

Crawley Borough Council

Report to the Audit and Governance Committee

2 December 2014

Internal Audit Progress Report as at 10th November 2014



Report of the Audit and Risk Manager – FIN 350

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Committee has a responsibility to review the Internal Audit Progress report to ensure that action has been taken by relevant managers on risk based issues identified by Internal Audit..

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to receive this report and note progress to date.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 The Committee has a responsibility to ensure that action has been taken by relevant managers on risk based issues identified by Internal Audit.

4. Background

Work Completed

- 4.1 Since the last report, as at 31st August 2014 the following reviews have been completed:

Audit Title	Audit Opinion
Commercial Properties	Full Assurance
Fraud Arrangements	Substantial Assurance
Bewbush Surplus	N/A

Work in Progress

4.2 The reviews in progress and other work that we have undertaken in the period are shown at Appendix A.

4.2 High priority findings in this period

There are no high priority findings to report at this time.

4.3 Follow Up Audits

Data Management

This review looked at how data is held at the Council, to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 2000 and to meet business requirements.

We reported at the last meeting that service areas had advised which folders they wish to retain and who should have access to these areas. These have been sent to the ICT Helpdesk to action.

I have been advised by the Service Delivery Manager that the work that has been requested of ICT has been completed. However, at the time of writing the report, I am unable to confirm this.

I will provide a verbal update at the meeting on the status of the recommendations.

Rent Deposit Scheme (now Crawley Deposit Service - CDS)

I reported at the last meeting that an Accounts Receivable Assistant was employed on 11th August on a two year contract to assist in recovering rent deposit scheme debts.

We have undertaken a further follow up review and can confirm that progress is being made on the management of these debts.

All the rent deposit scheme accounts are now being managed between the Private Sector Housing Manager's team and the Income Control Officer's team, the former dealing with accounts set up for current tenants and the latter with former tenant accounts.

All the current tenant accounts have been transferred into FMS, which generates automated letters when / if the debtor defaults on their repayment agreement. Regular management information is available and this shows the status of all debts.

A number of measures have been introduced to assist tenants in avoiding debt. This includes improved working arrangements with the West Sussex Credit Union to ensure that all new tenants open a savings account with the Credit Union prior to moving into their CDS sponsored tenancy whereby tenants agree to save on a regular basis with the Credit Union towards their own deposit.

It is considered premature to report on the comparative totals for the current year and previous years as changes made are new and have not yet had sufficient time to show

that they are effective. I will therefore report again to this Committee at the meeting in March 2015.

4.4 Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

Between 1st September and 10th November 2014, we have processed 112 requests and of these, 12 responses were sent to the requester outside of the 20 working day deadline. This was due to annual leave and the complexity of the requests. We wrote to the requester in all cases to apologise for the delay and provided the information as quickly as possible.

FOI Publication Scheme

As I reported at the last meeting of this Committee, The Freedom of Information Act requires every public authority to have a publication scheme, approved by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and to publish information covered by the scheme. This publication scheme commits the Council to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities

Crawley Borough Council's scheme is currently being reviewed but to date, this has not been completed.

It is anticipated that significant progress will have been made at the time of the next meeting of this Committee in March 2015 and I will advise on this at that meeting.

5. **Background Papers**

5.1 None.

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ENDS

Internal Audit Plans 2013/2014 and 2014/2015

Progress Report as at 31st August 2014

Audit	Audit Plan Year	Audit Opinion- Assurance	Number of High Priority Findings	Comments
A. Work Completed in the Current Period				
Commercial Properties	2014/15	Full		
Fraud Awareness	2014/15	Substantial		
Bewbush Surplus	2014/15	N/A		
B. Work In Progress				
FOI Requests – day to day work	2014/15			
Waste and Recycling Post Contract Review	2014/15			
Council Tax	2014/15			
Information Security	2014/15			
Payroll	2014/15			
Other Work				
	2014/15			We have undertaken a substantial amount of work at MSDC in the period.
Mid Sussex District Council FOI Publication Scheme	2014/15			Ongoing
C. Follow Up Audits				
Rent Deposit Scheme	2014/15			Action is being taken on the recommendations made.