INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT	

FROM:	Audit and Risk Manager	**SUBJECT:**	Homelessness & Housing Advice (Temporary Accommodation)
TO:	Head of Housing Services	**DATE:**	5 December 2019
C.C.	Chief Executive		
	Deputy Chief Executive (BH)		
	Head of Finance		
	Housing Needs Manager		
	Housing Allocations and Advice Manager		
	Portfolio Holder (Cllr Matecki)		

1   Introduction

1.1   In accordance with the Audit Plan for 2019/20, an examination of the above subject area has been undertaken and this report presents the findings and conclusions drawn from the audit for information and action where appropriate.

1.2   Wherever possible, findings have been discussed with the staff involved in the procedures examined and their views are incorporated, where appropriate, into the report. My thanks are extended to all concerned for the help and cooperation received during the audit.

2   Background

2.1   An audit of Homelessness and Housing Advice, evaluating progress made against specific objectives of the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2017-2020), was undertaken in March 2019.

2.2   During the scoping of the audit, the Head of Housing Services requested that a review of temporary accommodation be included. As it could not be accommodated as part of that audit, this audit was scheduled.

2.3   The Council utilises a number of different temporary accommodation 'units', comprising a mixture of Council-owned properties, properties leased from others, and B&B and hotel rooms.

3   Scope and Objectives of the Audit

3.1   The audit was undertaken to test the management and financial controls in place.

3.2 The audit largely concentrated on the processes where service users are placed into temporary accommodation. However, the processes around the use of the Council's direct-access hostel (William Wallsgrove House (WWH)) were also covered in some cases.

3.3 In terms of scope, the audit covered the following areas:
- Policies and procedures
- Accommodation standards
- Provision and use
- Support to occupants
- Finance
- Risk management.

3.4 The control objectives examined were:
- Staff are aware of how the Council aims to meet its legislative requirements with regards to homeless placements in temporary accommodation
- The standard of accommodation is suitable and meets statutory guidance, caters for a range of housing needs, is maintained and well managed
- Temporary accommodation is only used when no other housing solutions are available
- The number of units is sufficient and minimises the use of B&B alternatives
- Occupancy in temporary accommodation is not used a long-term solution for the housing of homeless individuals
- Accommodation used is appropriate to the needs of the homeless 'individuals' / family groups
- Support to occupants is provided and enables them to manage their licence conditions and future housing needs
- All income due to the Council is received
- Expenditure is being controlled appropriately and value for money is being obtained
- Budget variances are limited as the budgets are set appropriately in line with known areas of income and expenditure
- The Council is aware of any potential budget variances
- The Council is aware of the risks in relation to the placement of individuals in temporary accommodation and has taken steps to address them
- Health and safety is well managed.

4 **Findings**

4.1 **Recommendations from Previous Reports**

4.1.1 The current position in respect of the recommendations from the audits reported in March 2015 (the last 'general' review of this topic) and March 2019 (the strategy review) were also reviewed. The current position is as follows (see overleaf):

Recommendation	Management Response	Current Status
March 2015		
1 Care should be taken to ensure that documentation is retained with the correct case files (either electronic or paper based).	All staff will be reminded of the importance of document management. A monthly file audit will be introduced to monitor document management.	Whilst this issue was not addressed specifically as part of this audit, it was noted that some documentation had been retained on officers' network drives as opposed to being attached to the relevant (Locata) system. (See 4.5.4)
2 Staff are reminded of the need to accurately complete all relevant fields in Active-H.	All staff will be reminded of the importance of completing fields on Active-H accurately. A monthly file audit will be introduced to monitor the accuracy of data entry.	Issues were noted on different tests in relation to rent accounts not being set up correctly, with rent accounts being ended before the start dates and new accounts subsequently being set up (not field specific, but highlights general issue with completion of Active H). (See 4.3.11 and 4.6.3)
March 2019		
3 To further inform development and planning of the future strategy, an assessment should be undertaken of actions to be undertaken against remaining objectives. Progress against these actions should then be assessed on a monthly basis.	The recommendation to assess actions is accepted however our view is that quarterly is sufficient to monitor progress.	The Housing Strategy & Development Officer (HSDO) advised that a review of the strategy and progress against the action plan is underway. She felt that this should be picked up as part of the Service Area Plan (SAP) monitoring, as the SAP has a specific entry in the planned changes / projects section regarding the 'Rough Sleeping Initiative' (RSI) strategy and action plan. However, the HSDO (being new to the role) was unable to find any notes / minutes that reflect the regular monitoring of progress against these actions. (See 4.1.2)

	Recommendation	Management Response	Current Status
4	There should be engagement and consultation, regarding the Mental Health Protocol, with mental health service providers, clinical commissioning groups, safeguarding, and social care teams to ensure that it reflects relevant issues.	Since the strategy was approved there have been some key developments at a County level. Warwickshire County Council are funding a pilot scheme involving two Community Psychiatric Nurse posts which will be placed with the street outreach teams but link to the Mental Health partnership trust. Furthermore, a county-wide homeless strategy is being developed which consider addressing the mental health needs of homeless people. We would suggest that events have overtaken the notion of the development of a protocol and it is therefore proposed to put to members, revisions to the strategy to reflect current thinking and practices.	As suggested above, the HSDO advised that she is in the process of reviewing the current strategy which will, in future, be split into a 'local' housing strategy and a county-wide homelessness strategy.
5	The Mental Health Protocol should include consent to information being exchanged between parties at the outset and include a quarterly case review process of those considered to be at most risk of becoming homeless.	As above.	As above.

Recommendation	Management Response	Current Status
6 Cases discussed at the relevant weekly or monthly meetings should be risk-assessed and RAG-rated identifying assigned actions, barriers and further engagement required. Where a case is not discussed, details should be minuted.	The recommendation will be actioned as suggested.	The Housing Needs Manager advised that cases are being risk assessed at the meetings (which are held fortnightly).

4.1.2   In relation to item three in the above table, management had agreed to undertake quarterly monitoring of the actions included in the Housing and Homelessness Strategy. However, the officers responsible for ensuring that this action was undertaken have both recently left the Council.

4.1.3   As suggested above, the HSDO is in the process of reviewing progress against actions taken to date so, whilst quarterly monitoring may not have taken place due to staffing changes, it is clear that action is now being taken to address this.

4.2   **Policies & Procedures**

4.2.1   A 'Policy & Placement' document is in place which sets out the policy for deciding on how and where those needing temporary accommodation are placed along with procedures on how this is undertaken. The Senior Housing Advice Officer (SHAO) advised that it is reviewed as and when necessary and will reflect legislation as necessary. The initial copy provided still showed as draft and there were issues within the document. However, this was updated during the course of the audit.

4.2.2   The policy document makes clear reference to relevant legislation, with the introduction highlighting the Council's duties (relating to temporary accommodation) under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and associated duties under the Housing Act 1996 (Section 188). It also covers the Homeless (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 as well as various other pieces of related legislation.

4.2.3   In order to ensure that the policy remains compliant with legislation, the SHAO receives and reviews email newsletters from various different 'organisations' (e.g. Shelter and providers of legal services) to ascertain if any changes to legislation are to be made that may affect the services that the Council provides.

4.2.4   There is also a management plan in place for WWH. This sets out the policy and processes for who can be admitted and how this is to be undertaken.

4.3 **Accommodation Standards**

4.3.1 The Housing Allocations & Advice Manager (HAAM) advised that a review had been undertaken in December 2016 of the provision of temporary accommodation. This looked at the accommodation that was available at the time, the costs of using it, and changes relating to the legislation that led to changes on the duties in relation to provision of homeless accommodation. It also raised a number of recommendations as to how the use of temporary accommodation could / should be improved.

4.3.2 The HAAM confirmed that the majority of these recommendations had been actioned, although there had been no formal 'response' to the recommendations, as he had changed roles whilst in the process of completing the review.

4.3.3 The SHAO raises issues concerning the suitability of specific units being used as temporary accommodation with Assets or Senior Managers as necessary. An example is the accommodation at Willes Road which is a listed building in a conservation area. There are now plans to improve the condition of the property, including improvements to the heating, new windows and insulation works.

4.3.4 The planned maintenance programmes at the Council are driven by the findings of the stock condition surveys (SCS). However, the Compliance Team Leader advised that the temporary accommodation units were specifically excluded from the scope of the surveys. He was unsure why this had been, as the scope of the work was set by previous members of staff and he had just inherited the work. WWH was also not included in the SCS as it was not in place at the time of the survey. As a result, these properties are not included in the planned maintenance programmes unless specific requests are received. He has agreed to survey the properties this year and ensure that any requirements are in future planned works.

4.3.5 That being said, he suggested that, due to the regular turnaround of the properties, the regular void inspections performed (see below) would help to ensure that the properties are maintained to an appropriate standard.

4.3.6 He also suggested that discussions had been held with the Technical Manager and the Maintenance Team Leader to ascertain whether regular inspections of the temporary accommodation units should be undertaken to identify whether there were any aspects that could / should be included in the planned maintenance programmes. It was subsequently confirmed that the Surveying Team will be completing SCS for the temporary accommodation units by the end of the current financial year.

4.3.7 The SHAO advised that some fire safety works are likely to be required and training was required in order for relevant (Housing) staff to identify issues during their visits to (temporary) accommodation properties.

4.3.8 It was highlighted that, at the time of intial reporting, the fire safety works had concentrated on the high-rise properties in the district. Subsequently, it was confirmed that the Temporary Accommodation units were being progressed with Building Control staff undertaking fire risk assessments for

the properties. Once these inspections have been completed, any required works are to be placed through the appropriate contract.

4.3.9   The SHAO advised that when keys are returned at the end of the temporary 'tenancy', the Allocations team end the rent account and this instigates the void process (similar to 'regular' HRA properties). If keys are not returned for any reason (e.g. the person has abandoned the property or has been evicted), the process would be instigated once this was identified and new keys were obtained.

4.3.10   When the void job is raised on the Active H system, a specific (schedule of rates) code is included for the 'Inspection of Temporary Accommodation'. The Data Coordinator ran an extract from Active H of the use of this code over the last calendar year which showed 92 instances (although three were found to be incorrect).

4.3.11   The SHAO provided a report of cases where temporary accommodation 'tenancies' had ended during the current financial year and testing was undertaken to confirm whether corresponding void jobs were included on the Active H extract. This test proved largely satisfactory although two issues were noted in relation to the setting up of rent accounts. The SHAO suggested the issues here were fairly common with staff often being reminded of the need to set up rent accounts accurately.

Risk

The Council may not obtain all income due.

Recommendation

Refresher training on the setting up of rent accounts on Active H should be given to relevant staff.

4.3.12   The Interim Homeless Services Assistant Manager (IHSAM) advised that when someone leaves one of the rooms at WWH a visual inspection is undertaken to see if any repair works are required. However, as regular inspections are undertaken, void repair works are rarely required. He also advised that cleaning is undertaken when someone moves out of the room.

4.3.13   With regards to the dormitories at WWH, weekly health and safety checks are undertaken and any repair issues will be picked up as part of these checks.

4.3.14   The HAAM advised that the agreements in place for the leased accommodation (flats at 31 Tachbrook Road) specify that the internal aspects will be maintained by the Council. Some works will be paid for by the Council with others being initially paid for by the Council and then being recharged to the owner of the property. A review of Active H confirmed that various minor jobs and void works had been undertaken during the current financial year.

4.3.15   In terms of reviews undertaken of B&Bs, the SHAO suggested that this would have been undertaken in the 2016 review of temporary accommodation, but nothing formal had been undertaken since. However, this was not felt to be a particular issue.

4.4 Provision & Use

4.4.1 The SHAO advised that, where placements were 'outside of the ordinary' (i.e. not in 'regular', Council-owned or leased, units that were available at the time that the duty was required) the reasons why people are placed into temporary accommodation should be recorded in the notes on the Locata system. Testing on a sample of cases did not highlight any specific issues.

4.4.2 The HAAM advised that informal reviews of occupancy rates are undertaken in so far as details are available at a glance via the whiteboard held in the office. He suggested that if people were being left in B&B accommodation for longer than six weeks this might indicate a problem. However, this hasn't occurred and, as such, there has not been a requirement for more formal reviews.

4.4.3 The HAAM confirmed that the use of Council-owned and leased units would be prioritised over the use of B&B accommodation. However, he highlighted that sometimes there would be issues over the suitability of the Council-owned and leased accommodation (e.g. location in relation to an ex-partner), so the use of B&Bs would be required even if there was another unit free.

4.4.4 Another reason is that where the Council is minded to consider that a household may be homeless intentionally, it can be benefitial to secure B&B accommodation rather than using the other types of temporary accommodation as the arrangement can be more easily brought to an end.

4.4.5 He also highlighted that the Council's use of B&Bs was significantly lower than neighbouring authorities (e.g. Coventry City Council, Nuneaton & Bedworth and Rugby) and there had been some considerable periods where no B&B accommodation was in use within the District.

4.4.6 The sample testing above only identified one case where B&B accommodation had been used and this was suitably explained (individual circumstances of the user).

4.4.7 The whiteboard in Housing Advice identified four current users of B&Bs (as at the time of testing). The SHAO advised that three of these were due to the lack of availability in our own units and the occupiers would be moved to our own temporary accommomodation as soon as these were available. The other person was also waiting for the void repair works to be undertaken before being moved into a single-person unit.

4.4.8 The SHAO advised that the only cases for which a maximum tenancy duration is set out in relation to use of temporary accommodation is for families and pregnant women in line with legislation (the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003). This stipulates that they should stay for a maximum of six weeks in 'B&B' accommodation (formally 'nightly paid with shared facilities') and this should only be in exceptional circumstances.

4.4.9 For the cases chosen in the abovementioned sample, all placements were considered appropriate based on the circumstances of the service user and the availability of different units.

4.4.10 The Housing Needs Manager (HNM) advised that placement within WWH will be determined by the needs of existing users, balancing these against the needs of those that present on any given day. This (amongst other things) is set out in the management plan.

4.4.11 There are six individual rooms and sixteen dormitory bed spaces split across different rooms and the use is flexible depending on the number of men and women. Some specific users will be given individual rooms such as those who present with a dog, those with known mental health issues and those who are looking to move on to more regular accommodation.

4.5 **Support to Occupants**

4.5.1 The SHAO advised that the team try to maintain regular contact with tenants of temporary accommodation to ensure that the terms of their tenancy are maintained. However, despite this regular contact, there are often issues due to the types of people that require homelessness assistance (e.g. drug users). She advised that the aim is to visit the 'tenant' every week, but some require more regular visits (sometimes daily).

4.5.2 The SHAO also highlighted that there have been issues due to the fact that the team has been short staffed and management covering both temporary accommodation and general homelessness. One of the consequences of changing staff is that a lot of the job involves building relationships with the 'clients'.

4.5.3 The SHAO also advised that notes are maintained of when visits are performed and what has been discussed, including details of any issues raised by the tenants or identified by the Housing Officers (e.g. anti-social behaviour). Rent statements and any letters are also taken along to the 'meetings'.

4.5.4 Sample testing confirmed that regular contact had been maintained with each 'tenant', with various journal entries seen on the Locata system in each case. Personal Housing Plans (PHPs) and Needs Assessments were also found to be in place in each case although in two cases these were still held on the network directories of the case officer as opposed to being attached to the system.

Risk

Staff may be unaware of relevant information in relation to service users.

Recommendation

Staff should be reminded of the need to ensure documents are attached appropriately to the system.

4.5.5 The HAAM advised that proposals are in place to appoint a Temporary Accommodation Officer. The purpose of this post is to enhance the service by providing specialised management of this accommodation and enhanced support to the occupants.

4.5.6 The HNM advised that users of WWH are allocated a support worker who will draw up a support plan to help identify any issues that they may have. There is also a risk assessment drawn up for each user as part of their admission.

4.5.7 The IHSAM advised that the support plan takes the form of a 'star chart' which is used to assess the needs of the service user and any support that will be required. An associated action plan is also completed. Scheduled support sessions are planned with each user as part of the support provided to them and users have access to other staff as well as their 'key' support worker.

4.5.8 If users are placed in a room, they will have a license agreement in place and if they are in a dormitory there is a use and occupation agreement. There is also a set of house rules and monthly 'house' meetings are held.

4.5.9 If the 'licenses' are breached, the user can be excluded from the hostel. This may be preceded by written warnings, depending on the severity of the issues / conduct.

4.5.10 If a serious breach has occurred (leading to a 28-day exclusion), there will be discussions held as to the reasons behind the issue and what has been done by the user to address the issue. They will also have to sign an 'Acceptable Behaviour Contract' before being allowed back into the hostel.

4.5.11 The HNM advised that some use WWH as a bed for the night, but the ethos is that the use of the hostel is a step on the road to help the user break out of long term homelessness.

4.5.12 Users are advised to speak to Housing Advice staff (within three nights) and, as part of the process, they will have PHPs and needs assessments drawn (as set out above), and these will be shared with WWH staff.

4.5.13 If a service user refuses / fails to cooperate with Housing, they may be excluded from WWH for a period and the IHSAM provided an (anonymised) sample letter. However, following the identification of this issue as part of the draft reporting process, the Head of Housing Services has instructed that this should cease.

4.5.14 The Council also works in partnership with Coventry Cyrenians (CC). Six properties are leased to them to provide 'move on' accommodation. When users of WWH are ready, they will be referred to CC so that the can be moved into the (shared) leased properties in order to help prepare them to obtain, and maintain, a formal tenancy.

4.6 **Finance**

4.6.1 The SHAO advised that Council staff will instigate benefit claims on behalf of the occupants and will chase if not paid. She highlighted that rent statements are prepared and passed to the tenants on a weekly basis, with warning letters being sent where relevant.

4.6.2   Where tenants are housed in Council-owned properties or those in leased properties (Tachbrook Road), any benefits will be paid directly to the Council. The benefits paid do not generally cover all of the costs of the use of temporary accommodation, so top-up rent is also charged.

4.6.3   Testing confirmed that benefits had been claimed as appropriate in each sampled case but none of the 'top-up' rents had been received. The testing also identified another case where the rent account had been set up incorrectly, with benefit payments being credited to a closed account as opposed to the new, correct one. (See recommendation at 4.3.11 above).

4.6.4   The HNM advised that benefit claims will similarly be submitted for those using William Wallsgrove House (WWH), with the hostel dealing with the claim and receiving payment directly. She also advised that individuals using WWH also have to pay a personal charge for the rooms and this can be paid at various places using a bar code.

4.6.5   The IHSAM advised that he maintains a spreadsheet to track benefit claims and any personal payment arrears and provided an anonymised version as evidence.

4.6.6   Where personal payments are not received, payment plans will be entered into. He suggested that, due to the service users moving between dormitories / rooms, Active H is not an ideal system to track payments, which is why the separate spreadsheet is used. He also advised that he holds fortnightly meetings with Benefit staff to obtain updates on service users' benefit applications.

4.6.7   The contract register included on the intranet includes details of various different contracts in place in relation to the provision of temporary accommodation for homeless people.

4.6.8   The AAM advised that discussions are ongoing with the Senior Procurement Business Partner in relation to the 'procurement' of Bed & Breakfast (B&B) accommodation. He suggested, however, that there were issues over getting providers to sign up to be on the 'list' and he felt that it may lead to providers adding a premium to the amounts they were charging compared to the prices that could be obtained online though popular hotel booking websites.

4.6.9   A sample of payments to B&B providers was reviewed to ensure that the accommodation usage has been checked and the invoice has been authorised as appropriate prior to payment. The sample chosen included three payments based on invoices received and two that had been paid for using a purchasing card.

4.6.10   Where invoices were held, there was evidence that the usage had been checked (i.e. the invoice was annotated in some way as evidence). Due to the nature of the payments on purchasing cards, there was no evidence that the accommodation use had been checked. All payments had been authorised (either signature on invoice or the purchasing card log).

4.6.11   Both the AAM and the HNM advised that regular meetings are held with Accountancy staff (the Principal Accountant (Housing) (PAH) and the Assistant Accountant (AA)).

4.6.12   The AAM advised that there is work to be done with regards to budget structure and coding, although he suggested that the Housing Services review needed to be completed before this could be undertaken.

4.6.13   The budget figures as per TOTAL were examined to ascertain if there were any 'significant' variances and those were discussed with the AAM. He was able to provide adequate explanations for the majority of variances against the previous year's budget and outturn and the current year expenditure.

4.6.14   Two specific issues were noted in relation to a miscoding of procurement card expenditure (B&B expenditure coded to repairs and maintenance) and an outstanding liability from 2017/18 (crash pad).

Advisory

The budget issues identified should be addressed with Accountancy staff.

4.6.15   It was noted that, where there had been a significant budget variance in 2018/19, these had generally not been taken into account when the budgets for 2019/20 were set. The AAM again highlighted that there was a need to review Housing budgets in general but this needs to be undertaken once the restructure of the service has been completed.

Advisory

Actual income and expenditure figures should be taken into account when new Housing Services budgets are 'created'.

4.6.16   The only expenditure budgets included on the WWH budget code were for staffing costs and the HNM explained why these budgets had varied and where there were ongoing variances. However, she was unsure why no budgets were showing against the other expenditure codes despite expenditure being coded accordingly.

4.6.17   The AA advised that the budgets were meant to have been loaded by the previous PAH but this had not happened due to other issues, so this had passed to the current post holder. The AA provided evidence that the budgets for 2020/21 were currently being worked on so that budgets would be included as appropriate in future.

4.7   **Risk Management**

4.7.1   The Housing Services Risk Register does not contain any direct risks relating to the provision of temporary accommodation or WWH. However, the register makes reference to temporary accommodation use as a consequence of two separate risks:

11 'Increasing levels of homelessness', with one consequence being 'Pressure on temporary accommodation leading to increased bed and breakfast use'

12 'Reputational risk due to Inability to meet the need for housing across the district', with one consequence being 'Increase in homelessness & demand for temporary accommodation'

4.7.2 The Accommodation Placement Policy and Procedures document does, however, make reference to risk in relation to the actual accommodation (i.e. health and safety, and fire risks) and the WWH management plan identifies the need for risk assessments to be performed for each individual taking a bed at the hostel.

4.7.3 Various different search words were used to try to identify relevant risk assessments on AssessNet. Most searches (relating to 'general' temporary accommodation or use of B&Bs) returned no (relevant) results.

4.7.4 However, a specific assessment relating to the use of WWH was found to be in place. This also makes specific reference to the need for risk assessments to be performed prior to a bed space being given.

4.7.5 A risk assessment for Housing Officers who undertake visits was also identified, but this does not specifically cover those visiting temporary accommodation. The SHAO advised that, following the current redesign in Housing Services, there will be a specific Temporary Accommodation Officer and it is expected that a risk assessment will need to be drawn up in relation to their work.

Advisory

An AssessNet risk assessment should be drawn up for in relation to temporary accommodation visits when the new Temporary Accommodation Officer joins the Council.

4.7.6 The SHAO advised that, due to the types of tenants that require temporary accommodation, there are often issues of anti-social behaviour. Other agencies, such as the Police, are involved wherever possible.

4.7.7 However, she highlighted that there is no Police back-up received. This is to be discussed with the Senior Housing Officer and the Tenancy Manager to ascertain how these issues are dealt with, with regards to 'regular' tenancies. They have also been referred to a (relevant) Police Sergeant.

4.7.8 The HNM advised, however, that at WWH they have regular interaction with the Police and they have a close working relationship with a particular PCSO who regularly visits the hostel due to the nature of the tenants and the associated issues that they bring.

5 **Conclusions**

5.1 Following our review, in overall terms we are able to give a SUBSTANTIAL degree of assurance that the systems and controls in place in respect of

Homelessness and Housing Advice in relation to use of temporary accommodation are appropriate and are working effectively.

5.2 The assurance bands are shown overleaf:

Level of Assurance	Definition
Substantial Assurance	There is a sound system of control in place and compliance with the key controls.
Moderate Assurance	Whilst the system of control is broadly satisfactory, some controls are weak or non-existent and there is non-compliance with several controls.
Limited Assurance	The system of control is generally weak and there is non-compliance with controls that do exist.

5.3 A number of minor issues were, however, identified:

- A number of rent accounts were found to have been set up incorrectly.
- Documents were sometimes held on network drives as opposed to being attached to the system as appropriate.

5.4 Further 'issues' were also identified where advisory notes have been reported. In these instances, no formal recommendations are thought to be warranted as there is no risk if the actions are not taken. If the changes are made, however, the existing control framework will be enhanced:

- Budget issues identified need to be addressed with Accountancy staff.
- Actual income and expenditure figures should be taken into account when new Housing Services budgets are 'created'.
- An AssessNet risk assessment should be drawn up for in relation to temporary accommodation visits when the new Temporary Accommodation Officer joins the Council.

6 **Management Action**

6.1 The recommendations arising above are reproduced in the attached Action Plan (Appendix A) for management attention.

Richard Barr
Audit and Risk Manager

Action Plan

Internal Audit of Homelessness & Housing Advice (Temporary Accommodation) – December 2019

Report Ref.	Recommendation	Risk	Risk Rating*	Responsible Officer(s)	Management Response	Target Date
4.3.11	Refresher training on the setting up of rent accounts on Active H should be given to relevant staff.	The Council may not obtain all income due.	Low	Senior Housing Advice Officer	The team have a number of new and inexperienced staff. We will arrange refresher training for the relevant staff on setting up rent accounts.	31 December 2019
4.5.4	Staff should be reminded of the need to ensure documents are attached appropriately to the system.	Staff may be unaware of relevant information in relation to service users.	Low	Senior Housing Advice Officer	We will arrange refresher training for the relevant staff on document management.	31 December 2019

* Risk Ratings are defined as follows:

High Risk: Issue of significant importance requiring urgent attention.
Medium Risk: Issue of moderate importance requiring prompt attention.
Low Risk: Issue of minor importance requiring attention.