

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL
AUDIT & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

Actions Arising from Meetings

28 July 2022

Minute Reference	Agenda Item and Action Required	Lead Officer	Status / Comment
3	<p>Action Progress Report</p> <p>Adult Social Care Transformation Programme Update - presentation slides to be emailed to Committee.</p>	Democratic Services	Completed. Slides emailed on 15.08.22.
5	<p>Risk Management Update Quarter 1 2022/23</p> <p>Risk 3 - Temporary Accommodation: Cost implications of housing Ukrainian refugees</p>	Executive Director Place & Community	<p><u>Risk 3 - Temporary Accommodation: Cost implications of housing Ukrainian refugees</u></p> <p>The current arrangement for people arriving from Ukraine is as follows:</p> <p>Families Scheme – This is where guests from Ukraine are supported by family members who already reside in the UK. This scheme is run directly by the Home Office and does not run through Local Authorities. Like all Local Authorities we do not have statistics about how many people from Ukraine are staying with their families in Slough, but believe the number to be small.</p> <p>Homes for Ukraine Scheme – This scheme is where UK residents have</p>

			<p>volunteered to open up their homes to support guests from Ukraine. The Person offering the home is known as a Sponsor and the people arriving from Ukraine are known as guests. Sponsors are entitled to a £350</p> <p>Currently we have 58 guests matched to 33 properties. Of these 30 guests have arrived in Slough. Slough has by far, fewer sponsors and guests than any of the other authorities in Berkshire.</p> <p>Like with all local authorities, there is a risk of relationship breakdowns from both schemes leaving Local Authorities with the potential of guests from Ukraine becoming at risk of homelessness and requiring housing support from Local Authorities. We are lining up other potential sponsors. This is in addition to the normal conflict resolution we and partners support to resolve.</p> <p>We currently deem risk of homelessness to be low and are managing the risk. Our current intelligence shows that most sponsors will continue to support guests as long as payments are being made. In addition we are supporting guests from Ukraine to secure employment, ESOL and other Adult Education which better places their chances of becoming independent.</p> <p>Local Authorities are currently awaiting Government guidance about the future of</p>
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	<p>Risk Management Implications - details in next committee report on timescale to get risk to green</p>	<p>Director of Finance.</p>	<p>the schemes. The initial scheme was for Sponsors to support guests for a minimum of 6 months. Should Government stop or reduce payments to Sponsors, then this would significantly increase risk for all local authorities of families presenting themselves as homeless. This has been raised by local authorities with Government. Berkshire Local Authorities meet at Senior Level every two weeks to share practice and information about the Ukraine initiative and utilise this as an opportunity to escalate any concerns nationally.</p> <p><u>Risk management implications</u> Please see agenda item 4 – Risk management update, details are in section 3.3 of the report</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Internal Audit Quarterly Progress Report</p> <p>Duplicate supplier payments – check latest status on monies recovered</p>	<p>Director of Finance.</p>	<p><u>Supplier duplicate payments</u> Previously there was no analysis or monitoring of potential duplicate payments. An exercise using specialist software has identified potentially 68 payments that had a potential likelihood of being duplicates of £425k going back over six years. Those with a strong likelihood totalled £194k. To date £251k has been collected with other suppliers being chased for further information. This exercise will be completed on a regular basis going forward. Some of the</p>

	<p>Temporary Accommodation Audit - running theme is lack of evidence - details to be provided for this.</p> <p>Temporary accommodation - further details why rent arrears happening, reasons why residents in TA for so long –to be included in report to next meeting & relevant Officers to attend the next meeting.</p>	<p>Executive Director Place & Community</p> <p>Executive Director Place & Community</p>	<p>potential overpayments go back as far as 2016 which means it is harder to get responses from companies so although progress is being made no new repayments have been made over the past two months. These include various logistical issues to contend with suppliers having to retrieve the records from archived records. Some supplier systems have also changed. Additionally, some are reluctant to respond due to the age of the debt; there is also some continuity issues as some of their staff have left. Legal action will be taken if it becomes clear that the amounts identified are true overpayments and suppliers do not respond to enquiries. To date total £80k outstanding.</p> <p><u>Temporary Accommodation Audit</u> The team of 5 officers have left the authority. We are recruiting a new team. In the interim 1 temporary resource and 1 secondee are in place. Work has begun to re-build systems and processes.</p> <p><u>Temporary Accommodation</u> TA stock records will be in one place – Northgate Housing Management System after 13 October 2022 go live – this will improve charging and also rent recovery including integration with the housing benefits system</p>
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	Shared Bank Details – Supplier and Payroll records – further details how and why these accounts had been set up/payments made.	Director of Finance	<p><u>Shared bank details</u> These accounts were set up to pay employee expenses which with best practice should be processed via Payroll.</p> <p>SBC's ERP (Agresso) now has an Expenses module through which all expenses are captured and approved via workflows and paid via payroll.</p> <p>Supplier accounts identified will be deleted by the end of October</p>
9	<p>Internal Audit Annual Report 2021/22</p> <p>Finalised report to be scheduled for September meeting.</p>	Head of Internal Audit	Draft reports outstanding - to be scheduled for December 2022 Committee meeting.