

CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION POSITION OF LOW AND MEDIUM RISK RECOMMENDATIONS
ISSUED FOR QUARTER 4 2012/13

RECOMMENDATIONS	INITIAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSE incl. PLANNED IMPLEMENTATION DATE	CURRENT STATE OF IMPLEMENTATION PER MANAGER
Car Parking Income – 27 March 2013		
<p>The fees for residents and visitors permits should be approved each year in line with other parking fees.</p>	<p><i>Parking Services Manager:</i> This is a function of Warwickshire County Council and is not within the District's remit to action. The Fees and Charges for WDC car parks are agreed each year by the Executive during the October's fees and charges setting process. March 2013.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>
<p>Regular reviews should be performed of cases that are shown as being at DVLA related stages of recovery. The specific sampled cases should also be followed up to ensure that the cases have progressed since the time of the audit testing.</p>	<p><i>Parking Services Manager:</i> The issue raised was as a result of a clerical error by a new team member. The process has been reviewed to ensure that only trained staff are permitted to deal with this task and the Notice Processing Manager will review the queue stage each week to ensure no mistakes have been made. March 2013.</p>	<p>The Notice Processing Manager is conducting regular checks of the queue stage in line with the audit recommendation.</p>

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Sundry Debtors – 5 March 2013		
<p>The corporate Debt Recovery Policy should be reviewed, updated and publicised to all relevant staff.</p>	<p><i>Finance Administration Manager:</i> Update to be drafted for Executive. July 2013.</p>	<p>Mike Snow deferred to March 2014 to enable the policy to encompass changes that Housing & Property Services are making to their recovery policies. Additionally the new Enforcement Regulations 2014 may lead to revision of other debt policies.</p>
<p>Staff who raise debts should be reminded of the need to include sufficient levels of detail on the invoices, including the date of service provision where possible, and to ensure that they raise the invoices in a timely manner.</p>	<p><i>Finance Administration Manager:</i> Agreed. Guidance is already available to users on TOTAL and the intranet to advise users of the need to provide sufficient details on the invoices and they have been reminded of this requirement on several occasions in the past 4 years. However, this guidance will be re-publicised. Ongoing.</p>	<p>There are still two links on the intranet for staff to access this information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directory/a-z/choose "d"/debtor advice • Finance & procurement/FSTeam/FST links section/debtor manual <p>There is also a link on the Total system on the "debtors" tab titled "please read this before raising an invoice".</p> <p>In addition to this a big button item has been placed on the intranet homepage and will continue to be periodically published on there as a reminder to all staff.</p> <p>After the audit a review of all services was completed which highlighted that details were being provided with the exception of one particular service area team; this was highlighted to the team's manager, via an exchange of emails in which the Auditor was also copied into. Subsequently improvements have been made.</p>

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<p>Staff should be reminded to provide appropriate details to support the cancellation or write-offs of the invoices, including appropriate evidence of who had provided the approval / submitted the request for this to be undertaken.</p>	<p><i>Finance Administration Manager:</i> Agreed. Supporting documentation with authorisation is normally provided. However, the majority of cases sampled, where these issues have occurred, relate to recent transactions during a period of time where there were staff shortages, related to the reorganisation within Finance.</p> <p>A potential increase in the lower threshold at which departmental authorisation is required for write-offs is to be discussed with relevant senior Finance staff and, should this amendment be agreed, relevant departmental staff will be informed.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>	<p>The FSTeam is now at full strength and following these guidelines; cancellations are no longer authorised unless a full explanation is given by the staff requesting cancellation.</p> <p>Management discussed the threshold and decided that due to the low volume of write-off transactions the existing threshold would be retained.</p>

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<p>Whilst no formal debt collection targets are set, reports should be provided to management regarding debt collection performance so that they can assure themselves that processes in place are appropriate and that they are aware of any potential issues arising.</p>	<p><i>Finance Administration Manager:</i> The reports are already available to management who can run them as and when they require. It is intended that regular monthly reports will be run to capture recovery performance to provoke discussion at 1-1s and team meetings and, where necessary, prompt service changes. July 2013.</p>	<p>Discussion regarding this matter highlighted the availability of a system report titled "Aged Debtor Analysis By Debt Type / Invoice Date"; this has been scheduled to be automatically run and emailed to both the Exchequer Manager and Finance Admin Team Manager on the 1st of each month to facilitate performance discussion. The debtor's module within Total is a bolt-on and not particularly designed for in-depth performance statistics, however, there is an outstanding request with the supplier, Total Mobile, to amend an existing collection statistics performance report to make it usable. We have asked for this request to be prioritised but we still need to wait for consultant availability; target date May 2014. We have also recently automated a process that was previously a manual task which reviews all outstanding invoices and captures any that appear to have not been worked.</p>

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Employee Absence Management – 28 March 2013		
<p>The Intranet information resource on absence management should be revised and repositioned to make it more prominent and coherent (including cross-referencing to the Stress at Work Code of Practice).</p>	<p><i>Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager:</i> Reviewed policy and associated paperwork to make it clearer and easy to access. Publicise this on intranet and through management communications. April 2013 – completed.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>
<p>The Sickness Absence Policy should be revised to make it more in line with the aims of the People Strategy (including 'wellbeing' emphasis).</p>	<p><i>Corporate Management Team Senior Management Team Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager (Lead Officer):</i> Cross reference with People Strategy. April 2013 – completed.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>
<p>A statement setting out the respective responsibilities of employees, management and Human Resources in managing absence should be prepared and referenced from the Sickness Absence Policy. Preferably, the statement should be approved by Senior Management Team.</p>	<p><i>Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager:</i> Insert into the policy. April 2013.</p>	<p><i>Chief Executive / HR:</i> This item has been actioned and an update sent to Heads of Service and Unison on 4 April 2013.</p>

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<p>Service Area Managers should review the identities of staff with absence return entry rights and ensure that only the minimum necessary to ensure that all absences are recorded have access.</p>	<p><i>Service Area Managers</i> <i>Lead Officer: Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager:</i> HR advise Service managers. HR liaise with ICT on ensuring access rights have HR check before granting. April 2013.</p>	<p><i>Chief Executive:</i> As for above item.</p>
<p>Service Area Managers should ensure that all staff designated to complete the weekly absence returns on their behalf are appropriately briefed on the responsibilities and procedures.</p>	<p><i>Service Area Managers</i> <i>Lead Officer: Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager:</i> HR to advise Service managers of the importance of this. April 2013 – completed.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>
<p>Outstanding self-certifications and fit notes should be followed up and raised, where appropriate, with the respective Service Area Managers.</p>	<p><i>Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager:</i> HR to remind services of their responsibility. April 2013 – completed.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>
<p>Responsibilities of line managers and support resources available to them should be clearly presented in training workshops on absence management.</p>	<p><i>Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager:</i> Scheduled HR workshops on absence annually continue. HR already include manager responsibility but workshop content will be reviewed. April 2013 – completed.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>

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<p>Promotion of absence management requirements through other communication channels (e.g. Core Brief, Senior Officers' Forum) should be considered.</p>	<p><i>Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager:</i> To be considered with HoS. July 2013.</p>	<p><i>Chief Executive / HR:</i> This item has been delayed owing to the vacancy of the HR/OD Manager post but it will be actioned by September 2014.</p>
<p>Mortgages – 1 February 2013</p>		
<p>A decision needs to be reached as to how these overpayments are dealt with (either being repaid or being used to calculate amended terms and interest payments in future if this is allowed for under the terms and conditions of the mortgages). (NB precedent may have been set as a previous overpayment on one of these accounts had been used to reduce the principal outstanding following the previous audit report).</p>	<p><i>Senior Finance Administration Officer:</i> Bearing in mind the size of the mortgages, the limited number (5), and the limited time until their redemption, it is intended that the credit balances will be addressed as part of the final redemption calculations. All mortgages to be redeemed by the end of 2014.</p>	<p>There is now only one mortgage outstanding; this is due to be redeemed in March 2014.</p>
<p>Action should be taken as appropriate upon receipt of the response from the Head of Housing & Property Services.</p>	<p><i>Senior Finance Administration Officer:</i> Agreed. The mortgage will be redeemed, with a small write-off following authorisation from the Head of Housing & Property Services. March 2013.</p>	<p>No longer applicable; this related to one specific mortgage which was dealt with and the mortgage redeemed.</p>

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<p>The mortgagee who arranges her own buildings insurance should be contacted to obtain evidence that this insurance is in place.</p>	<p><i>Senior Finance Administration Officer:</i> A reminder is always put in the annual statement for the mortgagee to send in a copy of the policy. April 2013.</p>	<p>No longer applicable; the one mortgage remaining has insurance through WDC and will be redeemed in March 2014.</p>
<p>Corporate Properties Repair and Maintenance – 26 March 2013</p>		
<p>Stricter control needs to be exercised over the Corporate Property Repair and Maintenance budget in order to avoid future overspends of the level encountered this year.</p>	<p><i>Head of Housing and Property Services:</i> A revised repairs and maintenance budget has been agreed which is based on historical spend data which more accurately reflects the typical expenditure for this budget. Completed 01/01/13.</p>	<p><i>Deputy Chief Executive (BH):</i> The revised arrangements have been implemented as envisaged and the Strategic Asset Group now receives a monthly budget monitoring report. The report presented to the January meeting demonstrated that the current year (13/14) budget is projected to outturn on budget.</p>
	<p>A clear definition is to be agreed by the Corporate Property Investment Board (CPIB) of what works can be carried out using this budget. Works outside of this definition will require alternative sources of funding to be sought. 28/06/13.</p>	<p><i>Business Support Manager:</i> Definitions of works were proposed by Housing & Property Services as part of a Corporate Property Budget Charter. Senior members of the CPIB requested that the approval of a charter be placed on hold until the Asset Management Strategy/Plan is complete on the basis that fundamental changes to the budget allocation process may be needed. The Corporate Property Investment Board continues to work together and in accordance with the principles of budget allocation set by CMT in 2008.</p>

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	<p>A stock condition survey is being conducted of all corporate assets. This will provide an informed 5 year maintenance plan that accurately forecasts expenditure liabilities that can be programmed in advance.</p> <p>31/03/14.</p>	<p><i>Business Support Manager:</i></p> <p>The Corporate Stock Condition Surveys were completed in 2013. The strategic Asset Group and the in-house surveying team are now working to programme the 2014/15 Corporate Property Investment Programme based on the data collected from the surveys and presented to Executive in a recent report. The work is closely linked to the on-going development of the asset management strategy/plan.</p>

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CCTV Services – 21 March 2013		
<p>Service Level Agreements should be drawn up for those services where they do not currently exist, with existing ones being reviewed and revised appropriately to bring them up to date.</p>	<p><i>CCTV Manager:</i> Agreed. The SLA for Regent’s Court is currently in hand, with a response being awaited from them. April 2013. The SLA for Housing will be reviewed once the updated system is complete. June 2013. The remaining SLAs will be drawn up / reviewed as soon as possible. April 2013.</p>	<p>The SLA for Regents Court is still an on-going issue due to a change in owner and technical problems. A Planning Application has been received to change Livery St to a restaurant destination. One condition requested is that camera position will have to be agreed with our CCTV team. Six cameras are being changed so that our control room can receive images. (June 2014)</p> <p>The SLA for Housing is delayed by works pending from Baydale. Whilst some of the work has been carried out other works to fit cameras in the lifts is outstanding. Until this is carried the Concierge system cannot function. The SLA can only be reviewed once these systems are in place. (June 2014)</p> <p>Other SLAs include Neighbourhood Services (car parks) and Cultural Services (St Nicholas Park, Newbold Comyn& Pump Rooms) but there has no progress on these due to other work priorities including a re-fit of the CCTV suite, power issues, staffing issues and changes to working practices. (December 2014)</p>

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Investigation into Members' Travel Claims – 28 August 2013		
Councillors should be required to submit travel claims in a timely manner (preferably on a monthly basis but no more than three months in arrears).	Agreed. Councillors will be advised of this requirement. Completed.	While this has been completed there have been teething problems with the electronic form that has led to delays in submitting forms by members. This has now been resolved.
Councillor Illingworth should be asked to repay the amount that had been overpaid due to the submission of a duplicate claim form.	Agreed. The Councillor will be contacted to arrange for this overpayment to be repaid. September 2013.	Completed February 2014. Due to the level of the value involved and the agreement that payment would be made in lieu of future expenses claims this will be concluded as part of the February pay advices.
The travel claim forms for Councillors should be amended to require sufficient details regarding the actual journeys undertaken and the nature of the meeting attended (such as formal committee meeting, training, portfolio meeting etc.). Once this has been undertaken, Councillors should be advised that this form must be used for all future claims submitted.	Agreed. An amended form has now been produced and agreed with Internal Audit. Councillors will be provided with this and advised that all future claims should be submitted on this form. Completed.	This is now working and corrections have been made to claims made by members.
Councillors should be advised to take the most direct, sensible route to meetings wherever possible.	Agreed. Councillors will be advised of this requirement. Wording to this effect has also been included on the new claim form. Completed.	This is included within the claim form used by Members.

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<p>Councillors should be reminded of the need to complete accurately their travel claims.</p> <p>Whilst the amounts are small, the overpayments should be recovered from Councillors 3 (£9.00), Doody (£2.70) and Mobbs (£4.05).</p>	<p>Agreed. Councillors will be advised of this requirement.</p> <p>The Councillors in question will also be contacted to ask for the monies to be repaid.</p> <p>September 2013.</p>	<p>This was completed through the reduction of the expenses claims made by the individual Councillors.</p>
<p>Staff checking and authorising the travel forms should be reminded of the need to check thoroughly the claims submitted, including a reasonableness check on mileages claimed and a check of meeting attendance as appropriate.</p>	<p>Agreed. An amended monitoring spreadsheet has been produced and procedure notes have been produced for staff, which have been agreed with Internal Audit.</p> <p>Completed.</p>	<p>This is now implemented and working. It has brought an improved level of checking and issues have been spotted. It is now considered that a briefing note needs to be issued to Members reminding them of what expenses they are entitled to claim for. It is considered that this will be sent out either in February or March 2014.</p>