

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 11 SEPTEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE AUDIT WORKING GROUP – 4 SEPTEMBER 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 4 September 2019 and received the quarterly Internal Audit update. Officers also attended to provide a progress update in respect of the audit of Mental Health and present the Whistleblowing annual report.

Introduction

Attendance:

Full Meeting: Chairman Dr Geoff Jones, Councillors: Roz Smith, Deborah McIlveen, Charles Mathew, Nick Carter.

Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor; Tessa Clayton, Audit Manager, Georgina Cox, Auditor (minutes)

Part Meeting:

Karen Fuller, Deputy Director Adults, Nick Graham, Director of Law and Governance, Ian Dyson Assistant Director of Finance.

Matters to Report:

AWG 19.22 Mental Health Update

3. The group received an update from the 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 February 2019. 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 and significant progress has been made to implement the required governance and control improvements.
4. For adults of working age some of the actions remain outstanding. The group noted the current work being undertaken by the Deputy Director and OCC to work with Oxford Health and agree future arrangements / ensure robust processes in place. The group agreed that Officers would attend the February 2020 AWG meeting to provide a further update.

AWG 19.23 Bank Account Closure

5. The group were updated regarding a process error that had occurred resulting in an incorrect school bank account being closed. The group were satisfied with the remedial action taken to rectify the issue and that controls had been strengthened appropriately.

AWG 19.24 Whistleblowing Annual Report

6. The group considered the annual report of Whistleblowing received from staff or the public. Individual cases and the outcomes were noted.

AWG 19.25 Internal Audit Update

7. The group received an update from the Chief Internal Auditor on progress against the Internal Audit Plan. A full update on plan progress is due to be made to the September A&G committee.
8. Recruitment challenges were noted regarding the vacant Senior Auditor post. In contrast the response to the in-house counter fraud officer has initially been very positive – successful recruitment to this post will reduce some of the impact that the operational counter fraud work currently has on the internal audit resource.
9. The group noted the ongoing follow up of Red reports and have scheduled updates from officers at future AWG meetings to report back on progress of implementation of agreed actions. An update on S106 and also Security Bonds is scheduled for the October 2019 AWG meeting.
10. The group noted the positive improvement with the implementation of priority 1 management actions, however noted a number of actions still outstanding from 2017/18. These will be followed up during September and October by Internal Audit with the individual Directorate Leadership Teams.

Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance
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September 2019.
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Date of next AWG meeting Wednesday 23 October 2019 at 14:00