

ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING

Audit, Governance & Review
Committee

AGENDA ITEM

6

MEETING DATE

19 April 2017

REPORT NUMBER

EFA/058/17

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. A further review of information governance is being carried out by Essex County Council to identify the action needed to meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations in May 2018. This report will be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.	ICT Security Officer Amended date June 2017 – Recruitment of ICT Security Officer unsuccessful	Superseded
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. A further review of information governance is being carried out by Essex County Council to identify the action needed to meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations in May 2018. This report will be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.	Senior Information Risk Owner (Finance Director & Treasurer) Amended date June 2017 – Links to initial work on 2018 data protection regulations	Superseded
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 Amended date June 2017 – National strategy under review	On Track

Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
Data Retention	Essex Fire Authority has not provided any training on data retention or data protection	Essex Fire Authority will implement training to all relevant staff on data retention and data protection.	Learning and Development Manager March 2017	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	Completed
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	Completed
HR Training & Development	The Learning and Development Policy had not been reviewed since April 2015	An annual review of the Learning and Development Policy will be undertaken	Director of Transformation April 2017	Completed
HR Training & Development	The 2016/17 organisational development plan had not been formally approved and evidenced as such.	Annual review and approval of the annual organisational development plan will be formally evidenced.	Director of Transformation April 2017	Completed

Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
HR Training & Development	Training needs for general support staff are identified according to their person specifications. In two cases the person specifications had not been reviewed since March and June 2015.	All person specifications will be updated to include the date of next review and will be reviewed annually.	Assistant Director HR Dec 2017	On Track
HR Training & Development	We have been unable to test whether key training for general staff has been undertaken as we were unable to confirm what training should have been undertaken as part of their roles.	Key training requirements will be identified by employee for all staff/officer roles. In addition the procurement and implementation of a new learning management system to effectively record workforce training will continue.	Director of Transformation Sep 2017	On Track
HR Training & Development	The Service has not documented the core training requirements through the ranks	The Service will implement a document outlining the key training requirements through the ranks and the regular mandatory training which must be completed.	Director of Transformation Sep 2017	On Track
HR Training & Development	Command is creating a manual central spreadsheet of all firefighters, their individual training requirements and record of current training. This spreadsheet is a work in progress. This exercise has highlighted training data on TEM and the manual excel spreadsheets does not reconcile.	The central command training record spreadsheet will be reviewed by an independent officer to ensure the input is accurate. On completion, the spreadsheet will be signed off by management as complete and accurate.	Director of Transformation April 2017	On Track

Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
HR Training & Development	In three of 10 cases sample tested, supporting documentation had not been retained to evidence the completion of the Phase one firefighter training.	Comprehensive records will be maintained detailing the qualifications and training records of all staff.	Assistant Director – HR Dec 2017	On Track
HR Training & Development	For a sample of five firefighters (full time and retained) across five stations we found in all cases their 2015/16 TASK books had not been fully completed. In four cases the Station Managers had not reviewed their TASK books for completion. In one case the TASK book had been verified, even though it had not been fully completed.	Line Managers will be reminded of the importance for firefighters to complete their phase three TASK books fully on an annual basis. Compliance should be monitored and reported on by station in a periodic performance scorecard or report to the relevant governance forum.	Director of Transformation Feb 2017	Completed
HR Training & Development	There is no reporting on training compliance.	Once the new system is introduced and base line data can be relied upon, a process of monthly reporting will be implemented on training compliance for Firefighters and general staff. Management will also review the new systems capacity to be linked to TASK.	Director of Transformation Sep 2017	On Track
HR Training & Development	There are different methods of feedback for firefighters used depending on the core course.	A standardised process for feedback on key courses for firefighters will be implemented to ensure feedback is delivered and can be monitored effectively.	Director of Transformation Jun 2017	On Track

Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
Communication and Engagement	<p>We reviewed the Engagement Strategy and the related Corporate Communication Strategy, both established to guide engagement and communication with internal stakeholders.</p> <p>We identified that they did not evidence the date of last review, level of approval, approval of strategy by governing body or the version control number.</p>	The Service will ensure that the Engagement Strategy and the Corporate Communication Strategy are reviewed and updated annually with relevant themes from the annual staff survey. The strategies will include a version number and will be formally approved by the Service Leadership Team	Head of Marketing and Communications Feb 2017	Completed
Communication and Engagement	From our review of the approval process for Engagement Strategy and the related Corporate Communication Strategy we identified that the strategies had both been approved at an informal meeting of the Service Leadership Team but the decision had not been ratified in the next formal meeting.	The Service Leadership Team will ensure that all decisions made by them at informal meetings are ratified in the minutes of the next formal meeting.	A/CFO Feb 2017	Completed

Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
Communication and Engagement	We sampled three project activities to test the linkage between key documents used to implement and guide Programme 2020 (Gantt Milestones, Road Map of structure, Programme 2020 Communication Delivery Plan). We found that none of project activities had been allocated a project ID by the Project 2020 team. For all three samples there was a different naming convention for the project activity. Two out of the three samples could be traced between the key documents, though this was with difficulty.	The Programme 2020 team will ensure that all projects have unique identifiers and that there is clear and consistent linkage between the key documents.	Programme Manager 2020 Feb 2017	Completed
Communication and Engagement	We reviewed the format and content of the Programme 2020 delivery communications plan to ensure that it was appropriate to deliver against the objective of Programme 2020. We found that it could not be linked to the Gantt milestone document as it did not include project IDs. There was also no column to report against the effectiveness upon completion of the action, ie effectiveness of the communication.	The Service will include the following columns in the Programme 2020 delivery communications plan: • Project ID that links to the Gantt project milestones document. • Evaluation of effectiveness of the communication. In addition, to ensure consistency standardised project names will be introduced.	Programme Manager 2020 Feb 2017	Completed

Source	Finding from Audit report	Original (or amended) Service Action Plan	Responsibility and Timescales	Progress
Communication and Engagement	We identified that Terms of Reference for the Programme Board have not been established, and there are a number of areas that are currently not covered	The Programme 2020 team will develop Terms of Reference for the Programme 2020 Board that include details as per the approved in the Programme 2020 governance document. In addition it will include the frequency of meetings, number for a quorum and reporting structure for governance. This will be approved by the relevant governance body	Programme Manager 2020 Mar 2017	Completed
Communication and Engagement	We reviewed the Your Voice forum used to deliver face to face communication to employees via workshops held throughout the district. A review of the effectiveness of the Your Voice forum would benefit the organisation	The Director of Transformation will analyse the effectiveness, to include a review of lessons learnt, of the Your Voice forum and advise on improvement if necessary	Director of Transformation Sep 2017	On Track