

Internal Audit Recommendation Tracker (Overdue)

Appendix B

Last Updated: 11 February 2022

Audit Year (Date report issued)	Rec Ref	Original Recommendation	Priority	Original Managers Response	Responsible Officer/ Head of Service	Agreed Imp Date	Revised Imp Date(s)	Status Update from Management	Status
Responsive Housing Repairs 2018/19 August 2019	2(b)	Post inspections completed on more complex housing repairs should be formally documented and retained.	Medium	<p>Agreed. Customer Satisfaction Surveys are currently sent out to tenants on a sample basis. The sample size will be increased to ensure that the quality of repairs works is completed to a satisfactory standard.</p> <p>Post inspections completed on complex repairs works will be formally documented and retained</p>	HTS Operations Director and the Council's Assistant Director Housing and Property	30/09/19	31/01/20 30/04/20 30/09/20 31/01/21 30/10/21 01/04/22	<p>Oct 19: HTS carries out a 100% post inspection regime on all housing voids it completes (with handover forms to demonstrate this). There are ongoing discussions with HDC over who should be carrying out more detailed Post Inspections on completed Housing Repairs. Traditionally this has been carried out by Technical Services who transferred from HTS and now work for HDC. We will provide a further update once this is resolved.</p> <p>Feb 20: It has been agreed that HTS will carry out post inspections on repairs from 1st April 2020. These will be recorded formally.</p> <p>July 20: A response will not be forwarded from HTS whilst they establish recovery under the current Coronavirus situation. This will be picked up as part of their recovery plans</p> <p>Oct 20: HTS (P&E) Ltd continue to establish recovery and aligned to recent Govt. restrictions (Tier 2 for Essex). This activity is recognised as a key quality control mechanism and is included in their implementation plan from learning the lessons from Covid 19 initial lockdown. This will be monitored through the shared operations group.</p>	Overdue

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								<p>May 21: HTS (P&E) Ltd continue to establish recovery aligned to recent Govt. restrictions. A phased approach to internal inspections has recommenced and will be included in the HTS (P&E) repairs recovery plans which is expected to be published in June 2021.</p> <p>Oct 21: HTS continue to deal with the backlog of works and the issue of post inspection of works is now discussed at the Joint Operations meetings with HTS Directors</p> <p>Feb 22: As response Oct21. HTS confirmed in a meeting held on 31/01/22 that they will be recommending Post inspections from the beginning of April 2022.</p>	
<p>Harlow Playhouse overspends 2018/19 March 2020</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Produce a report to SMB and Councillors to consider the direction of travel for the playhouse. To include consideration of the importance of the relationship with the Arts Council.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Business Plan has been produced and the process of getting the plan adopted has been included in the /corporate plan as an objective of the coming municipal year.</p>	<p>Director of Governance and Corporate Support</p>	<p>31/12/20</p>	<p>31/03/22 30/09/22</p>	<p>Feb 21: As a result of Covid-19, the 2020/21 milestones have moved to 2021/22 in line with the revised Governance business plan.</p> <p>May 21: The Playhouse budget outturn will not be overspent for 20/21. As a result of Covid-19 the Playhouse has been shut most of the last year. Funding of £500k has been secured from the Arts Council as part of the Covid-19 culture recovery fund. The business plan has been delayed and is included in the Governance Service plan for 21/22.</p> <p>Oct 21: All reports from external</p>	<p>Overdue</p>

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								<p>consultants have now been submitted, a review with Legal Services will take place at the end of October ready for draft to SMB by end of November.</p> <p>Feb 22: A draft options appraisal has now been prepared and is being reviewed by the new Director and Assistant Director (in post from January 2022). This is currently being reviewed and refined. To review again in July 2022.</p>	
<p>Business Continuity 2019/20 May 2020</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>The recovery detail, both in the corporate plan and in the service area plans define the IT systems individually and specifically and a prioritised list for recovery for them developed.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Changes will be made as part of review process of the COVID 19 BC scenario and applications of plans and processes during this time.</p>	<p>Assistant Director Corporate Services and Senior ICT Manager</p>	<p>31/03/21</p>	<p>31/03/22 31/07/22</p>	<p>May 21: Team level Covid specific BC Plans were carried out in September 2020 and have been reviewed in March 2021; IT systems have been considered as part of these. Once plans for future ways of working are finalised new BC assessments will need to be carried out accordingly and this recommendation will be incorporated.</p> <p>Oct 21: Work is underway on Future Ways of Working assessment and corporate structure review and new BC assessments will follow this; in the absence of specifically listed and prioritised systems these will be recovered in order or service delivery priorities as per the corporate BC plan.</p> <p>Feb 22: Senior management review is now complete and</p>	<p>Overdue</p>

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								changes took effect as of 1 January 2022. The corporate BC Plan will be updated to reflect this and will include individual system priority; in the absence of specifically listed and prioritised systems these will be recovered in order of service delivery priorities as per the corporate BC plan.	
Business Continuity 2019/20 May 2020	5	Training for key staff and plan holders should be undertaken. This includes more desk-top training, but also full scenario training.	Medium	Training will be most useful if it occurs after completion of Good Practice Action below	Assistant Director Corporate Services	31/07/21	31/03/22 31/07/22	Oct 21: An Essex Resilience Forum Working Group has been set up to service Business Continuity across Membership of the Forum and will look to provide training required. Feb 22: The Essex resilience Forum Working group for Business Continuity will provide training and testing programme across Essex to ensure all authorities working at same level; which goes over and above the original recommendation for local level training.	Overdue
Corporate Health and Safety 2019/20 May 2020	2	A common and consistent H&S Training Matrix be adopted and used across the Council. Human Resources should be consulted as part of the process to ensure a consistent approach. Responsibility should	Medium	A training matrix will be incorporated into the forthcoming health and safety management system. A proposal will be made to SMB regarding oversight of return of completed matrices	Assistant Director Environment and Director of Communities and Environment	30/09/21	30/06/22	Oct 21: Development with HTS of a comprehensive Health and Safety management system has been paused throughout the COVID-19 emergency as corporate Health and safety resources have been Substantially diverted to responding to continually changing COVID-19 risks. It is proposed to re-examine the viability of this work as the impact of the COVID-19 emergency fully abates	Overdue

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		be given to Heads of Service to ensure their completed training matrices are submitted to the Council's Health and Safety Officer on a quarterly basis for review and ensure compliance.						Feb 22: The amount of additional work from Covid 19 appears to be abating. This will give the Health and Safety Team the opportunity to focus on completing the recommendation by the revised implementation date.	
Harlow Gilston Garden Town 2019/20 July 2020	1	To clarify the accountability and extent of any liability of each partner in the HGGT a signed overarching agreement between the councils should be prepared. This will include a data sharing agreement.	Medium	(1) Work is now well underway on the next steps to establish Combined Delivery Service following Board decision on 10 Feb 2020. (2) Legal work is underway to clarify arrangements and delegations for the CDS. Link to HIG delivery and governance	HGGT Director HGGT Project Manager HGGT Programme Manager	(1) 31/03/21 (2) 30/09/21	31/03/22 30/09/22	(1) Political and corporate agreement to proposals by 31 March 2021 Shadow structures then up and running (2) Formal decision making will need to follow the local election period – 30 September 2021 Feb 21: HGGT legal advisors, Weightmans, have been instructed to develop a data sharing protocol for the HGGT. The most appropriate agreement is currently being evaluated. Oct 21: An HGGT Governance Review Task and Finish Group has been established. A series of meetings with HGGT Partner Leaders and Chief Executives, and the Task & Finish Group have been set up to take forward the formalisation of governance arrangements for HGGT. The Task and Finish Group agreed for further work to be undertaken	Overdue

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								<p>towards the establishment of a Joint Committee. The Leaders of the HGGT Partner Councils are keen for this work to take place at pace and are seeking to have formalised arrangements in place by March 2022.</p> <p>Feb 22: Work is ongoing but given the scale and complexity, the timescales have been pushed back and now looking for formal approval of the new governance arrangements in the summer 2022 and operation of the new Joint Committee to commence in September 2022.</p>	
<p>Commercial Rents 2019/20 September 2020 (Re-issued October 2020)</p>	1b	<p>Create a commercial property policy, which covers; how rent is set the types of lettings operated, the content of leases, renting, rent free periods, rent deposits, maintenance, voids, and collection of income. (This list is not exhaustive).</p>	Medium	Agreed	Property and Facilities Manager in conjunction with the Assistant Director of Housing and Property.	31/01/21	<p>31/01/22 30/06/22</p>	<p>Oct 21: The Property and Facilities Team have been utilising a number of checklists to guide the processes related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grant of new leases; • Progressing of assignment requests; • Managing lease surrenders and expiries; and • Management of vacant properties <p>An overarching policy/guidance document has been drafted to provide guidance for Officers and a framework under which they are to operate. A copy of the draft policy has been given to Internal Audit while waiting for Director of Finance sign off.</p>	Overdue

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								Feb 22: A full commercial lettings policy has been prepared; Member scrutiny and adoption are to be progressed.	
Commercial Rents 2019/20 September 2020 (Re-issued October 2020)	6	Review management fees for all service charges. Ensure they are appropriate. Consider any RICS requirements when setting management fees. Finance can be asked to help in calculating management fees.	Medium	Agreed.	Property and Facilities Manager.	31/03/21	30/06/22	Oct 21: This is in progress. The Property and Facilities Manager has discussed the level of management fees with the Senior Services Accountant and will amend those where considered necessary as part of the year end (31 March 2022) service charge account reconciliation. Feb 22 This will be completed following the year-end service charge account reconciliations.	Overdue
Equality Act and Impact Assessments 2020/21 February 2021	3	To drive equality improvements and ensure buy-in from managers across the Council, there should be an 'equality champion' at Senior Management Board. Key messages from the Equality Working Group (EWG) should be reported to the Third Tier Managers meeting to be filtered down to staff.	Medium	(a) Head of Governance to be Equality Champion' at Senior Management Board (SMB). (b) An EWG Group has been established. (c) The Chair of EWG to develop key messages for the Third Tier Managers and their Teams. (d) The EWG will be expanded to include participants from the	Director of Governance and Corporate Support/ Corporate and Democratic Services Manager	(a) Completed (b) Completed (c) 28/02/21 (d) May 2021 onwards	(c) 31/05/21 31/12/21 30/06/22 (d) 31/05/21 31/12/21 30/06/22	May 21: (c) This has not been progressed as quickly as needed due to continued work being undertaken on Corona pandemic and the Elections. This will now fall in line with (d) and will be underway by late May 2021 Oct 21: The EWG has meet on occasions to ensure the documents were agreed and ready to be presented at Cabinet. However the EWG has not has the opportunity to meet over the summer due to seasonal issues which have impacted Officers workloads. The dates for both (c) and (d) have	Overdue

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				protected characteristics to work on the Action Plan and build on the other work required to meet the PSED.				been amended to Dec 21 to reflect this Feb 22: Unfortunately the Service Manager leading on the EWG has not been able to arrange these meetings. This has now been taken to the Senior Management Board Meeting to discuss a way forward to ensure this important work is carried out as soon as possible.	
Equality Act and Impact Assessments 2020/21 February 2021	5	To comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) the Council should publish annually its equality objectives and the progress made towards achieving them. This could be achieved through the publication of an Equalities Annual Report.	Medium	An interim report is being compiled for publication in April 2021.	Director of Governance and Corporate Support/ Corporate and Democratic Services Manager	30/04/21	30/06/21 31/12/21 31/03/22	May 21: This is currently being developed and should be ready for publication soon. Oct 21: The report has been compiled and is awaiting approval and to be finalised by the Communications Team. This will be completed by Dec 21 Feb 22: This has been delayed due to conflicting work with the Communications Team and now needs to be further updated. This will be completed by March 2022	Overdue

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Equality Act and Impact Assessments 2020/21 February 2021	6	The process for assessing and recording the equalities impacts of policies (using an Equality Impact Assessment or other agreed methodology) should be clearly communicated as part of tailored training for staff and Members.	Medium	Provide a range of equality and diversity training and development to support staff deliver the Council's equality and diversity commitments.	Director of Governance and Corporate Support/ Corporate and Democratic Services Manager	31/12/21	30/04/22	Feb 22: A suitable training company is being sourced to do both Equality and Diversity Training and also training on filling in Equality Impact Assessments.	Overdue
IT Disaster Recovery 2020/21 August 2021	1	The IT Disaster Recovery plan should be reviewed and updated to accurately capture the recovery of all Council systems including new virtual or cloud-based applications.	Medium	Accepted. ICT recovery plans will be reviewed and updated upon completion of the next scheduled IT DR test.	Senior ICT Manager	31/12/21	31/03/22	Feb 22: The IT Disaster recovery plan is being reviewed and updated, for completion by the start of the new financial year.	Overdue
IT Disaster Recovery 2020/21 August 2021	2	Disaster Recovery plans should be supported by comprehensive and up to date technical recovery procedures.	Medium	Accepted.	Senior ICT Manager	31/12/21	31/03/22	Feb 22: As above, the IT Disaster recovery plan is being reviewed and updated.	Overdue
IT Disaster Recovery 2020/21 August 2021	5	All environmental hardware including UPS, fire suppression and air conditioning should be tested and serviced annually and records confirming this held.	Low	Accepted.	Senior ICT Manager Assistant Director Housing and Property	31/12/21	30/06/22	Feb 22: With the restructure responsibility for this has moved from the Director of Finance to the Assistant Director Housing and Property who is looking into this	Overdue

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Provision of IT Services to HTS 2020/21 August 2021	1	Documented and agreed KPIs should be implemented at the next contract renewal together with penalty clauses which can then be used to assess the adequacy of ICTs service provision to HTS.	Medium	Agreed and accepted.	Senior ICT Manager	31/12/21	31/03/22	Feb 22: A service level agreement was drafted for HTS approval. The SLA includes two performance targets to be reported quarterly and monitored at the monthly contract meeting. Penalty clauses are included to cover poor performance for more than one month.	Overdue
Provision of IT Services to HTS 2020/21 August 2021	2	Contract negotiations between HTS and ICT for the continued provision of ICT technical support services should commence immediately.	Medium	Agreed and accepted.	Senior ICT Manager	31/12/21	31/03/22	Feb 22: HTS and ICT met 01 February. A Service Level Agreement has been drafted for HTS approval	Overdue
Provision of IT Services to HTS 2020/21 August 2021	4	Monthly contract / account meetings should be formalised, and discussions based on performance reports that capture KPIs (as outlined in recommendation 1) and which are also minuted with agreed actions documented.	Medium	Agreed and accepted.	Senior ICT Manager	31/12/21	31/07/22	Feb 22: Meetings will be formalised and documented as part of the contract management process. HTS has agreed to set up the meetings.	Overdue