Audit Improvement Plan Activities

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service

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

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 Strategic Risk and Corporate Assurance & Watch Manager Business Continuity **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	The Service has good business continuity arrangements in place that are aligned to British Standard, BS ISO 22301:2012 25999 "Business Continuity Management System" and the Business Continuity Institute's (BCI) "Good Practice Guidelines 2018". The Service has a full suite of Station and Departmental plans and, aligned to Service, local and national risk, have appropriate incident response plans. All plans are reviewed, tested and exercised in line with the Service procedure and best practice.	Complete

				As this audit task is now complete, and in line with business as usual, the Strategic Leadership Team will continue to receive regular updates on progress to ensure that we remain confident of the Service's business continuity arrangements.	

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 two-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 requirement 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 18 new members of staff has been significant,	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Ensure PAS55.1 2008 Standard is implemented within the 3-year timeline. **Responsibility:** Director – Service Support & Head of Assets **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	The approach to harmonising the Service's property, Fleet, Water & Foam, Stores and Equipment is being tracked and managed through our performance management system known as Sycle. This work has been aligned to the requirements and principles associated with PAS 55-1:2008. This has been achieved by building our plans into SYCLE. These plans allow us to fully integrate with and inform the Service Delivery Plan.	Complete

	as has the disruption caused by 18 vacancies in a Department of 50 staff. The situation with regards 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 that the staffing situation will largely be resolved by the end of the year and at this point a more detailed project plan will be developed.	

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 March 2018	This has been incorporated into the Corporate Governance policy, approved by the Authority at the June 2018 meeting.	Complete
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	The Services approach to external communications is included in the media handling procedure, social media procedure and website management procedure. The department is also a key stakeholder in work which is being led by the HR team during 2018/19 with regards to branding. The outcome of this work will impact on our external communications approach as well as our recruitment, retention and development procedures.	Complete

			This action can therefore be completed as it will be delivered as part of the wider project aligned to the 'one Team' approach risk, monitored regularly by SLT.	
2. **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:** 31 July 2018	The Events Handling Procedure has been completed and will be published in September once the supporting system is in place.	Delayed

Information Systems Migration –
Bob Ford, Head of Strategic Planning &
Knowledge Management

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1. **Information Migration Procedure** We acknowledge that the documentation of the procedure for managing projects is a work programme target for the Head of Strategic Planning and Knowledge Management, but believe that a formal target date should be established for completion as this represents a key aspect of control within the process.	**MA**	The draft project management procedure will be finalised and issued.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Production of Project Management Procedure. **Responsibility:** Head of Strategic Planning and Knowledge Management **Target Date:** 31 July 2018	Projects are managed using a 'Prince 2' Lite (Projects IN Controlled Environment) approach and workflows based on this methodology are built into the Corporate Performance Tool, Sycle. Training for project managers is through an e-learning package although this has been strengthened with specific Prince 2 Foundation Training. The support for project managers is being strengthened with the appointment of dedicated project advisors within the Communities Programme and Assets teams for a number of key projects. The draft procedure has gone out on consultation and is being reviewed in the light of the comments made.	On Track

IT Health Check –
Chris Donaldson, Head of ICT

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1. Intrusion Attempts There is currently no reporting conducted on the intrusion attempts blocked by the Firewall. To provide a greater level of understanding for the senior management and to support continual investment needs, it is felt that an appropriate report detailing intrusion attempts blocked should be produced as an information item identifying the inherent risks being managed.	**MA**	ICT is currently purchasing and installing a product (Alien Vault) which, amongst other things, will monitor and report on logs from multiple devices. This will allow us to produce reports from the firewalls as well as the system which protects against spam e-mails and mail virus attacks.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Reporting for intrusion attempts blocked by Firewall **Responsibility:** Head of ICT **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	System now on-line and configured. Single report delivery for Alien Vault, Firewalls and IronPort being delivered - First full report delivered to SLT within July.	Complete

Business Case Management –
Bob Ford, Head of Strategic Planning &
Knowledge Management

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1. **Control of Business Case submission** The Service should introduce a control record of proposed and agreed business cases to inform future planning and analysis	MA	Director of Finance will establish this register	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** The Service should introduce a control record of proposed and agreed business cases to inform future planning and analysis. **Responsibility:** Director of Finance **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	On initiation of a business case, a formal register has been created and will be maintained by Finance, which will record the business case through various stages of the process.	Complete
2. **Financial Sign off** A formal sign-off document is produced, which includes a pre-financial sign-off confirming the case is viable and within budget prior to full SLT sign-off	S	Director of Finance will establish this process	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** A formal sign-off document to be produced, which includes a pre-financial sign off confirming the case is viable and within budget prior to full Strategic Leadership Team sign-off. **Responsibility:** Director of Finance **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	Having reviewed the governance around the business case process, the process has been strengthened and aligned to limits within financial regulations and appropriate approvals through Service Delivery Teams (SDT), Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and, if required, through Members. This process initiates a business case and maps out the route for approval depending on the nature of the business case.	Complete

				The Finance Department will validate each business case prior to submission and approval.	
3. Delegation of approval We recommend that a de-minimus limit is set to smaller business case review and approved thus freeing up the time of the SLT to concentrate on the more significant business cases for the Service	**MA**	The Service is currently establishing cross-departmental delivery teams centered on the delivery of each of the corporate priorities. These are to be chaired by Directors.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** De-minimus limits to be set for smaller business case reviews **Responsibility:** Director of Finance **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	The de-minimis level has been set at £10k for an 'in-year bid' which was submitted to the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) for approval as part of the business case process.	Complete

Strategic Planning –
Bob Ford, Head of Strategic Planning &
Knowledge Management

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1. **Strategic Plan Training** We recommend that all levels of management are engaged in the process of understanding the strategic planning process and their roles and responsibilities	**MA**	Agreed. As part of the strengthening of the Service delivery plan, this is in hand. Cross departmental delivery teams are also being established to support this new way of working	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Engagement of all levels of management regarding the strategic planning process and their roles and responsibilities **Responsibility:** Head of Strategic Planning and Knowledge Management **Target Date:** 01 October 2018	Awareness of the strategic planning process has been limited to Heads of Departments and Directors. The strategic assessment for 2018/19 has been complete and has resulted in a revamp of the Community Safety Plan and Service Delivery Plan, to strengthen the linkages with partner outcomes and went before Members in June. Members of the Eyes and Ears Forum, who act as a sounding board for their team members, have been briefed to support the dissemination of information. A station action plan page has been developed and is being enhanced to bring the whole process to life and to spread the understanding of the strategic planning process.	On Track

Strategic Workforce Planning –
Jenny Long, Director of People Services

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1. **Strategic Workforce Plan** It is recommended that the Strategic Workforce Plan document is reviewed and prepared on an annual basis to ensure that all areas are considered prior to being put into the Strategic Assessment Process and the Service Delivery Plan.	**MA**	This has been agreed.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Strategic Workforce Plan document to be reviewed and prepared on an annual basis. **Responsibility:** Director - People Services **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	The Annual Workforce Plan is completed annually in August, work to developed this for 2018 is underway. In support of this work a revised investigative framework has been communicated and responses will help to deliver the Annual Plan ongoing.	Complete
2. **Key Performance Indicators** It is recommended that the KPIs are regularly reviewed to ensure they reflect current processes. It is further recommended that all the stakeholders of the service are considered when deciding which KPIs to produce as the process develops.	**MA**	This has been agreed.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Review KPIs to ensure these reflect current processes. **Responsibility:** Director - People Services **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	A suite of KPIs have been developed for People Services, to include a number relating to strategic workforce planning. KPIs are reviewed by the People Delivery Team on a quarterly basis.	Complete

Key Financial Controls –
Ian Cotter, Head of Financial Services

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1. **Financial Regulations Review** It is recommended that the Authority undertake the regular review of the Financial Regulations to ensure they remain appropriate for the Authority purposes.	MA	This is agreed.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Regular review of Financial Regulations **Responsibility:** Head of Financial Services **Target Date:** 31 March 2019	The latest version of Financial Regulations was approved by the Fire & Rescue Authority in February 2018, following a review through the work looking at future governance arrangements. This will now be reviewed on an annual basis.	Complete
2. **Budget Meetings** It is recommended that formal budget meetings between budget managers and Finance recommence as soon as it is practically possible.	MA	Formal budget meetings will recommence as soon as possible, and for the 1st Quarter of the 2018/19 financial year reporting cycle at the latest.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Recommence budget manager meetings as soon as possible. **Responsibility:** Head of Financial Services **Target Date:** 31 July 2018	Budget meetings have commenced for the first quarter 2018/19	Complete
3. **Budget Structure** It is recommended that consideration be given to reviewing the budgetary control system, potentially reducing the number of budget managers, allowing formal budget discussions to be focused on key financial issues.	MA	We will review the budgetary control system with Heads of Departments during the 2018/19 financial year.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Review of budgetary control system. **Responsibility:** Head of Financial Services **Target Date** 31 December 2018	To be reviewed through 2019/20 budget setting process	On Track

4.	**Historical Ledger Balances** It is recommended that the remaining pre-combination debtor and creditor balances are cleared prior to the end of the Financial year.	**MA**	This work is already in hand and will be completed prior to year-end.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Clear remaining pre-combination debtor and creditor balances. **Responsibility:** Head of Financial Services **Target Date:** 31 March 2018	This work has been completed as part of our closedown processes.	Complete
5.	**Annual Compliance Testing** It is recommended that annual routine tests are carried out on the Agresso system to ensure that they continue to deliver accurate and timely results given a set of planned inputs.	**MA**	We recognise the need to maintain a view regarding the functionality of the system and would anticipate that this is something that is covered through the work of internal and external audit also. The system is stable and we have a test database that can, and is used, when system changes are made.	**Recommendation/Corrective Action:** Annual routine tests on Agresso System on-going and as required. **Responsibility:** Head of Financial Services **Target Date:** 31 March 2019	Testing has been undertaken and will be reviewed on an annual basis.	Complete