

ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING

Audit, Governance & Review
Committee

AGENDA ITEM

5

MEETING DATE

5 October 2016

REPORT NUMBER

EFA/115/16

SUBJECT

Audit Recommendation – Report on Progress Against Action Plans

REPORT BY

The Finance Director & Treasurer, Mike Clayton

PRESENTED BY

The Finance Director & Treasurer, Mike Clayton

SUMMARY

This paper reports on the progress against the action plans developed by the Service in response to audit reports. Items reported as completed in the previous quarter's report have been deleted from the table.

RECOMMENDATION

Members of the Committee are asked to review the progress.

BACKGROUND

This report brings forward the progress made by the Service in response to Audit recommendations.

RISK MANAGEMENT, LEGAL, FINANCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL & EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management, legal, financial, environmental or equality implications from this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of appendices attached to this paper: Table of Recommendations	
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Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
IT General Controls	The information security policy does not include all of the information that should be within such a policy.	The Service will be documenting a full information security policy and this will be completed using ISO 27001 guidance.	ICT Security Officer Dec 2016	On Track
IT General Controls	Backup restore testing is not performed as part of a defined schedule.	The Service will implement a defined schedule to confirm that servers and data can be restored in a continuity event.	ICT Service Manager Jun 2016	Completed
IT General Controls	Information sharing agreements are in place with third parties, however there is not an information sharing register which identifies all of the sharing arrangements in place.	We will complete a register to identify the information that we transfer that will include the transfer methods and the information types. This will ensure that all data is transferred securely.	Senior Information Risk Owner (Finance Director & Treasurer) Dec 2016	On Track
Purchase of New Appliances	The Procurement Strategy requires formal approval	The Strategy will be presented for formal approval by the Policy & Strategy Committee	Purchase and Supply Manager Deferred from August 2016 to January 2017	Revised Date
Risk Management	6 out of 15 control descriptions reviewed were not detailed enough	Drop in risk sessions will be used to advise risk and control owners on adequate description of controls.	Risk and Business Continuity Manager October 2016	On Track
Risk Management	Project owners are not uniformly using JCAD to record risks and controls	The Risk and Business Continuity Manager will assist project managers in maintaining all project risk registers on JCAD	Risk and Business Continuity Manager September 2016	Completed

Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
Risk Management	The Strategic Management Board are not subjecting the Corporate Risk Register to an adequate level of challenge and scrutiny, actively seeking assurances around controls, or ensuring that action plans are in place to reduce specific risk to an acceptable level.	The Strategic Management Board (and the Service Leadership Team) will ensure it fulfils its remit with respect to risk management	Finance Director & Treasurer December 2016	On Track
Risk Management	Members of the Strategic Delivery Board individually review risk registers but do not do so as a group.	This will now sit with the revised Service Leadership Team	Finance Director & Treasurer December 2016	On Track
Risk Management	The Policy & Strategy Committee is not taking an active role in setting and determining risk management policy and strategy	The Committee will fulfil its remit with respect to setting and determining risk management policy and strategy.	Finance Director & Treasurer December 2016	On Track
Risk Management	The Corporate Risk Register presented to the February 2016 Authority meeting included incorrect information under the control details	The reports being produced by JCAD will be reviewed to ensure they are reporting complete information	Risk and Business Continuity Manager December 2016	On Track
Risk Management	The Authority's risk appetite as currently defined is not aligned to the Authority's risk scoring system in such a way as it can be used to assess whether a given risk level is acceptable.	The Authority will review its risk appetite to ensure it can be used to consistently assess whether a given risk level is acceptable or if further action is required.	Risk and Business Continuity Manager September 2016	Completed
Workforce Planning	An implementation plan has not been drafted for the workforce tasks and initiatives due to be undertaken	There will be a formal implementation plan for Initiatives to be rolled out across the Service.	Deputy Director of HR July 2016	Completed

Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
Workforce Planning	Key details of the process for monitoring early retirement had not been identified.	Service operational lead will be identified. The prediction process will be completed for on-call firefighters. The frequency of updates will be communicated. The reporting line for statistics will be identified. The impact on succession planning will be considered.	Head of HR July 2016	Completed
Workforce Planning	Trend analysis had not been undertaken on agency and overtime spends to monitor achievement of objectives within the HR departmental strategy.	Reporting requirements for temporary staffing and overtime will be identified. Adverse trends will be reported to the Workforce Planning group and the Strategic Management Board	Deputy Director of Finance September 2016	Completed

Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
Data Retention	<p>The Record Retention & Disposal Policy is dated December 2013 and has not been reviewed since. The policy states that the review date should have been September 2014.</p> <p>The Policy does not detail: who is responsible for deleting electronic records on key operating systems such as Dream or SAP; and the implication of breaching internal timescales and responsibilities set.</p> <p>Testing throughout this audit has highlighted non-compliance with this policy across all departments and demonstrates a lack of awareness of the Policy.</p>	<p>The Record Retention & Disposal Policy will be updated to include: Those responsible for deleting electronic records on key operating systems such as Dream and SAP. and the implication of breaching internal timescales and responsibilities set.</p> <p>In addition the new policy will be disseminated to all staff and an article published on the staff intranet to emphasise its existence and importance.</p>	<p>Finance Director & Treasurer Sept 2016</p>	Completed
Data Retention	<p>Essex Fire Authority has not provided any training on data retention or data protection</p>	<p>Essex Fire Authority will implement training to all relevant staff on data retention and data protection.</p>	<p>Learning and Development Manager March 2017</p>	On Track

Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
Data Retention	There are no processes in place within HR, Payroll and Finance to identify when records are due for disposal. From our testing we have identified that data has been retained longer than the timeframes detailed in the Record Retention & Disposal Policy.	Essex Fire Authority will conduct an organisation wide review of data retention. This will include: Ensuring there are processes in place to identify when records are due for disposal; Disposing of electronic and hardcopy data in line with the data retention periods in the updated policy; Making decisions corporately or within departments to hold specific data electronically or in hardcopy so that duplicate records do not exist.	Finance Director & Treasurer September 2016	Completed
Data Retention	Contracts Duplicate records have been held electronically and in hardcopy. In addition, data has been retained longer than the data retention period set in policy.	Essex Fire Authority will conduct an organisation wide review of data retention. This will include: Ensuring there are processes in place to identify when records are due for disposal; Disposing of electronic and hardcopy data in line with the data retention periods in the updated policy; Making decisions corporately or within departments to hold specific data electronically or in hardcopy so that duplicate records do not exist.	Purchase & Supply Manager March 2017	On Track
Data Retention	Records of disposal have not been maintained by Payroll and I.T.	The Authority will ensure when data is disposed of a record will be kept by departments in line with the Record Retention & Disposal Policy	Deputy Director of Finance March 2017	On Track
Governance	The governance structure chart does not fully reflect the current committee arrangements.	The Authority will update the governance structure chart to reflect the current governance arrangements.	Service Solicitor & Deputy Clerk December 2016 (was May 2016)	Revised Data

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Governance	There is no formal action plan process in place to demonstrate that the actions agreed at the individual committees are monitored to ensure satisfactory and timely progress has been made	The Authority should implement action logs to add robustness to the process of raising actions at the authority's key governance forums, provide a clear audit trail of actions set and allow for ease of monitoring.	Service Solicitor & Deputy Clerk December 2016 (was May 2016)	Revised Date
Governance	A formal training programme for the Authority's Members is not in place. In addition a training log is not in place to record Members training completion.	The Authority will ensure that training logs are retained for each of its Members and that where training sessions are missed that they are followed up with non-attendees. In addition the Authority will produce a formal training programme for Members.	Service Solicitor & Deputy Clerk December 2016 (was May 2016)	Revised Date
Governance	A self-assessment process is not in place for either the EFA itself or the committees within the governance structure	An annual review of the EFA and sub committees' effectiveness will be introduced to ensure that the forums have achieved their annual objectives and have adhered to their Terms of Reference.	Service Solicitor & Deputy Clerk April 2017 (was October 2016)	Revised Date