

Current Implementation Position for Recommendations Due for Completion by End of Quarter One 2021/22
(including those not previously followed up under the previous process)

RECOMMENDATIONS	INITIAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSE	TARGET DATE	TARGET DATE REVISED?	CURRENT STATE OF IMPLEMENTATION PER MANAGER
Management of Contracts (2020/21 Audit)				
Before business commences with suppliers all contractual documents must be signed.	A reminder will be issued for the next Procurement Board (SPBP).	Aug-20	Not applicable.	The importance of contract-signing and correct storage was emphasised at the August 2020 Procurement Board and again at the April 2021 Procurement Board.

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Performance measures should be included in the contract documentation.	The climate change report includes a recommendation that there should be a corporate set of processes and performance monitoring documents for contract managers so that everyone is working in the same way, creating a consistent approach.	Mar-21	Not applicable.	KPIs are encouraged as standard within Procurements, though their management post-award is still at the discretion of the Contract Manager. The recommendation to standardise contract management performance monitoring across the Council has not been included into the CEAP for 2021/22. Lack of resource within the current Procurement team to progress the recommendation independently has resulted in this action being postponed until additional resource can be funded.
The requirement to store contracts securely and correctly should be reinforced.	A reminder will be issued for the next Procurement Board (SPBP).	Aug-20	Not applicable.	The importance of contract-signing and correct storage was emphasised at the August 2020 Procurement Board and again at the April 2021 Procurement Board.

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<p>Before authorising expenditure, there should be checks in place to ensure the Council is not at risk of breaching procurement laws and legislation.</p>	<p>This will be considered at the next Procurement Board to ensure practices are in place within each Service Area, and Procurement are sought for advice if in doubt.</p>	<p>Aug-20</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>It was highlighted in 2020 that the Council was at risk of regulation breaches due to off-contract agency spend in Housing. Despite this, a further analysis of spend in April 2021 identified that off-contract agency spend had escalated and we are now in breach of PCR2015 for one of the suppliers. Legal advice has been sought.</p>
<p>Before authorising expenditure, checks should be carried out to ensure spending is within contracted spend and relevant to the contract held.</p>	<p>Procurement Board to be reminded to ensure contract managers monitor spend against their contracts. Potential contract overspend has been included within the specification requirements for the new FMS, due to be progressed by end of financial year.</p>	<p>Mar-21</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Spend analysis was reported to August 2020 Procurement Board with a reminder about disaggregated spend and actions sought from Heads of Services.</p>

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<p>Staff should receive purchasing training before being given access to the purchasing system. This should include a basic checklist so that staff can review whether there is or should be a contract in place and a review of the cumulative spend.</p>	<p>Training is provided on the use of the FMS (Total) before officers can raise and authorise purchase orders. Officers will be reminded (Procurement Board) to ensure there is or should be a contract in place and to review of the cumulative spend, and to seek support from Finance to assist to monitor spend. Training on the new Financial Management System will ensure these points are covered.</p>	<p>Aug-20</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>No change to previous response.</p>
<p>There should be a 'rental' time imposed to help ensure that documents are returned in a timely manner to the Document Store.</p>	<p>Due to the current pandemic the majority of staff are working from home. Because of this, obtaining documents from the deed store is restricted and, therefore, forms a control in itself. Future processes to be agreed and put in place by the Democratic Services Manager.</p>	<p>End of December 2020</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Very few staff have requested contracts as many are now electronic. We amended the process to encourage officers requesting documents to book a room to peruse the item and then return it to us, advising it should not leave RSH. Only one member of staff has requested a document since this process was put in place and the procedure was followed.</p>

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Local Land Charges (2020/21 Audit)				
The next Service Area Plan for Development Services should include reference to the remaining aspects of the land charges function.	Agreed.	To fit in with the preparation of the next Service plan.	Not applicable.	Being actioned in accordance with the Service Plan preparation schedule.
Shared Legal Services (2020/21 Audit)				
The user guide should be updated to provide accurate, up-to-date information and should be rolled out to relevant staff.	The guide has been updated on a number of occasions and posted on the intranet for staff viewing. Further relevant changes will be made.	Sep-20	Not applicable.	The Shared Legal Service user guide was updated accordingly and is available via the intranet.
The procedure for updating the authorised commissioning officers list should be reviewed and the list updated.	The list has been updated on a number of occasions and will be reviewed again to make sure it is up to date.	Sep-20	Not applicable.	The Shared Legal Service user guide was updated accordingly and is available via the intranet.
The monthly coding spreadsheets, supplied by Legal Services, should be made available to all relevant (commissioning) staff.	Agreed. I will speak with the relevant finance officer so we can disseminate the relevant information.	Sep-20	Not applicable.	The Assistant Accountant now circulates these on a monthly basis.

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Corporate Governance (2020/21 Audit)				
A template for addendums and appendices should be introduced to ensure that all relevant documents that are made exempt have received appropriate consideration.	A template is being tested. If this is considered appropriate following the test, the template will be rolled out for all relevant documents.	Oct-20	Not applicable.	The template is now available for use via the intranet.
Housing Rent Collection (2020/21 Audit)				
As agreed in the 2017-18 audit the write-off information should be included in the quarterly reports.	To be included in quarterly reports going forward, CR to liaise with BD & C Manager (PS) to have report written and included.	Dec-20	Not applicable.	The SAP for 2021-22 is waiting to be approved.
Management should review the KPI's in the Service Area Plan and consider including a relevant KPI for write-offs.	Agree this to be included in the performance monitoring, to be decided at DMT whether this is a core or an operational PI.	Dec-20	Not applicable.	I have recommended that we include a KPI for write offs and requested a report to be written and that this information is to be included in the quarterly management reports.
Building Cleaning Services (2020/21 Audit)				

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The agenda for the monthly contract liaison meetings should include a standing item to review previous minutes for accuracy and to follow up on progress against agreed actions.	Agreed. The agenda for all future meetings will include the review of previous minutes and the status of agreed actions.	Jan-21	Not applicable.	Liaison meetings with Churchill now include reviewing previous actions on the agenda / minutes.
Variation orders in relation to additional works should be checked to prices included in the contract for day rates where applicable to ascertain whether the payments are in line with agreed rates.	Agreed. All future variation orders will be checked where additional staffing is included to ensure that the correct rates are being used.	Jan-21	Not applicable.	If a variation order is raised, additional staffing costs are checked against the (final, up-to-date) Bill of Quantities.
The Neighbourhood Services risk register should be updated to include reference to the building cleaning services contract.	Agreed. The issue will be raised at the next management team meeting when the risk register is reviewed to ensure that the contract is included.	Mar-21	Not applicable.	The Building Cleaning contract previously sat with Housing. From April 2021 it transferred to Neighbourhood Services and our risk register has been updated to reflect this.
National Non-Domestic Rates (2020/21 Audit)				
Staff should be reminded of the need to advise the VOA of all relevant change to non-domestic properties.	This has been raised in the team meeting and also the individuals' one-to-ones.	Completed	Not applicable.	Evidence provided by way of team meeting minutes and 1-1 extract to show that the recommendation had already been actioned.

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<p>The relief paid to the Community Interest Company should be reviewed, with a further check being undertaken to ascertain whether there are any other such accounts in place.</p>	<p>We will investigate the CIC identified that is receiving Mandatory Charity Relief and check to ensure they are eligible. This has never been picked up before so we were unaware of this issue.</p>	<p>Mar-21</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>There appears to be no definitive answer as to whether a CIC can be in receipt of the 80% mandatory relief for charities, with Councils around the country providing different responses to this. Investigations will continue, and we may look to switch this to a discretionary relief in order to 100% satisfy the eligibility.</p>
<p>MIS Housing and Corporate Property (ActiveH) (2020/21 Audit)</p>				
<p>The accounts assigned to the internal auditors should be reviewed such that they are assigned read-only access at the most.</p>	<p>Agreed. The level of access permission to be adjusted to read only access. If the system does not facilitate the creation of Read Only accounts, accounts used for auditing purposes could be disabled or removed until they are required.</p>	<p>Feb-21</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>As of 18/02/2021 the accounts assigned to the internal auditors in ActiveH have been re-assigned to read-only. Data can still be accessed but there are now restrictions on processing or interacting with the fields.</p>

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<p>Council management to work with relevant Information Governance colleagues to complete a DPIA on the MIS ActiveH Application in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Agreed. A Data Protection Information Assessment DPIA for the ActiveH application will be developed and signed off by the Council's Information Governance Manager.</p>	<p>Apr-21</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been produced and approved in principle by the Information Governance Manager on 28/04/2021. The final approval step for the document is that Lisa Barker, David Elkington, and Andrew Jones as SIRO sign off the document. The DPIA has been sent to David Elkington to start the cycle of final sign off. Subsequently advised that the DPIA has now been duly signed off.</p>
<p>All the UDE screens/ forms should be reviewed in order to apply appropriate validation to the relevant fields.</p>	<p>Agreed. To review existing UDE screens and forms, apply the appropriate validations and conditions to those still in use. This would have to be a joint undertaking between ICT, to support the changes, and the service area to identify which business items are crucial and must be updated.</p>	<p>Apr-21</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>A detailed review of the UDEs has been performed. Due to issues encountered, alternative options are being considered in terms of how to report instances of erroneous data. These are to be developed, tested, and subsequently implemented as appropriate.</p>
<p>Health & Wellbeing (COVID) (2020/21 Audit)</p>				

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<p>The current advice and information should still be easily accessible to staff so it can be reviewed if their circumstances change or when there are new starters.</p>	<p>The up-to-date guidance has been reinstated on to the big button information. Guidance will be consolidated to ensure the up-to-date information is easy to find.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Up to date guidance has been reinstated onto the big button information. Guidance will be consolidated to ensure the up-to-date information is easy to find.</p>
<p>Reminders or links to the support available should be an ongoing priority in the current pandemic.</p>	<p>Appropriate links and signposting are in place and managers will continue to be provided with information to share with their teams.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>A new Health & Wellbeing page was developed to consolidate the information and is regularly reviewed and updated by the Health and Wellbeing club.</p>
<p>Messages should be continuously reviewed and adapted, including those delivered by managers. Managers should make regular contact with their staff enabling them to provide guidance and signpost them to support.</p>	<p>Managers have now all received the virtual working training. Appropriate links and guidance will continue to be shared with staff and managers.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Managers have now all received the virtual working training. Appropriate links and guidance will continue to be shared with their teams. All updates regarding Health and wellbeing are discussed at the HWB Club meetings and discussed with Staff Voice as it's now a regular item on the Staff voice agenda. This allows objective sense checking of the style and tone of the comms.</p>

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The Health and Wellbeing page should be kept up-to-date and include current links, promoting the services and resources the Council has available to staff.	The Health and Wellbeing page has now been updated	Completed	Not applicable.	The Health and Wellbeing pages have now been updated and are regularly reviewed by the HWB Club members.
The information relating to the support available to staff should have the relevant intranet tags so it appears in the search function.	This is something we are aware of and it is being addressed.	Ongoing		
As most staff cannot access virtual meetings through VMware, there should be alternative joining instructions issued to allow staff to access the sessions from the device used for virtual meetings.	We have been made aware of this and adapted the message to ensure links are accessible.	Completed	Not applicable.	A message was adapted to improve accessibility to meeting links, rather than embedding them into the intranet message. We now use the intranet, we send out individual calendar invites, and we email the links via the weekly email (The five things you need to know on Friday)
The health and safety page should be reviewed to ensure it is relevant and has current information and guidance available, including advice on how to set up their workstation.	We will review this to ensure this is regularly updated.	Ongoing	Not applicable.	All actions and recommendations completed and checked with the auditor to ensure satisfactory.

Development Management (2020/21 Audit)

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Planning staff should be reminded to save all necessary documentation in Idox.	Agreed.	Feb-21	Not applicable.	Completed.
The percentage of applications with performance agreements should be included in the quarterly SAP figures.	Agreed subject to discussion with the Head of Service and Development Portfolio Holder.	Mar-21	Not applicable.	Discussions with the Head of Service and the Portfolio Holder are ongoing.
The Development Services risk register should be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.	Agreed.	Completed	No update received (Development Services Manager).	
Enforcement activity should be regularly publicised in local media and on social media.	Agreed. Consideration is already given to this on a regular basis.	Completed	No update received (Development Services Manager).	
The issues with Ripplestone should be identified and resolved.	Agreed.	Apr-21	Not applicable.	This task has been completed and we can produce lists of numbers of case closures and how they were resolved.
Tenancy Management (2020/21 Audit)				
A written procedure to guide staff on the recording of complaints should be established. Also, a lack of robust management information means that any necessary remedial action cannot be undertaken.	A procedure for managing complaint so Anti-Social Behaviour has been written. It is awaiting sign off by Landlord Services Manager. Training on the new procedure is arranged for 9 March 2021.	Mar-21	Not applicable.	The Anti-Social Behaviour procedure was launched in March 2021 and is been implemented across the service.

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<p>A review should be completed of the phone duty rota and procedure to ensure busier shifts are covered and so calls abandoned are kept to a minimum. Call waiting messages could be played reminding customers of the other ways to make contact, encouraging a channel shift towards using the website or email.</p>	<p>A review of the phone rotas in line with housing officers' duties of been on patch will be undertaken in April. Opportunities to move more services online will be explored and comparisons of telephone performance will be undertaken.</p>	Apr-21	Not applicable.	<p>The staff rota'd for phone duty has been doubled on busier days of the week for phone enquires, with a new phone rota launched from April 2021.</p>
<p>There should be a procedure in place for Housing officers to follow to ensure the same process is followed when logging visits and saving relevant documentation.</p>	<p>The Landlord Operations Manager is working on a set of procedures for Officer's to follow, relating to all functions of the Landlord Operations Team. This will include Tenancy Visits and saving of relevant documentation.</p>	Jun-21	Not applicable.	<p>A new procedure was implemented May 2021 which details Tenancy Update Visits, including giving tenants relevant notice.</p>
<p>The application for the mutual exchange together with other relevant documents should be saved to the tenants or house file. A formal procedure for officers to follow when processing applications for mutual exchanges, should be produced.</p>	<p>The Landlord Services Management Team are working on a set of procedures for Officer's to follow, relating to all functions of the Landlord Operations Team. This will include a guide on handling applications for Mutual Exchanges on HPM.</p>	Jul-21	Not applicable.	<p>A new procedure on how to manage Mutual Exchange applications has just been finalised and will be implemented across the service in July 2021. This details what documents are needed and where they need to be saved.</p>

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The duties for garage tenancy management should be agreed and documented in a formal procedure to ensure the Council's assets are maintained and rent is collected as due.	The Landlord Services Management Team are working on a set of procedures for Officer's to follow, relating to all functions of the Landlord Operations Team. This will include a guide on managing garages.	Jun-21	Not applicable.	There is now a procedure for managing garage sites.
To help ensure garages are used as intended and looked after by tenants, site checks on the external environment of the garages should be completed and logged onto the relevant file. A formal procedure detailing how officers should manage garages will need to be produced.	The Landlord Operations Manager is working on a set of procedures for Officer's to follow, relating to all functions of the Landlord Operations Team. This will include a guide on managing garages to include site checks.	Jun-21	Not applicable.	There is now a procedure for managing garage sites, which was implemented 5 July 2021.
Communications (2020/21 Audit)				
Training resources should be reviewed, updated, and made available to staff.	We will review our intranet pages and all the relevant documents to ensure they are easily accessible for staff.	Apr-21	Not applicable.	Our intranet pages have been reviewed to ensure training resources are easily accessible for staff.
Social media training should be amended to directly reference the Social Media Policy.	This will now be included in the social media training documents.	Apr-21	Not applicable.	The social media training has now been changed so that it references the social media policy.

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Management should receive performance monitoring data for all Council social media accounts, including Instagram.	Instagram will now be added to our social media monitoring and included in our monthly media stats.	May-21	Not applicable.	Instagram is now included in our social media monitoring as you can see on page 3 of our media stats. These are recorded monthly and circulated to staff and councillors.
Social media performance targets should be reviewed and revised regularly to remain relevant.	A review of our social media accounts will be included in Kris Walton's objectives in his appraisal to review quarterly.	Ongoing from June 2021	Not applicable.	A review of our social media accounts has been included in the objectives of the Digital Content and Social media officer, so they are reviewed quarterly.
Social media performance targets should be reviewed and revised to ensure that they accurately describe the performance statistics.	A review of our social media accounts will be included in Kris Walton's objectives in his appraisal to review quarterly.	Ongoing from June 2021	Not applicable.	Social media targets are reviewed quarterly as part of the Digital Content and Social media role. They have recently been updated on the portal as shown below (file saved to relevant audit network folder).
Nuisance and Other Protection Duties – Public Health Funerals (20/21 Audit)				
There should be a written procedure in place setting out the processes for arranging a public health funeral.	A documented procedure will be agreed with the technical officer.	Apr-21	Not applicable.	A procedure document has now been drawn up.
Income Receipting and Document Management (2020/21 Audit)				

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Access to post folders should be limited to the relevant team.	Agreed. The permissions on these folders were set in liaison with ICT based on available staff structures at the time on the intranet which were inconsistent. This will be reviewed with assistance from HR and within the capacity of the ICT team. The initial review will be completed by the end of April 2021.	Apr-21	Not applicable.	This is now a matter for IT & HR as is happening.
Staff should be reminded to regularly check folders for inbound post and to remove documents after use.	Agreed. A reminder will be sent to Managers Forum each quarter starting with one in late April 2021.	Apr-21	Not applicable.	These are happening.
Information Governance (20/21 Audit)				
A guidance document, pulling together all issues identified, should be drawn up and distributed to all staff.	Agreed. A guidance document will be drawn up and issued accordingly.	Jun-21	Not applicable.	A booklet guide for Officers relating to Data Protection with working from home is currently in draft and this will be sent to WDC's Media Team for presentational improvements prior to distribution.
Cyber Security (2020/21 Audit)				

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<p>Regular reviews of the ICT Services – Change Management Policy should be conducted with the first one being as soon as possible.</p>	<p>A number of ICT’s key operational policies have not been reviewed according to the normal schedules, principally due to the impact of COVID-19 on capacity to carry out the work and the absence of key staff within the service. The Change Management Policy will be reviewed to ensure that it includes key principles from the ITIL change management framework.</p>	<p>Jun-21</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>As part of the forthcoming merger process with Stratford District Council, and the undertaking of a similar cyber security at SDC now completed, the overall policies of both ICT departments will be reviewed and combined over the next six months. The current anticipated running order includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Change Management • Review of Patch Management • Review of Security Management • Review of Cyber Incident Response • Review of Service Desk Policy • Review of Asset Control • Review of Backup policies • Review of PCI Compliance
<p>Regular reviews of the “Major Virus Outbreak procedure” and “Removable Media Policy” should be conducted and communicated accordingly with the first ones being as soon as possible.</p>	<p>A number of ICT’s key operational policies have not been reviewed according to the normal schedules, principally due to the impact of COVID-19 on capacity to carry out the work and the absence of key staff within the service. The overall incident management policy and procedure, which includes the major virus outbreak procedure will be reviewed to ensure that it includes the latest guidance from NCSC. Removable media will also be reviewed as significant changes to its usefulness have taken place.</p>	<p>Jun-21</p>		<p>This is not a definitive list of policies and procedures. Others will be added to the list as required and as appropriate.</p>

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Insurances (2021/22 Audit)				
The Senior Management Team should be reminded to contact the Insurance and Risk Officer when purchasing high value items or property to ensure they are included in the insurance policy.	A reminder will be issued at SMT.	Jun-21	Not applicable.	Recommendation addressed - Reminder issued to SMT on 16 June 2021. Auditor copied in to email.

Corporate Governance (2021/22 Audit)				
A review should be undertaken of the homeworking environment for staff and of the set-up of work equipment in home locations.	Ongoing: Internal H & S officer has DSE discussions with relevant staff and arrangements made for alternative equipment where necessary (including covid-secure visits to Riverside House to source/collect items such as chairs). An on-line DSE assessment form has been developed in June and AssessNET is able to email DSE assessments directly to staff working from home.	Jun-21	Not applicable.	All actions and recommendations completed and checked with the auditor to ensure satisfactory.

