

INTERNAL AUDIT FOLLOW UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

NOVEMBER 2020

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Summary

We regularly follow up progress with the implementation of recommendations raised by Internal Audit and we report to the Performance, Governance & Audit Committee. We request commentary by responsible officers on the progress towards implementation of our recommendations and for high and medium priority recommendations we verify the progress to source evidence and conclude either that the recommendation is complete or incomplete. This information is collected via the Sharepoint portal. This report represents the status of all internal audit recommendations as at 26 August 2020.

2018/19 Recommendations

3 high and 13 medium recommendations have been raised in 2018/19. The current position of these recommendations is as follows:

- 14 are considered implemented as previously reported relating to Budgets and Performance Management (1 recommendation), Main financial Systems (1 recommendation), Safe and Clean Environment (4 recommendations), Transformation Programme (1 recommendation), Local Development Plan (2 recommendations) and Building Control (4 recommendations), Fraud Risk Assessment (1 High)
- Safe & Clean Environment- 1 recommendation is now overdue.
- The below recommendations are not yet due for follow up:
 - Building Control- One high recommendation not yet due (31.12.2020).

2019/20 Recommendations

- 5 high and 34 medium recommendations have been raised in 2019/20, 30 of which are considered implemented and previously reported to the PGA.
- Five further medium recommendations have been implemented since the last PGA (Community Safety- 2 recommendations, Corporate Governance- 3 recommendations)
- 4 recommendations are not yet due for follow up (Flood Risk Management)

Recommendations: Completed

RECOMMENDATION MADE	PRIORITY LEVEL	MANAGER RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE	CURRENT PROGRESS
2019/20- Community Safety				
<p>a) RAG should meet on a quarterly basis in line with its ToR</p> <p>b) Appropriate budget monitoring should be established and updated monthly with quarterly reporting undertaken by CSP at RAG, as well as the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a bi-annual basis, detailing budget vs actual and projected costs</p>	Medium	Spencer Clarke, Community Safety Manager	01.10.2020	<p>It is accepted that the Responsible Authorities Group (strategic) did not meet with the frequency identified within its formal terms of reference for the dates specified within the audit. This was due to a number of factors such as the restructure of Maldon District Council and the Chair of the RAG leaving for another police force. However, it should be noted that the Community Safety Hub was implemented in March 2019 which brought together key strategic and operational partners (Council and Essex Police) into one working space and therefore meet on a daily basis. Community Safety Hub Tasking meets on a monthly basis and reviews both real time crime and the action plan of the community safety partnership. The meeting of the RAG in February 2020 agreed that the next step for the strategic group would be to migrate to a One Maldon District which would broaden the scope of the strategic group to include topics such as health and economy but to still meet its duty as a statutory community safety partnership. The progress on implementing One Maldon District has been hampered by the Covid-19 crisis and is currently awaiting Member decision for approval. In the interim, meetings will be arranged on MS Teams to ensure that the partnership meets on a regular basis in the interim. It is noted that financial transparency is important in terms of partnership. Finance is generally discussed at the start of the financial year when agreeing strategic priorities. The funding provided by the Office of Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner is relatively small in value and for the last three years this funding has</p>

				<p>been used to contribute towards the cost of the Community Safety Development Officer who has delivered community safety interventions using a Maldon District Council events budget. However, it is agreed that a funding paper shall be prepared for future meetings of the RAG and Overview & Scrutiny (sitting as Crime and Disorder Committee) which will include any reserves and spend/progress on the MDC events budgets and any other partnership contributions.</p> <p><u>IA comments:</u></p> <p>Confirmation that the O&S has now approved new action plan (22/10).</p>
<p>a) Layout of the action plan should be updated to ensure the overarching priorities have individual actions with lead owners and timescales for delivery recorded for each</p> <p>b) Include a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating against the actions, or against each priority, to provide a clear indication of progress when reported</p> <p>c) Update the RAG rating and comments on a monthly basis</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Spencer Clarke, Community Safety Manager</p>	<p>01.10.2020</p>	<p>At present, an action plan is agreed at the start of the financial year once the strategic priorities have been agreed. This is reviewed on a monthly basis at community safety hub tasking. It is accepted that the recommendations identified in the audit will improve the current action plan and it will enable partners to monitor progress in an improved manner. It should be noted that tasks under each strategic priority may change throughout the year based on demand and types of intervention required, and inevitably situations outside our control, for example the Covid-19 crisis has prevented face to face interventions within school settings and targeted interventions with the elderly community who have been effectively shielding since March 2020. All three recommendations are accepted and will be implemented.</p> <p>O&S has now approved the new action plan (22/10)</p> <p><u>IA comments:</u></p>
<p>2019/20- Corporate Governance</p>				

<p>1a. Service level performance should be challenged at PGA on a regular basis</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Cheryl Hughes</p>	<p>a. 31.08.2020</p>	<p>1a. Balanced Score Card (BSC) now in action with ELT review, and the January reports for performance will include any exceptions from this service delivery level. Mechanism for continual review and reporting of service data is therefore in place as of Mid- October</p>
<p>1b. PGA should have increased level of oversight of Governance matters</p>			<p>30.09.2020</p>	<p>1b. An overhaul of the Annual Governance Statement format, should it be approved at PGA committee, will include tracking of governance matters on a quarterly basis. Update: AGS tracking was signed off by PGA committee as a mechanism for this. A recommendation is also going to Council 5/11 that PGA committee members sit on the Corporate Governance Working Group.</p> <p><u>IA comments:</u></p> <p>a. Management response has been validated and agreed by internal audit. Reviewed new BSC and confirmed this process is now in place.</p> <p>b. Management response has been validated and agreed by internal audit via review of PGA and Council minutes.</p>
<p>2. The role of Overview and Scrutiny should be reviewed with, either its work programme more appropriately tailored to its role and items referred to it more regularly or disband the committee with its remit subsumed by other standing committees</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Cheryl Hughes</p>	<p>31.10.2020</p>	<p>2. Council reviewed and decided to keep the O&S Committee 15/10- O&s committee agreed a working protocol and workflow to be clear on remit, and also a form for members to submit items for scrutiny.</p> <p><u>IA comments:</u></p> <p>Management response has been validated and agreed by internal audit via minutes of O&S Committee held on 15/10.</p>
<p>3a. Formalised induction process should be established including involvement from each Director to ensure all aspects of the Council are understood</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Cheryl Hughes</p>	<p>30.09.2020</p>	<p>3a. Members on boarding process has been built to mirror staff and will be launched with all members in November as it also gives quick access to resources etc.</p> <p><u>IA comments:</u></p> <p>Management response has been validated and agreed by internal audit via minutes of</p>

				the Council on 05/11 where this was tabled..
3b. Discussions should be undertaken with Members to identify training they feel would be advantageous	Medium	Cheryl Hughes	30.09.2020	<p>3b. In training run September 2019, we did encourage members to identify training needs, and Chairs to identify training specific to their committee. We will create a form to complete and advertise this to members to scope a 'continual' development plan.</p> <p>On 05/11 the Annual training plan is going to Members for approval.</p> <p><u>IA comments:</u></p> <p>Management response has been validated and agreed by internal audit via minutes of the Council on 05/11 where this was tabled.</p>
3c. Officer training plan developed based on progression through the Council	Medium	Cheryl Hughes		<p>3c. In March 2020, we ran training for Tier 2 managers on committee processes, and we will look to roll this out to other staff and include in the wider staff induction process. Working with elected Members was added to the Freshservice site for staff in September, and will continue to be part of the induction plan.</p> <p><u>IA comments:</u></p> <p>Management response has been validated and agreed by internal audit</p>

Recommendations: Overdue

RECOMMENDATION MADE	PRIORITY LEVEL	MANAGER RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE	CURRENT PROGRESS
2018/19- Safe and Clean Environment				
Create and environmental and waste management strategy.	Medium	Damien Ghela	December 2020	<p>Waste Strategy has been replaced by a Climate change strategy has been taken over by the new lead community officer to finalise draft version. Performance measures of the strategy are being discussed. Once Draft strategy finalised this will be presented to S&R to approve/adopt. This is also being tracked as part of corporate performance reporting. There has been little progress on the strategy as this has been overtaken by management of Covid relation workstreams.</p> <p><u>IA comments:</u></p> <p>We will request a copy of the Climate Change Strategy once approved to ensure this closes off the recommendation appropriately.</p> <p>Whilst there have been some updates made to the draft Climate Strategy, since the adjusted working arrangements there has been no further progress with the Climate Strategy.</p> <p>At the last PGA, the Lead Specialist Community in response to a query regarding the timing of the Climate Change and Waste Strategy report to Strategy and Resources Committee advised that a version with a much wider scope was currently being worked on and shared with internal partners. It would be submitted to the Strategy and Resources Committee in December 2020.</p>

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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