

**SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**AUDIT & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**  
**ACTION PROGRESS REPORT**

**Actions Arising from Meetings**

**14<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (Extraordinary meeting)**

<b>Minute:</b>	<b>Agenda item and Action:</b>	<b>For:</b>	<b>Status / Comment</b>
14	<p><b>Risk Management Update Quarter 1 2021/22</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Iqbal Zafar to be sent s114 notice and the s151s slides from 22<sup>nd</sup> July Council meeting.</li> </ul> <p>RM Update report to 30<sup>th</sup> September meeting to include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CRR to include information on which/number of LA's requested monies lent to be paid back and those continuing to lend to SBC</li> <li>Number of staff currently in the SBC treasury team</li> </ul>	<p>Democratic Services</p> <p>Steve Mair, Director of Finance/S151 Officer</p>	<p><b>Completed.</b> Email sent 16.09.21</p> <p><b>Completed</b> – See agenda item 5 30/9/21 meeting.</p>
15	<p><b>Internal Audit Progress Report</b></p> <p><u>Debt Management Review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update re measures taken to proactively recover debt owed to the Council - to include latest position re ongoing legal disputes with Arvato and First Beeline Buses re outstanding invoices.</li> </ul> <p><u>Whistleblowing / Health and Safety</u></p> <p>Head of HR / Director responsible for HR to attend 30<sup>th</sup> September meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR service lead officer to specifically respond to concern about low level of compliance in completing mandatory whistleblowing and health and safety training (68% Introduction to H&amp;S module and 66% DSE module - given that the modules are mandatory, compliance should be 100%;</li> </ul>	<p>Steve Mair, Director of Finance/S151 Officer</p> <p>Surjit Nagra, Associate Director, Customer</p>	<p><b>Completed.</b> See action below for 29/07/21 meeting update</p> <p>For Members information, mandatory training stats have improved since the migration from the old LMS system to the new system.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>H&amp;S self-audits not completed by any directorate for the 2020/21 financial year)</li> </ul>		<p>e.g. Health &amp; Safety 65% before and 72.9% now. Whistleblowing, no previous data, 74.2% now.</p> <p>In additional, automated reporting and self-service has also improved visibility and access.</p> <p>We are aware of the compliance rates across our mandatory modules and have put in place the following actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All line managers are now able to review their team members training compliance records as a function in their Cornerstone accounts.</li> <li>➤ This has been communicated out to all managers and a manager guide produced to support this, recommending reviews are included in 1:1s. – May 2021.</li> <li>➤ Mandatory Training compliance to be raised and reviewed as an agenda item at all DLT meetings attended by HR to progress compliance – Oct 2021</li> <li>➤ We are reviewing our 'Reach Out' employees (employees without access to SBC IT kit to access e-learning) to evaluate the success of our initiative to create presentation slide or workbooks that can be used as an alternative to achieve compliance.</li> </ul>
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29<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Minute:	Agenda item and Action:	For:	Status / Comment
3	<p><b>Action Progress Report</b></p> <p>ICT service to provide further information to democratic services to circulate to the committee in w/c 2<sup>nd</sup> August regarding Re risk #35 – cyber attacks. Clarification to be provided to the Committee on the statement “Cyber risks are excluded from the Council’s liability policies”.</p>	<p>Vijay McGuire Associate Director – Business services</p>	<p>Most cyber insurance would also seek to confirm good cyber practice by any organisation and this is being approached through the IT technology modernisation programme allowing systems and .security to be brought up to date and with greater control and rigour. This would significantly reduce cyber risk and the council could then seek Cyber Essentials accreditation</p>
4	<p><b>Whistleblowing Code and Guidance</b></p> <p>Constitution to be updated with new policy</p> <p>The Committee agreed the importance of communicating the new policy to employees through internal comms and induction.</p>	<p>Jo Ashton Democratic Services Officer</p> <p>Surjit Nagra Associate Director - customer</p>	<p>The constitution will be updated after council on 23rd September alongside the new corporate governance principles which are going to that meeting.</p> <p>Communication of the Whistleblowing code: This is part of Mandatory training delivered through our online training system. Measures have been put in place to ensure that completion rates are monitored through a reporting dashboard. This is reviewed by Executive Directors and Managers to ensure staff undertake training. All mandatory training must be completed by staff every 3 years. Staff are able to access the training via their own IT kit should they not have access to an SBC login or printed versions can be made available to staff</p>

			<p>The Whistleblowing code and guidance is referred to as part of the mandatory training in the content of the corporate training induction programme with new starters. As part of the offer letter all new starters are provided with a Cornerstone account, asking them to complete the 8 mandatory modules assigned, one of which is Whistleblowing.</p> <p>The updated Whistleblowing code has also been sent to all staff on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021 via the Newsround all staff email.</p>
6	<p><b>Members Performance Report – May 2020 to February 2021</b> That the report be noted and that a revised version be received at the next scheduled meeting of the committee on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.</p>	Hugh Peart – Monitoring Officer	<b>Completed</b> - See agenda item 4 for 30 <sup>th</sup> September meeting.
7	<p><b>Risk Management Update – Quarter 1 2021/22</b></p> <p>SALT Services – the Committee requested further information on the actions the Council was taking to address the risk and improve the service, particularly the 3 year waiting list.</p>	Johnny Kyriacou Associate Director – Education and Inclusion	<b>Completed.</b> Update provided to extraordinary meeting 14/9/21 Agenda item 3 – Risk Management update
8	<p><b>Internal Audit Progress Report</b></p> <p>Parked invoices – updates on legal disputes with Arvato and First Beeline Buses</p> <p>Parked invoices – report to be provided to the next meeting with an analysis of public sector debtors and updated position regarding debt recovery.</p>	Steven Mair – Director of Finance/S151	<p>Parked invoices for First Beeline - the dispute has been resolved and all released.</p> <p>Parked Invoices for Arvato - the negotiated settlement between SBC and Arvato in April 2021 included the cancellation of all outstanding invoices.</p>

	<p>Section 106 funds – report to be provided to the next meeting including on the position re the 50 agreements not yet invoiced which totalled £6.75m</p> <p>From Internal Audit Annual Report (page 107) – Council Tax audit 2019/20 – what progress had been made in addressing the weaknesses identified in Council Tax processes and discrepancies identified</p> <p>Progress in implementing actions relating to the Rent Arrears Recovery Audit.</p>	<p>Richard West – Executive Director Customer and Communities</p>	<p>Work is in progress and processes are being reviewed to ensure that the Accounts Receivable team are the final point in the workflow for these going forward, this will be completed by 1st December. The work includes verifying each parked invoice with the relevant cost centre manager. Information regarding both the parked invoices and Account Receivable will be available for the December Audit and Corporate Committee</p> <p>Data has been extensively reviewed and it is not £6.75m and 50 invoices but £1.35m and 15 invoices. This is where the trigger point for payment had been reached. £80k has been received to date and the remainder has been invoiced.</p> <p>All reconciliations, rents, council tax and NNDR are being addressed, a full plan will be developed by December to address the discrepancies and improve processes</p> <p>Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel Reporting will be through to the Customer and Community Scrutiny panel, the first meeting in October will be used to establish the reporting that is required by the panel</p>
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			<p>Former Tenant Arrears Procedural Document. <b>Completed</b> - This has been amended and published on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021</p> <p>Debt Collection Agencies All have formal agreements in place</p> <p>Formal review of the process for writing off debts Finance are in the process of reviewing this at present</p> <p>The Council will develop an approach to monitoring and managing former tenant arrears case which are below £3,000 in value</p> <p>The team have been systematically going through all pre 2017 tenancy end cases , and those over six months old where death was the reason and assess the chances of getting repayment and put for `write off` those with little chance of success. This was partially successful in reducing cases and debt. The process of write offs is also under review - to be in place in the beginning of November</p>
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4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Minute:	Agenda item and Action:	For:	Status / Comment
35	<p><b>Internal Audit Progress Report - Quarter 4 2020/21</b></p> <p>Progress on implementation of high risk recommendations on IT Patch Management Operating Systems</p> <p>Debt Collection Agencies – details of the number of agencies being used and whether they held a proper contract with the Council.</p>	<p>Vijay McGuire Associate Director – Business Services</p> <p>Steven Mair, Director of Finance/ S151 Officer</p>	<p><b>Completed.</b> Policy has now been developed and agreed at Information Governance Board, policy has now been introduced to IT policy library and is live</p> <p><b>Completed.</b> The Council does not use debt collection agencies but it does use Enforcement Agents via a contract for Ctax / NNDR/ Accounts Receivable/ Rents (mainly for evictions) and it uses an Enforcement Agent on a separate contract for HB Overpayments</p> <p>It also uses the Court Enforcement Agents for Accounts Receivable which are allocated based on the debt</p> <p>The Council also uses Tracing Agents</p>
40	<p><b>Internal Audit Actions Progress Report</b></p> <p>Clarification to be provided as to why the majority of the Outstanding Medium risk actions (as contained in appendix 1 to the report) were showing a target completion date of 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021.</p>	<p>Steven Mair Section 151 Officer</p>	<p>The review of Internal Audit actions were reviewed by the officer risk &amp; audit board on 9<sup>th</sup> July and the process for review is being re-energised. The Board will report back to the next Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on progress of the actions</p>

41	<p><b>General Data Protection Regulation Update</b></p> <p>Details of percentage of staff that had completed the mandatory GDPR training to be circulated to the Committee.</p> <p>Internal Audit to include whether adequate training and support for staff relating to GDPR was provided as part of the GDPR Post Implementation Audit scheduled for September 2021.</p>	<p>Vijay McGuire Associate Director – Business Services</p> <p>RSM</p>	<p>As at 29 June 2021 83% of staff had completed mandatory GDPR training. CMT and directors monitor via access to the dashboard reports and managers have access to their team training completion reports to pick review at team meetings and 1:1s.</p> <p>GDPR post implementation Audit is on the 2021 Audit plan</p>
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### 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Minute:	Agenda item and Action:	For:	Status / Comment
21	<p><b>Internal Audit Progress Report – Quarter 3 2020/21</b></p> <p>Implementation of a Flood Action Plan and for this to be in place as a priority.</p>	<p>Surjit Nagra Service Lead - People</p>	<p><b>In progress:</b> Subsequent to the December A&amp;G Meeting the Council had to deal with substantial flooding in Colnbrook. The EP/BC Manager is aware that the development of an overarching plan is a priority.</p>

**Note: Actions to be removed from the log after being reported as ‘completed’ to the Committee.**