

Division(s):

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 6 MARCH 2019
REPORT OF THE AUDIT WORKING GROUP – 6 FEBRUARY 2019

Report by Director of Finance

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the report.

Executive Summary

2. The Audit Working Group met on 6 February 2019 and received updates and reviewed progress in respect of the previous audits of Mental Health, Health & Safety and Security Bonds. The group reviewed a recently finalised audit report of Business Continuity which had been graded as Red, officers attended the group to provide an update on progress already taken and the action plan now in place to address the weaknesses identified. The group also considered an update in respect of the risk management, which included a review of the arrangements within the Communities Directorate.

Introduction

Attendance:

Full Meeting:

Chairman Dr Geoff Jones; Cllr Nick Carter, Cllr Paul Buckley; Cllr Deborah McIlveen, Cllr Charles Mathew, Ian Dyson, Assistant Director of Finance; Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor; Tessa Clayton, Audit Manager, Georgina Cox, Auditor (minutes)

Part Meeting:

Nick Graham, Strategic Director, Kate Terroni, Director Adults, Karen Fuller, Deputy Director Adults, Fiona Percival, County HR Manager, Paul Lundy, County Health & Safety Manager, Bev Hindle, Strategic Director, Rikke Hansen, Head of Integration & Improvement, Steven Jones, Corporate Performance and Risk Manager. Rob MacDougall, Assistant Chief Finance Officer (Corporate Lead for Business Continuity) and Andy Brett, Business Continuity and Resilience Manager, Eric Owens, Assistant Director Growth and Place.

Matters to Report:

AWG 18.38 Mental Health Audit Update

The group received an update from the Director and Deputy Director of Adults on the progress in addressing the weaknesses identified from the follow up audit of Mental Health, finalised in April 2018, which remained graded as Red. Officers had last attended the Audit Working Group in June 2018 and since then the responsibility for the delivery for social work provision for the over 65's has been brought back from Oxford Health to the OCC teams.

The group were satisfied that significant progress had been made for the over 65s and were updated on examples where the improvements implemented have led to delivery of better outcomes for service users. The group noted that for adults of working age mental health service that some actions remain outstanding; however, that OCC are working closely with Oxford Health to determine the future arrangements. The group agreed that Officers would attend the September AWG meeting to provide a further update.

AWG 18.39 Health & Safety Audit Update

The audit was finalised in October 2018 and had an overall conclusion grading of Red, with weaknesses noted with the governance structure and assurance arrangements for the management of health and safety across the council.

Officers attended the October AWG and also the January A&G Committee to discuss the action plan in place to address the weaknesses. Officers provided a further update to the AWG to confirm that the action plan is on track to implement all actions by the end of March 2019. The group were satisfied with the progress made. The remaining actions will continue to be monitored via the Internal Audit action tracking and reporting system.

AWG 18.40 Business Continuity Audit

The audit of Business Continuity has recently been finalised (January 2019), with an overall grading of Red. Officers attended to update the group regarding the agreed action plan. The group considered the full internal audit report. The group noted the work already completed and that officers plan to have all actions implemented by 31 March 2019. The actions will be monitored via the Internal Audit action tracking and reporting system.

AWG 18.41 Risk Management update

Officers presented an update on the corporate risk management approach. The group noted the plan in place which includes revision of the Risk Management Strategy, introduction of the new Annual Development Plan for risk management, and full review of the Strategic Risk Register.

The group acknowledged the ongoing work and the strategic direction being provided by the Chief Executive to improve and properly embed risk management as a routine part of OCC's everyday work.

The group also reviewed the risk management arrangements in place within the Communities Directorate through review of the risk registers and attendance of officers from Communities at the meeting. The group noted the planned developments to refresh the arrangements for risk management, which includes a programme of training to enable Communities to have a more cohesive, consistent and strategic approach. Communities were invited to attend the October AWG to present the improvements made.

The AWG have asked for the revised Strategic risk register to be brought to the April AWG meeting for review.

The AWG have asked that the Resources risk register be brought to the June AWG meeting for review.

AWG 18.42 Security Bonds Audit Update

The audit was finalised in April 2018 and had the overall grading of Red. Officers attended the June AWG meeting to provide an update on the implementation of actions. Officers were invited back to the February meeting to provide a further update. The group noted progress has been made with the implementation of actions, however there are some still in progress which officers reported that this has been due to the complexity of some the work that has been required. Officers confirmed they would be able to prepare a short report for April AWG to confirm that all actions are implemented.

Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance

Contact Officer: Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor
February 2019.
07393 001246 sarah.cox@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Date of next AWG meeting Wednesday 24 April 2019, 1.30 pm