0
09-Jul-20	Digital Transformation	Reasonable	0	3	0
21-Jun-21	Management of Fraud Risk	Limited	0	9	0
10-May-21	People Management	Reasonable	0	6	0
21-Jun-21	Delegated Decisions	Reasonable	0	1	0
16-Aug-21	Teleworking Security	Reasonable	0	3	0
01-Oct-21	Environmental Health	Reasonable	1	1	1
05-Oct-21	PCI Compliance in Organisational Transformation	Reasonable	0	2	0
16-Feb-22	Housing Health & Safety Statutory Compliance	Reasonable	0	1	0
28-Feb-22	Outdoor Recreation - Sports Bookings	Limited	6	0	3
03-Mar-22	Payroll 2021-22	Reasonable	1	0	0
03-Mar-22	Risk Management 2021-22	Reasonable	0	0	1
29-Mar-22	Scrutiny	Reasonable	0	1	0
08-Apr-22	Accounting Systems 2021-22	Substantial	2	1	0
11-Jul-22	Planning	Reasonable	3	0	0
28-Jul-22	Housing - Data Quality 2022-23	No	2	0	8
24-Oct-22	Treasury Management 2022/23	Reasonable	0	0	1
25-Oct-22	Licensing 2022-23	Reasonable	0	0	4
10-Nov-22	IT Asset Inventory 2022-23	Limited	0	0	12
		TOTALS	16	35	30

Action Due = The agreed actions are due, but Internal Audit has been unable to ascertain any progress information from the responsible officer.

Being Implemented = The original action date has now passed and the agreed actions have yet to be completed. Internal Audit has obtained status update comments from the responsible officer and a revised action date.

Future Action = The agreed actions are not yet due, so Internal Audit has not followed the matter up.

	A	Action Due			Implemente	d
Audit Assignments with Recommendations Due	Significant Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk	Significant Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk
Risk Registers	0	0	1	0	0	0
ICT Performance Management	0	0	0	0	2	0
Fire Safety	0	0	0	0	1	0
Treasury Management & Banking Services	0	0	0	0	0	1
Data Quality & Performance Management	0	0	0	0	0	1
Information Governance	0	0	0	0	1	1
Digital Transformation	0	0	0	0	2	1
Management of Fraud Risk	0	0	0	0	1	8
People Management	0	0	0	0	0	6
Delegated Decisions	0	0	0	0	0	1
Teleworking Security	0	0	0	0	1	2
Environmental Health	0	0	1	0	0	1
PCI Compliance in Organisational Transformation	0	0	0	0	0	2
Housing Health & Safety Statutory Compliance	0	0	0	0	1	0
Outdoor Recreation – Sports Bookings	0	3	3	0	0	0
Payroll 2021-22	0	0	1	0	0	0
Scrutiny	0	0	0	0	0	1
Accounting Systems 2021-22	0	0	2	0	0	1
Planning	0	2	1	0	0	0
Housing – Data Quality 2022-23	0	2	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	0	7	9	0	9	26

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Highlighted Recommendations

The following recommendations, that have not yet been implemented, are detailed for Committee's scrutiny.

Being Implemented Recommendations

Information Governance	Rec No. 4
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
Sensitive, personal data was being stored in locations which were not suitably restricted to only those officers with a genuine business need to access such information.	Moderate Risk
We recommend that management take appropriate action to ensure that all personal, sensitive data is secured in files, within restrictive sub-folders, with access limited to only those officers who have a genuine business need to access such information.	
Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
 The IT Security Policy Framework is under review. As part of this review we will ensure it is updated to take account of GDPR requirements. Specifically, we will introduce the following measures to assist with ensuring access to data is suitably restricted to only those officers with a genuine business need to access such information: Starters/Transfers/Leavers E-Form – to be completed by the Section Manager. This form will identify access rights of starters, amendments for staff transferring internally and identify when staff leave the Council. This will be used in conjunction/cross-references with the report received from HR on a quarterly basis. E-Form for completion by Managers/Directors for folder access changes. Introduction of new file structure guidelines and cascade through ELT/ALT, DMTs and MOD. Provision of Group Access Permission lists on a quarterly basis to Service Managers for checking and confirmation/amendment. IT to meet with individual Managers to confirm, amend and clarify what is required of Managers as part of this new process. 	30/06/2020
Status Update Comments	Revised Date
Actions have been taken to restrict folders and files. Internal Audit will be reviewing these actions as part of the ICT Key Controls audit.	30/06/2022
We are currently in the process of migrating documents to Sharepoint/Teams which will introduce private channels. This will make it easier for managers to check who has access to the data held in them.	

ICT Performance Management	Rec No. 1
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
Despite commitment to performance management in the Council's latest Technology Strategy, we could not find any documented performance management metrics and goals to support this. Similarly, performance metrics for IT did not appear to be subject to annual review, or agreed or monitored by the Council.	Moderate Risk
We recommend that Management defines performance management metrics for the IT service, and implements policies and procedures for monitoring and reporting compliance. Metrics, goals and targets should also be subject to annual review.	

Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
There is a review of the ICT Helpdesk due shortly where performance metrics will be defined and agreed.	01/09/2018
Status Update Comments	Revised Date
The Service Manager for ICT has updated audit that a prerequisite for this recommendation is the implementation of a new helpdesk system which will have appropriate reporting capabilities.	30/11/2022
The first version of the ICT Service Desk software is now in place but ICT still need to review its reporting capabilities. The post of Service Desk Team Leader is currently being advertised.	
The Service Manager for ICT has requested a further extension whilst the newly appointed service desk team leader investigates the implementation of the recommendation.	
To be resolved with the implementation of the House on the Hill service desk application.	

ICT Performance Management	Rec No. 2
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
Reviews of the team's performance in relation to the resolution of incidents and service requests did not appear to comply with a formal schedule, and evidence of previous reviews could not be provided as the actions/discussions were not documented in minutes.	Moderate Risk
We recommend that Management defines a schedule for reviewing performance of incident and request resolution times, and ensures any agreed actions are documented in minutes which are retained.	
Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
There is a review of the ICT Helpdesk due shortly where performance metrics will be defined and agreed.	01/09/2018
Status Update Comments	Revised Date
The Service Manager for ICT has updated audit that a prerequisite for this recommendation is the implementation of a new helpdesk system which will have appropriate reporting capabilities.	30/11/2022
The first version of the ICT Service Desk software is now in place but ICT still need to review its reporting capabilities. The post of Service Desk Team Leader is currently being advertised.	
The Service Manager for ICT has requested a further extension whilst the newly appointed service desk team leader investigates the implementation of the recommendation.	
To be resolved with the implementation of the House on the Hill service desk application.	

Digital Transformation	Rec No. 5
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
The Council did not have signed, up to date and adequate contracts in place for some of the applications tested.	Moderate Risk
We recommend that a review is undertaken to ensure that the Council has a signed, up to date and adequate contract in place for all Council applications. Where contracts are not in place, the Council should take action to formalise the provision and maintenance of applications in use.	
Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
Solution architecture review to be completed across the portfolio.	31/10/2020
Status Update Comments	Revised Date
This review has now commenced by the Innovations and Solutions Manager and Procurement and Projects Officer.	31/08/2022
We need to look at each contract and make sure that on renewal contracts are detailed and in place for each application.	
We have reviewed all of the major applications. The review is now being finalised by the new interim solutions manager and will be completed by the end of August 2022.	

Digital Transformation	Rec No. 6
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
The contracts register did not include accurate detail for the applications reviewed as part of the audit.	Moderate Risk
We recommend that the Council ensure all application contracts are included in the contracts register where appropriate, and any upgrades or new contract details are recorded on the register on a timely basis.	
Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
Solution architecture review to be completed across the portfolio.	31/10/2020
Status Update Comments	Revised Date
We have looked at all of the contracts and dates in the contracts register but we need to make sure that all of our applications are fully covered.	31/08/2022
Innovations and Solutions Manager will be doing this work over the next months.	
Reviewed all of the major applications and will be reviewing the rest by April 22. All the entries on the software register have been reviewed by Solutions Manager and Procurement Officer, to get details of those known and applicable, including contract end dates and dates to review renewals. The review is now being finalised by the new interim solutions manager and will be complete by the end of August 2022.	

Teleworking Security	Rec No. 2
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
Accounts with Remote Desktop Gateway access permissions were not always being disabled in a timely manner for leavers, creating data protection risks.	Moderate Risk
We recommend that management defines, documents and implements a more comprehensive approach to disabling network access for former employees or 3rd parties. This could include populating the account expiration date in advance, once a leavers date has been agreed with the employee to reduce the risk of administrative error.	
Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
We will review the process. We do have quite comprehensive processes in place but it is still possible to miss people leaving in the short term (they should get detected later due to another process). We will review each part of the process to ensure they are being carried out properly and look at implementing the "expiration date" where possible.	01/10/2021
Status Update Comments	Revised Date
Process is to be documented and added to Service Desk guidelines. 3rd party accounts are not left active when not in use. It will be raised that we need a proper process in place once HR comes back into the Council.	30/09/2022

Fire Safety	Rec No. 5
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
Not all entrance doors to flats comply with Fire Safety Regulations.	Moderate Risk
We recommend that the Council reviews all flat entrance doors to identify those which do not comply with Fire Safety Regulations, or those that have failed recent government tests. The Council should then take action to ensure the appropriately accredited fire safety doors are installed at the entrances to all flats.	
Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
An assessment of all flat entrance doors has been completed and the results forwarded to the Assets & Investment Section for building into future door replacement programme(s). However, due to uncertainties around the manufacture, testing, certification and subsequent affected supply of composite fire doors, it is currently not possible to identify a definitive timescale for completion. The option to use alternative timber fire doors of the appropriate fire safety standards and specification are currently being looked into.	31/03/2020
Status Update Comments	Revised Date
Standard fire doors (majority); installations to commence 07/02/22 – all to be complete by contract max end date 31/03/22.	30/04/2022
Leaseholder fire doors: Legal to expedite the process. Subject to access, the hope is for the project to be completed by as close to the end of April 2022 as possible.	

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Management of Fraud Risk	Rec No. 6
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
The Council did not have trained fraud investigators with professional accreditation to review and investigate all areas of potential fraud.	Moderate Risk
We recommend that the Council ensure they have access to fully trained fraud investigators, who can be called upon to investigate any areas of suspected fraudulent activity.	
Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
The Council will consider how to access a suitably trained fraud investigator.	30/04/2022
Status Update Comments	Revised Date
Action still being progressed.	31/03/2023

Health & Safety Statutory Compliance	Rec No. 3
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
The Council had not yet decided who will be the senior named person with responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Health and Safety obligations set out in the Social Housing White Paper.	Moderate Risk
We recommend that the Council review the responsibilities in order to determine which officer will be responsible for the Health and Safety requirements in preparation for legislative changes in accordance with the Social Housing White Paper.	
Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
To identify responsible officer.	01/04/2022
Status Update Comments	Revised Date
We begin formal consultation on the DMA restructure at the end of this week so we are close to resolution. Would suggest action date is changed to 31/12/22.	31/12/2022

Action Due

Planning	Rec No. 2
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
There were no processes in place that enabled management to monitor progress against tasks detailed on the Local Plan Work Programme.	Moderate Risk
We recommend that management is provided with performance information, linking to the Local Plan Work Programme, from the Forward Planning Team on a regular basis.	
Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
The team will be asked to provide a monthly report to the Assistant Director on a monthly basis.	31/07/2022
Status Update Comments	Revised Date

Risk Register	Rec No. 5
Summary of Weakness / Recommendation	Risk Rating
There was no evidence to confirm that Members had been suitably trained to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of risk management.	Low Risk
We recommend, in accordance with the ALARM best practice guidance, that all Council Members should receive training on risk management. Given that all Elected Members, Council Cabinet and Audit Committee have specific responsibilities in respect of the Councils risk management framework, it is important that Members are appropriately trained such that they are able to actively support the Council in its management of risks and also challenge and scrutinise the Council's risk position. Evidence of the training given to Members should be retained.	
Management Response/Action Details	Action Date
To be reviewed as part of member induction training package following local	31/07/2019
elections.	
Status Update Comments	Revised Date