

Appendix 2 – Update on Priority 1 and 2 Audit Recommendations at 31st July 2022

Audit Report	Recommendation/Agreed Action	Priority Scoring	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress	RAG Status
Health & Safety	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	Cllr Benet Allen has assumed the role of H&S Member Champion for the 22/23 municipal year leading the organisation into the new Somerset Council. Reports are taken quarterly to SMT and Audit & Governance committee to provide updates on all H&S metrics alongside the improvement programme. H&S training was delayed due to KL absence but the team continue to develop a plan to deliver this with a view to how we can assist the LGR programme too.	COMPLETE
Health & Safety	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	The compliance training figures to include upcoming expirations, lapsed tickets, those allowed to expire due to operational minimums already being met are all shared and discussed in the monthly Tier 2 senior management meeting. the figures are used by the L&D function to forecast training costs and ensure future training is booked.	COMPLETE
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	This is now completed	COMPLETE
Climate Change	To ensure that the business cases developed include the timescales budgets and resources.	2	Programme Manager for Climate Change	Ongoing	<p>Each action is reviewed individually, by going through the PMO gateway process to launch and monitor any new projects, gateways are approved at the monthly Directorate Board.</p> <p>The partnership has quarterly meetings with the member led consultation panel. A highlight report is produced for this meeting providing updates on all projects.</p> <p>We do not currently have a mechanism in place to identify carbon savings, this is one of the LGR workstreams within the Environment and Climate Change Sub Group 1 (Climate Change and Water)</p>	COMPLETE

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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	This issue has now been addressed with available properties now allocated. The Lettings team had to step outside of the panel letting process and allocate extra care properties to existing SWT tenants from within our sheltered housing housing stock - sheltered housing tenants moved on because of need. Panel meetings are being held on a regular basis where applicant referrals are been considered.	COMPLETE
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	Extension to review period agreed by PF with SWAP team due to SWAP capacity and priorities. Close out meeting 30 June 2022 with final report imminent. Mark as Complete.	COMPLETE

There are a further 11 actions listed below where the due date is further ahead and detailed updates will be reported nearer the time.

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Health & Safety	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	H & S Business Partner	31/8/22	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
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
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 Manager	31/8/22	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 Manager	31/8/22	In Progress
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 Manager	31/8/22	In Progress

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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	31/8/22	In Progress
Material Supplies Management	Management should ensure a physical count of all stock levels is performed on an annual basis to ensure that records are bought up to date.	1	Assistant Director – Housing Property	30/04/23	In Progress
Material Supplies Management	Management should introduce a process for vans to be stocked with basic supplies, which are recorded on a van inventory and that it is maintained by operatives, with any surplus stock recorded.	2	Assistant Director – Housing Property	30/09/22	In Progress
Material Supplies Management	Management should restructure and reallocate responsibilities so that only skilled team leaders are approving orders and payments, and this should include the reintroduction of separation of duties in the process.	2	Assistant Director – Housing Property	30/09/22	In Progress
Material Supplies Management	Management should ensure that suppliers only fulfil orders that are supported by an approved requisition, in advance of supply.	2	Assistant Director – Housing Property	30/09/22	In Progress

