

Appendix 2 – Update on Priority 1 and 2 Audit Recommendations at 30th April 2022

Audit Report	Recommendation/Agreed Action	Priority Scoring	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress	Progress RAG Status
Health & Safety (2/8/21)	In the short term we will request that an existing Portfolio Holder accepts the responsibility of championing health and safety. In the medium to long term we will look into health and safety being a specific responsibility of Portfolio Holder. We will endeavour to provide an overview of the Health and Safety Management System to Members to enable them to understand the health and safety risks within the organisation and help them to act in their capacity as critical friends. This may be done by video that can be reviewed remotely. We will also provide a quarterly update to Members on the Health and Safety work carried out to keep everyone safe, including performance against key targets set.	2	Health and Safety Specialist	31/8/21	Members Induction Courses developed and Member's activity risk assessment complete. Next stage is to book delivery dates - aiming for June 2022. Proposal - Members to be invited to half day session (TEAMS) where they will receive the H & S Induction and also will be taken through the body of the risk assessment to ensure all are familiar with recommended safety control measures.	In Progress
Health & Safety (2/8/21)	Risk Management Scoping Sessions have been delayed by a Health and Safety Partner leaving. They should now be completed by the end of July 2021. We are continuing with recruitment to fill the vacant post.	2	Health and Safety Specialist	31/8/21	Exercise completed during April & May to ensure that all generic risk assessments across all teams are communicated (and declaration sheets completed for audit trail), this in ongoing. Tier 3 continue to monitor risk action plans on a monthly basis - progress stats provided to ADs. Works still outstanding to bring all teams to 100% completion - stats available in Audit & Governance Reports.	In Progress
Health & Safety (2/8/21)	We will investigate the potential of iTrent to record the Training Needs Analysis, Learning and Development Records, develop training plans and produce detailed analysis on the training delivered.	2	Health and Safety Specialist	31/8/21	HR/PEOPLE Team has completed an exercise with all Depot Operations Managers to ensure that all compliancy training has been documented. Triggers built in for refresher training. Also, an additional indicator has been added to the spreadsheet for managers to identify 'operational minimum' levels where compliancy training is not 100% complete (where services can still be delivered by employees with in-date training certificates), this additional indicator will avoid unnecessary Safety Action Notices being applied and lost service time. Work continues to address compliancy training other than Depot Operations.	In Progress
Housing Compliance Governance & Reporting (2020/21)	The Compliance Manager has appointed specialist Contractors to expedite the programme of property inspections for water safety. They expect to have completed this by March 2022.		Compliance Manager	31/3/22	Specialist Contractors have completed all Water Risk Assessments to all communal apparatus.	COMPLETED

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Data Centre (2021/22)	To support ICT management oversight of resilience testing, it was agreed that a formal program would be introduced to detail the periodic tests undertaken and results recorded. The frequency of these tests would be determined by management according to the risk arising. These tests would be designed to ensure that all resilient equipment was able to function as expected in the event of a recovery or continuity event arising.	2	Head of ICT	31/03/22	As part of the monthly 'Patch Day' operation performance of the resilient connections (which are used during the patching operation) are now monitored to ensure the continuity of connections are available if required.	COMPLETED
Data Centre (2021/22)	It was agreed that an examination of the PDC's UPS would be undertaken to confirm that load balancing was in place, and additionally to replace the SDC UPS. The Head of ICT will liaise with Facilities Management to ensure these actions are completed	2	Head of ICT	31/03/22	SDC Uninterruptable Power Supply has been replaced. On investigation the UPS at both the PDC and SDC are optimally load balanced.	COMPLETED
Data Centre (2021/22)	To improve physical security at the Council's data centre facilities it was agreed to: a) Document the process required to gain entry to the data centres along with details of those that would be required to authorise access. This process could be documented as a distinct policy or absorbed by existing Information Security Policies used by the Council. b) Review and reduce where practicable the number of cards that allow access to the data centres.	2	Head of ICT	28/02/22	Data Centre policies are under review as part of the LGR Cyber Security sub-workstream and new policies will be drafted for approval. Data Centre access has been reviewed and unnecessary access has been removed.	COMPLETED
Data Centre (2021/22)	It was agreed to conduct an inspection of both data centres to confirm the inventory details of all equipment located in these facilities and to apply any updates to the Council's inventory records where necessary.	2	Head of ICT	31/12/21	This is now complete.	COMPLETED
Risk Management (2021/22)	We will ensure that services will identify and document key risks. We will look to align this with the Unitary project.	2	Business Intelligence & Performance Manager	31/3/22	We have worked with the Asst Directors to identify & document the risks for their services. These will continue to be monitored on a regular basis. We have now implemented a single Sharepoint risk register, which contains details of all service, directorate & corporate risks. This list can easily be filtered at AD level to isolate risks for each service area. Details of our risk audit and key actions have been provided to the element of the LGR programme that is looking at risk.	COMPLETED
Risk Management (2021/22)	We will feed the finding (the need for Service level Risk Registers, better analysis of Risk data and strengthened independent risk management) to the Unitary Project Management Team for consideration as part of the Unitary process.	2	Assistant Director - Customer	31/3/22	SWT officers are working as part of the risk management workstream within the LGR programme and have shared the SWT audit actions & audit report.	COMPLETED

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GDPR (2021/22)	The existing Complaints and FOI reporting system will be updated to include an overview of requests received under GDPR, such as SARs, breaches and amendment requests for onward distribution to senior managers.	2	Customer Service Manager	31/3/22	The Complaints and FOI Report has been amended to include SARs and is shared with SMT weekly.	COMPLETED
Climate Change	To create the risk register for the Partnership.	2	Programme Manager for Climate Change	31/3/22	There is now a risk register for the SWT/SDC partnership located on the partnership sharepoint page https://swtcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/PRJ10154/Lists/Risks/AllItems.aspx The risk register is reviewed on a regular basis via the partnership review meetings between SWT and SDC leads.	COMPLETED
Purchasing Cards	Pending complete review and restructure of accounts and cards, the AD Finance will complete interim review and reduce existing card credit limits where appropriate to minimise risk. Next, the card scheme 're-launch' will require Asst Directors to agree card limits for individual officers in their respective teams; Assistance Director - Finance (or Deputy) will independently review limits requested, challenging where necessary and approve. NB -An initial review has been completed by the AD – Finance and the Corporate Finance Manager and card credit limits will be reduced significantly. This will be implemented now with an initial advice to the cardholders to identify material concerns about reduced limits to ensure business continuity is not adversely affected. Essentially, new limits have been agreed.	2	Assistant Director - Finance	27/4/22	This is now complete.	COMPLETED
Purchasing Cards	Reminder to all cardholders/ co-ordinating officers of requirement to complete logs and provide transaction evidence promptly including VAT invoice/receipt where appropriate. Failure to provide fully evidenced transaction logs on timely basis will be escalated to Asst Directors or Directors. Repeated delays or incomplete logs will result in card being withdrawn or blocked. NB This action was completed following the issue of the Draft Report.	1	Assistant Director - Finance	30/4/22	This is now complete.	COMPLETED

There are a further 10 actions listed below where the due date is further ahead and detailed updates will be reported nearer the time.

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Data Centre	It was agreed to formally document emergency procedures relating to the data centres and that training would be provided to the appropriate staff according to their roles and responsibilities. This would support the Council's compliance with Health and Safety legislation	2	Head of ICT	30/06/22	In Progress
GDPR	A final sweep of the paper data held will be completed by the end of January, after which a discussion with Somerset CC to understand their storage system will be held. This is to establish whether paper data that needs to be retained can be incorporated into their storage facility. The overall review of paper data held, and the storage requirements will be completed thereafter.	2	Records Officer	31/12/22	In Progress
Climate Change	To ensure that the business cases developed include the timescales budgets and resources.	2	Programme Manager for Climate Change	Ongoing	In Progress
Housing Rents	The Housing Service has an established process to maximise uptake of capital works by tenants. This includes major contracts including specifications for tenant liaison as part of the implementation by contractors. This tenant liaison will include attempts at written and phone contact to persuade the tenant to participate. Where this is unsuccessful, the Tenancy Management team will also try and advocate the case to the tenant to allow access to undertake the works. We will investigate the option to bring in a bespoke Resident Liaison Officer into the structure, if this is affordable, to improve uptake of major works – particularly for tenants who are vulnerable and anxious about disruption.	2	AD (Housing Property) & AD (Housing & Communities)	30/09/22	In Progress
Housing Rents	It needs to be clear that the issue with high levels of voids at our Extra Care schemes is as a direct result of the Extra Care Placement panels not working properly and primarily the lack of (or poor quality) of referrals from Adults Social Care to place suitable residents into void properties. This issue has been raised by all of the Somerset Housing Providers – including at a Housing Directors meeting to the Adults Social Care Strategic Commissioning Manager. The action we commit to is to ensure the Lettings team challenges whether each Void property can be let outside of the agreed placement policy to a suitable household if the Panel is unable to find a suitable placement. This should lead to a reduction in the current number of Extra Care void properties.	2	Lettings Manager	30/06/22	In Progress
Purchasing Cards	The policy and guidance are being reviewed and updated. This will include tighter rules including usage to be limited to named cardholder only. Training and guidance will be provided to all cardholders as part of a card scheme 're-launch. [Note: Card holders will only be allowed to receive / hold cards with confirmed acceptance and understanding of policy and guidance.	2	Corporate Finance Officer	31/7/22	In Progress
Purchasing Cards	Process to manage registration of card and policy acceptance to be reviewed and implemented. Recent agreement with bank that opportunity to be taken to replace all cards with new Mastercard debit cards; this will ensure cards will only be provided following declaration of acceptance by prospective card holder.	2	Corporate Finance Officer	31/7/22	In Progress

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Purchasing Cards	The policy and guidance are being reviewed and updated. This will tighten rules and clarify that usage shall be limited to the named cardholder only, with misuse subject to card blocking and/ or disciplinary action. In meantime, cardholders will be reminded they are responsible for all transactions on their cards; and requested to cease sharing details or allowing others to use their card pending the policy review that is underway. Departments will be required to nominate a co-ordinating officer who may make on-line purchases on behalf of colleagues so that card details are not passed to other officers; those transactions will be verified by originating officers.	1	Corporate Finance Officer	31/7/22	In Progress
Purchasing Cards	Process to be reviewed to include confirmation of card administrator/ co-ordinator within cardholders' service areas prior to cards being issued. To ensure independent checks are in place, this may either require card holders to administer their transactions with a nominated second officer verifying, or a nominated administrator administering all department transactions (not same as cardholder). New guidance to include requirement for cardholder to identify budget and coding in advance of purchase, or in timely manner post purchase when used under urgency, and good practice for maintaining logs and coding after each transaction.	2	Systems and Project Accountant	31/7/22	In Progress
Purchasing Cards	Cardholders will be reminded of current policy and responsibilities; and advised that policy is under review. In addition, the following actions linked to findings above will further strengthen the controls around the use of cards: - The process for independent monitoring is to be reviewed and will include independent checks on processes - Rules around card usage will be tightened and will prohibit card-sharing - A review and reduction of card limits will take place - A reminder will be issued to cardholders/administrators of the requirement to complete logs and provide transaction evidence promptly. Internal Audit requested to complete further audit investigation into possible non-compliance, with any clear misuse escalated to Asst Director or Director for further action.	1	Assistant Director Finance	15/5/22	In Progress