Audit Improvement Plan Activities

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service

Appendix A

DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE

Audit Improvement Plan Activities

KEY FOR RECOMMENDATION PRIORITY

Fundamental (F)	- The organisation is subject to levels of fundamental risk where immediate action should be taken to implement an agreed action plan.
Significant (S)	- Attention to be given to resolving the position as the organisation may be subject to significant risks.
Merits Attention (MA)	- Desirable improvements to be made to improve the control, risk management or governance framework or strengthen its effectiveness.

Risk Management – Jill McCrae, Head of Democratic Services & Corporate Assurance

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Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1.Completion of response plans Completion of Response Plans The development of emergency response plans and department business continuity plans should be programmed on a risk basis to conclude within 2016/17 as planned.	**S**	This has been planned for within the business continuity work programme, and will be programmed in line with the work programme.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Delivery of incident response plans. **Responsibility:** Head of Democratic Services and Corporate Assurance & Watch Manager Business Continuity **Target Date:** 31 December 2017	All Departmental and Station plans are in place and are subject to a testing plan. Although there has been a slight delay in finalising all incident response plans, the major ones are in place and the Strategic Leadership Team are receiving regular updates on progress. There is good confidence that the Service will cope well with any disruption.	On Track

Fixed Assets and Inventories – Ian Thomas, Head of Assets

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1.Fixed Asset Policy Recommend that a detailed documented plan is introduced to ensure that the new PAS55.1 2008 Standard from the Institute of Management in respect of Fixed Assets is implemented within the 2-year timeline.	**S**	PAS 55-1:2008 contains a range of requirements and these have been used as the tasks to be completed to embed the Standard across all five Assets functions (Estates, Fleet, Equipment, Supplies and Foam & Water). The tasks have already been prioritised into a three year programme of work and have been allocated to appropriate management roles through Sycle. The next stage is to produce a more detailed project plan as described in the recommendation. This work has been delayed by the need to prioritise other risk critical work, in particular the need to maintain legal compliance. The Department has faced a significant challenge caused by the need to recruit and train staff to fill vacancies. the work required to recruit and train	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Ensure PAS55.1 2008 Standard is implemented within the 3-year timeline **Responsibility:** Director of Service Support **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	A report has been discussed at this Committee in July and at the Authority in September. There has been progress with the development of the PAS 55 systems approach to asset management with the asset management strategy approximately 50% complete. All procedures from the former services have either been consolidated or new ones written. There has been significant progress with the identification of software systems within the department with procurement underway for the replacement of the two existing equipment management databases with one modern system that will allow the Service to manage its equipment assets effectively and efficiently. The fleet systems are being merged into one system with the target date of the end of march 2018 for full functionality. The stores system is being consolidated	On Track

		18 new members of staff has been significant, as has the disruption caused by 18 vacancies in a Department of 50 staff. The situation with regard to this recommendation is further complicated by the fact that two of the senior management roles required to develop the plan are currently, or will soon be, vacant. I hope the staff situation will be largely resolved by the end of the year and at this point a more detailed project plan will be developed		into the Agresso finance system to be more efficient and joint working with finance. The estates system is already service wide ensuring a common approach to management. Staffing: The department has a new head of assets and that person started at the end of July. All major managerial roles now have substantive managers except for Equipment Manager which fell vacant at the end of July due to a retirement and a replacement is being recruited, in the meantime an experienced uniformed officer is maintaining the systems and ensuring that the equipment is tested in accordance with our maintenance schedule.	
2.Capitalisation Limits Recommend that a minimum capitalisation limit is introduced to ensure that all significant value items are included within the asset registers, and not just relying on the requirement of an inspection. It is acknowledged that a number of lesser valued items do require inclusion on the registers due to the inspection requirement and these should override the capitalisation requirement.	**MA**	There has been an informal caplitalisation limit in place for a number of years. This will be firmed up in consultation with finance.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Minimum Capitalisation limits to be introduced. **Responsibility:** Director of Service Support **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	Significant assets require a range of planned and reactive work to ensure they remain fit for purpose and the organisation remains legally compliant, these assets therefore have cradle to grave records. This requirement means virtually all assets of significant value are recorded, however there	On Track

| | | | | are a few significant assets that do not require planned maintenance and as such would not require records for this reason, but they are of such value that they should be recorded and for that reason a minimum capitalisation limit will be agreed before the end of the financial year. The department has developed a specification for an asset management system which will address this issue. it has gone through the procurement phase early in July 17 with the view to it being in service end of March 2018. | |

Complaints, Whistleblowing, Anti-Fraud, Corruption and Bribery – Lisa Smith, Information Manager

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1.Complaint Prioritisation Recommend that DWFRS consider introducing a prioritization scale for the complaints received to allow more serious complaints to be addressed as a priority.	MA	All complaints are allocated to an officer to handle within 3 working days regardless of priority. It is rarely an issue for these timescales to be met. However, we will introduce this priority rating as a means of alerting the officer of the potential significance/impact of a compliant. Development work with ICT is programmed for May 2017.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Complaint Priortisation - introduce prioritisation scale **Responsibility:** Information Manager and Head of Information & Communications **Target Date:** 31 August 2017	The ICT development work is complete. The system is being tested for training during September.	Complete
2.Team Training Recommend that training in the processes, procedures and systems of the adopted Dorset FRS complaints approach is undertaken as soon as possible to establish a single, consistent and quality approach is established throughout the combined Authority.	MA	One single system is used by the central Information Management team. Ex-Dorset officers receive automated alerts about complaints and can input their own investigation details directly. At this stage, Ex-Wiltshire officers who are allocated a complaint are notified manually and are being supported by the team for inputting their	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Team Training in the processes, procedures and systems to be undertaken **Responsibility:** Information Manager **Target Date:** 29 September 2017	Training on the amended system has been programmed in and will be delivered to key managers between 27 September – 12 October. This will cover use of the new system as well as a refresher on the Services complaints handling procedure.	Complete

| | | investigations/outcomes. Once the Service has migrated to a single domain this will no longer be necessary. Training for all Officers against the procedure, process and system will be provided at this stage, and once further development work is completed by ICT. | |

Health & Safety Migration – John Lincoln, Senior Health & Safety Advisor

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1.No issues were identified No issues were identified as a result of our audit fieldwork on this occasion which we consider of significance to warrant a formal recommendation. However further items may be identified within the Executive Summary for the specific area.	MA	None Required. Senior managers will continue to monitor and review the current performance and migration plans, reporting to Finance, Governance and Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** No issues were identified **Responsibility:** Health and Safety Advisor **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	Good progress to date. Production has been aligned with the procedure planning register. The migration plan remains on track. Member champions continue to be engaged on progress.	On Track

Information Management System Migration – Bob Ford, Head of Strategic Planning and Knowledge Management

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1.Information Management System Migration Given that the information systems migration transition is at an early stage it is recommended that a further audit(s) review(s) be scheduled within the 2017/18 Audit Plan covering this topic. This is to ensure the framework is embedded and operating effectively, and that the schedule remains realistic for the targeted two-year duration.	MA	The systems migration plan will continue to be monitored and reviewed by senior officers on a monthly and quarterly basis reporting to Members in line with the agreed arrangements.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Further Audit(s) Review(s) to be scheduled in 2017/18 Audit Plan **Responsibility:** Head of Strategic Planning and Knowledge Management **Target Date:** 31 August 2017	An updated audit was undertaken in July and at the time of reporting officers are waiting for the audit report to be delivered. This recommendation is therefore complete and will be replaced if the updated audit has any recommendations to make	Complete

Key Financial Controls – Ian Cotter,
Head of Financial Services

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1.Budget Holder Meetings When Budget holders meet with the management accountants we recommend that a schedule of action points are prepared after each meeting which can be tracked to ensure all suggested actions are completed.	S	We plan to ensure this process is in place from the 2017/18 financial year.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Schedule of Action Points to ensure all actions are completed **Responsibility:** Principal Financial Accountant **Target Date:** 31 August 2017	Meetings with budget managers have commenced to discuss expenditure against budgets to 31 July 2017. Templates have been drawn up for use by Accounting Technicians and other finance staff during their meetings with budget managers so that action points can be recorded and allocated to people. These templates are now in use.	Complete
2.Agresso Training Whilst training on Agresso has been provided to relevant staff, we recommend that a programme of regular training on the Agresso system is introduced to ensure all users remain competent in its use.	MA	We will establish a regular programme of training from 2017/18. This will ensure new staff are trained, as well as maintaining competence of existing staff.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Programme of training on Agresso System **Responsibility:** Financial Systems Manager **Target Date:** 31 August 2017	Financial Accountants now have a plan of action for an Agresso training programme. Use of the ICT Trainers has been confirmed. We are developing training notes and guidance for the Trainers so that they are prepared for taking on the training of new users.	Complete

3. Accounting Timetable of Operational Activities We recommend that an accounting timetable is introduced which identifies what tasks need to be completed by whom and by when. This schedule should be available to all Finance staff to ensure the department are all working to the same objective.	MA	We already have in place an established timetable for the accounts close-down process. We will look to introduce a timetable covering other regular control processes.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Production of accounting timetable **Responsibility:** Principal Financial Accountant **Target Date:** 31 October 2017	An initial list of tasks has been drawn up from the 'to-do' lists of the Principal Financial Accountants. This now needs to be widened to include all accounting tasks within the finance team. The target date has been extended until 31 October 2017, to reflect workload issues related to closing the accounts.	On Track

Cultural Alignment Review – Mick Stead, Director of Prevention and Protection

1.Branding of digital communication It is recommended that areas which remain branded as the former Authority should be identified and re-branded as soon as possible in order to encourage the transition to a single recognised identity.	**MA**	Agreed and will be actioned as soon as possible.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Areas that remain branded as former Authority to be re-branded as soon as possible **Responsibility:** Head of Information & Communications **Target Date:** 31 October 2017	All stations have new DWFRS branded signage. A further programme for internal branding and signage is taking place between July and October, following approval of the new Community Safety Plan in June. This will focus on Service priorities and values in line with the new corporate branding. The corporate style guidelines provide consistent templates for corporate communications such as email signatures, letters and business cards. A review is being carried out to provide some further corporate consistency to Service social media accounts.	On Track

Communications – Vikki Shearing, Head of Information & Communications

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1.Combined Communication Policy We recommend that an overarching Communication policy is introduced collating all the individual communication documents and procedures into a single location.	MA	The internal communications strategy and supporting procedures will be reviewed to ensure clear procedural alignment. This will be incorporated into a wider review of policies that will be undertaken during the coming year.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Introduce Communication policy to ensure all communication documents are in a single location **Responsibility:** Head of Information & Communications **Target Date:** 31 December 2017	Work will commence in January 2018	On Track
2.External Communication Policy The Service considers implementing a specific external communications strategy into the Combined Communication policy	S	We will consider the requirements of an external engagement strategy as part of ongoing work associated with our performance management and partnership arrangements	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Implementing an External Communications Strategy **Responsibility:** Head of Information & Communications **Target Date:** 01 April 2018	Work will commence in January 2018	On Track

3.Events Handling Procedure The Service should establish a realistic target date for the completion of the 'Events Handling Procedure'	**MA**	The delivery of this procedure has already been prioritised for 2017/18 and will be completed at the end of the summer events period	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Target date to be set for completion of Events Handling Procedure **Responsibility:** Media and Communications Manager **Target Date:** 30 November 2017	This work is being aligned to timescales for roll out of Office 365. The procedure will be developed once this has been achieved.	On Track
4.Contact Database The Service should establish a target date for the completion of the contact database	**MA**	A media contact database exists within the department and the intention is to extend this database to include key stakeholders during the coming year	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Establish target date for completion of Contact Database **Responsibility:** Media and Communications Manager **Target Date:** 30 October 2017	The existing contacts database will be enhanced during September and October.	On Track