

DAP - Internal Audit Half Year Report 2022-23

Plymouth City Council Audit & Governance Committee

November 2022

Official

Tony Rose
Head of Audit Partnership



Auditing for achievement

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the performance against the internal audit plan to date for the 2022/23 financial year, summarising our main findings and recommendations aimed at improving controls where our work has been finalised.

The key objective of the Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) is to support the Council and provide assurance on the adequacy, security and effectiveness of the systems and controls operating across the organisation.

The Internal Audit plan for 2022/23 was presented to, and approved by, the Audit and Governance Committee in March 2022. However, with the rapid pace of change in local government, we continue to liaise with the management to “flex” the plan as appropriate to ensure that our work focusses on those areas which add most value to the Council in these challenging times.

The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require the Head of Internal Audit to prepare an annual report providing an opinion that can be used by the organisation to inform its governance statement. This report provides a position statement on the progress towards that opinion.

Expectations of the Audit and Governance Committee from this half year report

Members are requested to consider:

- the assurance statement within this report,
- the completion of audit work against the plan,
- the scope and ability of audit to complete the audit work,
- any audit findings provided,
- the overall performance and customer satisfaction on audit delivery, and
- review and approve the in-year changes to the audit plan.

In review of the above the Audit Committee are required to consider the assurance provided alongside that of the Executive, Corporate Risk Management and external assurance including that of the External Auditor as part of the Governance Framework and satisfy themselves from this assurance that the internal control framework continues to be maintained at an adequate level to mitigate risks and inform the Executive for governance requirements.

Tony Rose
Head of Devon Audit Partnership

Opinion Statement

Overall, based on work performed to date during 2022/23 and our experience from the current year progress and previous years' audit, the Head of Internal Audit's mid-year assurance opinion is "Reasonable Assurance" on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's internal control framework.

Work included in the 2022/23 audit plan includes assurance, risk, governance and value-added engagements which, together with prior years audit work, provide a framework and background within which we assess the Authority's control environment. Should any significant weaknesses be identified in specific areas, these would need to be considered by the Authority when preparing its Annual Governance Statement later in the year.

When undertaking reviews, we assess whether key, and other, controls are operating satisfactorily and that exposure to risk is minimised. An opinion on the adequacy of the control environment is provided to management as part of the audit report. All audit reports include an action plan detailing the management responses to be taken to address any risk and control issues identified during a review. Progress with the implementation of each action plan is tracked by Internal Audit with the Finance Service incorporating the outcome of that work into the Audit Actions Review report. The outcomes of the implementation of management actions at the end of Quarter 1 was presented to Audit and Governance Committee in September. The next exercise is planned for Quarter 3 and the results will be brought before this Committee in March 2023.

Substantial Assurance	A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists across the organisation, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of strategic and operational objectives.	Limited Assurance	Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified across the organisation. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks and ensure that strategic and operational objectives can be achieved.
Reasonable Assurance	There are generally sound systems of governance, risk management and control in place across the organisation. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of some of the strategic and operational objectives.	No Assurance	Immediate action is required to address fundamental control gaps, weaknesses or issues of non-compliance identified across the organisation. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of strategic and operational objectives.

Review of Audit Coverage

Information and data are vital to every part of the Council's business and is transforming the way we work and how local people access information and services. Against this backdrop, cyber-attacks are growing in frequency and becoming more sophisticated. The threat landscape, and the ever-increasing availability of sophisticated 'malware kits', makes a cyber incident highly likely and an effective backup process is a key component in safeguarding the Council's data and ability to deliver its services. Our review of the Rubrik backup solution concluded that the solution does provide an effective safeguard that should enable the timely restoration of data and services in the event of a cyber-attack. It is however imperative that the Council does continue to monitor, maintain, and test the backup solution.

Key Financial Systems – much of our work in this area is already underway and we have completed work on the Purchasing and Creditors Systems and our audit opinion of Reasonable Assurance reflects the continued focus and commitment of officers to maintain sound controls. It is however important that resource limitations are addressed to ensure that the controls currently in operation continue to be maintained.

The administration of the Council's commercial property portfolio had not been subject to audit review for a number of years and in 2021/22 we performed a full walkthrough, documenting the "as is system" to inform compliance testing in the current year. This work has recently commenced. The Council's commercial property portfolio has a value in the region of £300m and generates gross rental income of around £18m per annum.

Plymouth Active Leisure (PAL) is a Teckal company set up to provide the Council with a delivery vehicle from which they could better control leisure services provided within the City. The key factors were that the Council could provide a stable and sustainable model that would enable it to meet its strategic goal of making Plymouth "the most active coastal city in England by 2034". PAL was incorporated on 17th November 2021 and with swimming pools and large buildings to maintain, existing financial pressures have been further exacerbated by the global energy crisis. We have undertaken a high-level piece of advisory work to ensure that there are no significant weaknesses in the governance arrangements and key processes.

The number of grants received by the Council requiring internal audit certification continue to increase but all 27 grants audited in the year to date have been certified as being in accordance with the requirements of the relevant grant determination. In addition, we have audited 5 Families with a Future (Payment by Results) monthly claims.

At the time of writing this report, a meeting has been scheduled with Directors and the S151 Officer to revisit the audit plan to ensure that the work performed in the second half of the year best reflects the rapidly changing environment Councils are operating in. This may result in a "re-focus" of audit coverage.

A table showing the status of planned, unplanned and deferred audits and their associated reported executive summaries is contained at Appendix I.

Fraud Prevention and Detection

Counter-fraud arrangements are a high priority for the Council and assist in the protection of public funds and accountability. The Cabinet Office runs a national data matching exercise, The National Fraud Initiative (NFI), every two years. For the 2022-23 exercise, DAP are in the process of co-ordinating the extraction and provision of relevant Council datasets, as listed below, with the resulting data matches expected back from the Cabinet in February 2023. The processing of the matches by the relevant Council departments will be overseen by DAP's Counter Fraud Manager.

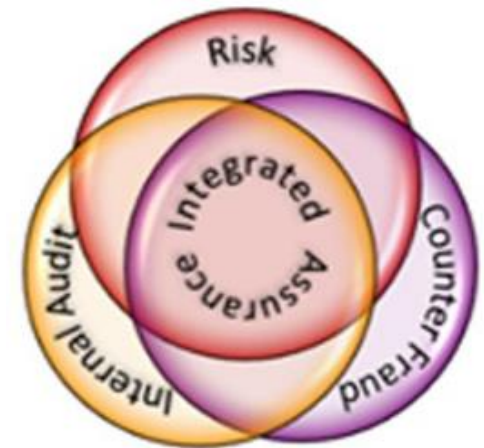
- Council Tax,
- Creditor Payments,
- Council Tax Support and Housing Benefits,
- Payroll / Pensions,
- Transport Passes (including blue badges and concessionary bus passes)

Integrated Assurance

Collaboration between the Audit Team and the Counter Fraud Team continues to evolve and strengthen with auditors becoming more aware of fraud risks and fraud investigators having a greater understanding of systems and controls.

This joined up approach will help us to continue to provide the highest level of assurance possible and, for the Council to minimise fraud loss to the lowest level possible.

The Counter Fraud Team Manager has prepared a separate report for this Committee where more information can be found.



Appendix I - Assurance Opinion and Extract Executive Summaries – up to 14 October 2022

Areas of Review	Assurance Opinion	Residual Risk / Audit Comment
Customer and Corporate		
Purchasing & Creditors Systems	Reasonable Assurance Status: Draft	<p>Whilst the overall Internal Control Framework provides reasonable assurance that Council Purchasing and Creditor Payments are accurate, complete, timely and in accordance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders, the legitimacy, validity and integrity of payments is only ensured through consistent application of automated and manual verification, reconciliation and exception reporting.</p> <p>There are however capacity and resilience issues within the Financial Transactions Team from an increase in workload, following the Business Support Review and transfer of Plymouth Active Leisure and staff turnover. It is important that resource limitations are addressed to ensure that the controls currently in operation continue to be maintained.</p>
Housing Benefits	Reasonable Assurance Status: Draft	Assurance was reported in September 2022 Progress Report, please refer to that report for details.
Payroll (CoreHR) System	Status: In Progress	The scope and objective of this audit is to provide the Council with an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls operating within the Payroll system. Following two years of detailed substantive testing and evaluation of the overall internal control framework since the implementation of CoreHR, this years' audit will focus of key controls and follow-up of any outstanding recommendations.
Council Tax	Status: In Progress	Work has begun on the annual review of the Council Tax system. In recent years controls and compliance have been found to be consistently operating to a good standard and we will conduct a walkthrough of the system to verify that the control framework remains effective. Compliance testing will focus on income collection.
£150 Energy Rebate <i>Not included in original plan</i>	Status: Work to be run alongside the Council Tax Review	In the March Audit & Governance Committee, Members requested that a piece of work was undertaken to provide assurance that those Council Tax payers in band A – D

Areas of Review	Assurance Opinion	Residual Risk / Audit Comment
		properties eligible for the £150 energy rebate, were able to receive it. We plan to carry out this work alongside our annual review of Council Tax.
Business Rates	Status: In Progress	Work has also commenced the Business Rates system and as for Council Tax above, will constitute a walk-through of the processes with some additional testing focussing on the effectiveness of income collection and recovery.
Registrars Financial Audit <i>Not included in original plan</i>	Status: In Progress	The focus of our work is to provide assurance on the effectiveness of the income collection controls operating within the Registration Service. As part of this review we will also follow-up on the management actions taken in response to recommendations made by the GRO (General Register Office) following the stock and security assessment in February 2022. The GRO concluded that the service had achieved an overall “reasonable” level of security in relation to the control arrangements for the receipt, storage and use of secure certificate stock and registration records. T
Additional Holiday Pay <i>Not included in original plan</i>	Value Added Status: Complete	Assurance was reported in September 2022 Progress Report, please refer to that report for details.
Electronic Signatures	Limited Assurance Status: Draft	Assurance was reported in September 2022 Progress Report, please refer to that report for details.
ICT Backup Arrangements	Reasonable Assurance Status: Final	<p>Rubrik is a powerful and complex backup solution with a modern user interface, which enables an effective, efficient and secure backup process. Rubrik provides immutable backups, meaning the backup cannot be changed, deleted, encrypted, or modified; alongside scalability, which enables restore of a single file to a full Virtual Machine, in the restore process. Further assurance is provided by the use of secondary backup copies being stored in the Microsoft Azure hosted service.</p> <p>There is satisfactory governance in place regarding the implementation, policies and process around the Rubrik solution, with a mature change management process.</p> <p>Effective daily monitoring and monthly testing by the Infrastructure Team ensures the integrity and completeness of backup data and that appropriate reinstatement of data and services can be achieved if required.</p>

Areas of Review	Assurance Opinion	Residual Risk / Audit Comment
Client Financial Services	Status: In Progress	The objective of this audit is to evaluate and report on the adequacy of controls, processes and procedures operating for the collection of service user contributions toward their care costs: to ensure that service users receive timely and accurate financial assessments; are charged accordingly and outstanding debts are pursued and recovered. This is an end-to-end system review and will consider the roles and responsibilities of Livewell Southwest, Adult Social Care as well as the Client Financial Services Team.
Recommendation Tracking	Status: Ongoing	An exercise to follow-up on progress with the implementation of management actions (as at 30 June) which were agreed in response to audit recommendations has been completed. The results were reported to this committee by the Finance Director in September.
Health & Safety - Hand, Arm Vibration (HAVs)	Status: In Progress	The review will assess the effectiveness of the controls in place to safeguard employees from HAVs. We will consider if past operational weaknesses have been resolved and that controls ensure that appropriate planning, recording and, monitoring of operatives and their use of HAVs are effective.
Schools Financial Value Standards (SFVS)	Status: Complete	Assurance was reported in September 2022 Progress Report, please refer to that report for details.
<p>Work on “Core Compliance” and “Debt Collection” is being considered across reviews of the key financial systems.</p>		
<p>The following key financial reviews have not yet commenced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Accounting • Debtors • Treasury Management • Capital Programme 		
<p>Executive Office</p>		
Electoral Services (Follow Up)	Value Added Status: Complete	Assurance was reported in July 2022 Progress Report, please refer to that report for details.

Areas of Review	Assurance Opinion	Residual Risk / Audit Comment
People		
OLM Eclipse Project	Value Added Status: Ongoing for duration of project	DAP continues to provide real-time support and challenge to the Eclipse Project Board and additional formal advice. The Children's project has now successfully delivered and early life issues are being well administered and addressed will robust challenge being made where supplier responses are not considered effective. The 'Adults' project has commenced and benefits from any lessons learnt during the Children's project. The 'Go Live' for the 'Adults' project remains projected as being during July/ August 2023.
Plymouth Active Leisure (PAL)	Value Added Status: Draft	<p>The scope of our work as agreed by the PAL Board was to perform a highlight review of key operational areas, looking also at the Governance to make sure they have the correct arrangements in place to enable them to learn and grow. Areas considered are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance & Risk Management • Performance Indicators • Financial Management • Human Resources (HR) management including staff management, time management, training and skills • Building and asset management, maintenance of buildings and assets, safekeeping of assets. • Business Systems, Metrics and Intelligence • Engagement with the public, and front of house activities including handling of complaints. <p>No significant concerns were identified but our situation report has highlighted the need to further develop and strengthen governance arrangements. This is a challenging area for all Teckal companies and getting a sound balance to provide strategic and operational clarity will materially improve PAL's ability to deliver its intended outcomes in a challenging financial climate.</p>
Finance & Assurance Review Group (FARG)	Status: Ongoing	The purpose of FARG is to provide oversight, scrutiny, and assurance of the integrated fund and internal audit continue to have a seat on FARG providing real time support and challenge.

Areas of Review	Assurance Opinion	Residual Risk / Audit Comment
Fully CATERed	Status: In Progress	<p>Xero Accounting Software is used to manage the accounting transactions for FullyCATERed Ltd. Daily automatic integrations to Square, the point-of-sale software, and the bank account support prompt and accurate recording of financial transactions. Following sample checking of a range of financial transactions, including invoices, payments, journals and reconciliations within Xero. Whilst there remains a small amount of work for us to complete, we can advise that no issues have been identified to date.</p>
Adult Social Care Reforms - Review of the Section 75 Agreement.	Status: In Progress	<p>S75 of the Social Care Act 2012 gave powers to local authorities and clinical commissioning groups (superseded by the Integrated Care Boards (ICB) in July '22) to establish and maintain pooled funds out of which payment may be made towards expenditure incurred in the exercise of prescribed local authority functions and prescribed NHS functions. DAP attend the cross-party working group (PCC & ICB) set up to review and update the existing S75 agreement which has been in place since 2015.</p>
The Plymouth Alliance	Reasonable Assurance Status: Draft	<p>The Council in partnership with service users and providers, co-designed a new complex needs system to enable people to receive the right support, at the right time, in the right place. In April 2019, 25 separate services were brought together into The Plymouth Alliance (TPA) to create a new single system to deliver an improved experience and better outcomes.</p> <p>DAP have completed a high-level review of the arrangements underpinning TPA and through discussion with internal and external stakeholders can provide assurance that a spirit of collaborative work has been embedded within TPA, replacing siloed working and fostering a shared determination to improve outcomes for service users.</p> <p>TPA has evolved since its inception it is considered that further, more focussed, audit work would be beneficial to provide further assurance that the Single Referral Pathway is operating as efficiently as possible, that PCC staff have full visibility of relevant financial information and that outcomes are being effectively measured and reported. The potential for additional work will be discussed as part of the 2023/24 audit planning process.</p>

Areas of Review	Assurance Opinion	Residual Risk / Audit Comment
<p>There is more time earmarked for Adult Social Care Reforms and we liaise with the Strategic Director for People and the Head of ASC & Retained Functions as to the areas and timing of audit support needed.</p>		
<p>Children’s Services</p>		
Families with a Future (Payment by Results)	Regulatory Requirement	DAP have verified and certified five monthly claims in the year to date.
Life Chances Fund (Pause Programme)	Regulatory Requirement	Sample checks have been performed on the outcomes reported for Cohorts 1 and 2 of the Pause Programme. This programme works with women who have experienced or are at risk of, repeated pregnancies that result in children needed to be removed from their care. The model aims to give women the opportunity to “pause”, take control of their lives and break free from destructive cycles.
<p>Work has not yet commenced on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Contracts • Joint Funding Arrangements 		
<p>Office of the Director of Public Health</p>		
Public Burials	Reasonable Assurance Status: Final	Assurance was reported in the July 2022 Annual Report, please refer to that report for details.
<p>There is a “pot of days” which the service will determine in due course where they would like best to use them.</p>		

Areas of Review	Assurance Opinion	Residual Risk / Audit Comment
Place		
Cultural Development Fund iMayflower Project Delivery <i>Not included in original plan</i>	Reasonable Assurance Status: Final	<p>The iMayflower project was an ambitious, large-scale, collaborative programme providing skills and learning opportunities through events and community engagement; there were significant interdependencies with the activities planned for the Mayflower 400 commemorations. The project harnessed immersive, digital technologies to support Plymouth's creative talent in bringing to life world class cultural heritage whilst helping the best and brightest ideas succeed, building businesses, and creating a sustainable future for all.</p> <p>An agreement was made at the onset of the project between the partners as to the intended project outcomes and criteria for eligible expenditure. However, the COVID-19 pandemic created major challenges and prevented elements of the programme from being delivered as planned. Nonetheless, most of the reported outcomes support the overall project objectives and demonstrate creative innovation and agility in adapting to a rapidly changing landscape.</p> <p>Our assessment of management controls, procedures and processes in place are considered sufficient to provide reasonable assurance that the Council as Accountable Body and RIO as a Delivery Partner have complied with the grant conditions.</p> <p>Whilst we have raised some points in our report relating to issues that have caused difficulties during project delivery so that lessons can be learned, it is important to recognise and celebrate the successes of the project and the outputs delivered to the City.</p>
Stores & Stock Control (Domestic Waste Containers) <i>Not included in original plan</i>	Reasonable Assurance Status: Draft	<p>We can report that the Council's stock of domestic waste containers and bags are subject to effective administration and stock control procedures. Since the responsible team leader was appointed in April 2022 there have been significant improvements made, with new processes and controls implemented. Stock takes are undertaken on a weekly basis and ordering trigger points have been adopted to ensure that there is sufficient holding stock to cover any delays with supply.</p>

Areas of Review	Assurance Opinion	Residual Risk / Audit Comment
		<p>In addition, the Auditor has worked alongside the department to adapt the current weekly stock check spreadsheet to include the cost per unit, total inventory cost and variance from the previous week stock count. This will aid in identifying the total inventory cost of physical stock held at any given point as well as notable changes in stock levels which require reconciliation. Individual sheets have been created which will improve the visualization of checks on a monthly basis as well as a dashboard highlighting key information.</p>
Stores & Stock Control (Stores)	Reasonable Assurance Status: Draft	<p>Overall we are able to provide a reasonable level of assurance that there are effective stock management controls operating within the main Stores at Prince Rock Depot. However, the Stores Officer is the only member of staff in the department licensed to receive and issue chemicals and we have highlighted the need for management to consider whether there is sufficient cover across the service to adequately cover periods of absence.</p> <p>Currently there are multiple spreadsheets in use to record the distribution of stock and the Auditor has worked with the Stores Officer to condense current records into a single spreadsheet. By condensing records into a single excel spreadsheet and using the tools available data analysis can be undertaken by using filters etc to identify trends.</p>
City Change Fund	Substantial Assurance Status: Draft	<p>City Change Fund (CCF) governance arrangements ensure compliance with Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No 2) Regulations 2019 and its effective use through appropriate management and allocation of City Change funds. Substantial Assurance is provided through current governance, risk management and internal controls that operate effectively and are consistently applied to support the achievement of City Change Fund objectives.</p> <p>This customer focused, digital system enables developer contributions to be directed at the priorities of local communities and has been held up as an exemplar with the CCF declared the winner in the 'Excellence in Tech Within Planning Practice' category before winning the overall Silver Jubilee Cup at the RTPI awards in 2019, where it was recognised for a "genuinely citizen-led decision-making approach" and for "its unique, ground breaking initiative that went beyond simple community engagement by</p>

Areas of Review	Assurance Opinion	Residual Risk / Audit Comment
		empowering local communities to be proactive and invest in the City Change Fun to deliver local priorities.
Commercial Properties	Status: In Progress	Following on from work performed in 2021/22 to understand and map the use of the new TF Cloud asset management system and associated processes, we are undertaking a programme of testing to check that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rental agreements are properly established, accurately recorded and held securely, • Rental income is received in accordance with the agreement and debt recovery processes are followed, • Rent reviews are carried out in accordance with the agreement.
With the rapidly changing environment the Council operates in, the Strategic Director has advised that the following reviews be deferred to 2022/23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety at Sports Grounds • Plymouth & SW Devon Community Forest • The Box 		
Grant Certification	Regulatory Requirement	Grants certified without amendment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWLEP Growth Fund - Derriford Transport Scheme • SWLEP Growth Fund - Northern Corridor Junction Improvements • SWLEP Growth Fund - Eastern Corridor Strategic Cycle Network • SWLEP Growth Fund - Charles Cross • SWLEP Growth Fund - Plymouth Railway Station • SWLEP Growth Fund - Oceansgate Phase I • SWLEP Growth Fund - 5G Smart Sound • SWLEP Get Building Fund - National Marine Park • SWLEP Get Building Fund - Plymouth International and City Business Parks • SWLEP Get Building Fund - Concourse Phase 2, Brunel Plaza • SWLEP Get Building Fund - Green Homes • DH&SC LA Test and Trace Service Support • DH&SC LA Trace and Test Support Payment Scheme (2 claims)

Areas of Review	Assurance Opinion	Residual Risk / Audit Comment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH&SC Contain Outbreak Management (5 claims) • DH&SC Community Testing • DH&SC LA Test & Trace Contain Outbreak Management Fund Surge Testing • DLUH&C Protect and Vaccinate • DLUH&C Disabled Facilities Grant • Innovate UK - Marine e-charging living lab • DFT Transforming Cities - Tranche I • DFT LTCB - Integrated Transport and Highway Maintenance • DFT LTCB - Pothole Action Fund
National Fraud Initiative (NFI)		
NFI	Status: Ongoing	The cycle for the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is every two years. For the 2022-23 exercise, DAP are in the process of co-ordinating the extraction and provision of relevant Council datasets, with the resulting data matches expected back from the Cabinet Office in February 2023.

Appendix 2 - Audit Standards and Customer Delivery

Conformance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS)

Conformance - Devon Audit Partnership conforms to the requirements of the PSIAS for its internal audit activity. The purpose, authority and responsibility of the internal audit activity is defined in our internal audit charter, consistent with the Definition of Internal Auditing, the Code of Ethics and the Standards. Our internal audit charter was approved by senior management and the Audit & Governance Committee in July 2022. This is supported through DAP self-assessment of conformance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards & Local Government Application note.

Quality Assessment – through external assessment December 2021 ‘DAP is continuing to operate in conformance with the standards. External Assessment provides independent assurance against the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) Quality Assessment & Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). The Head of Devon Audit Partnership also maintains a quality assessment process which includes review by audit managers of all audit work. The quality assessment process and improvement are supported by a development programme.

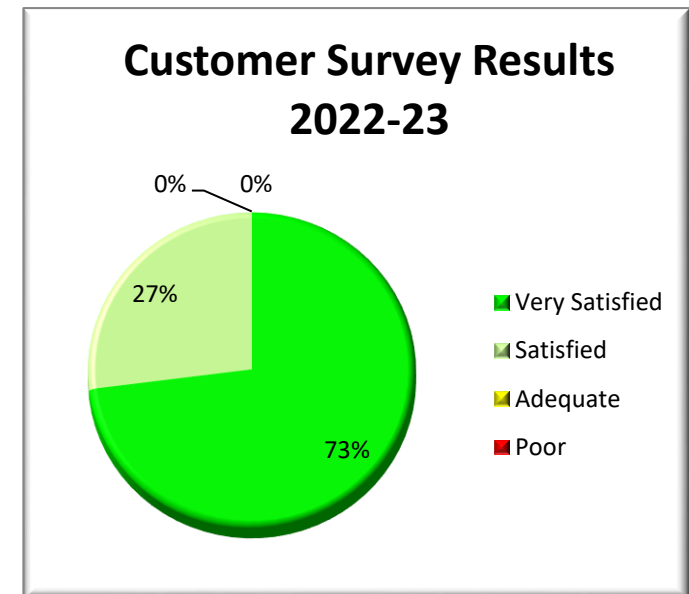
Improvement Programme – DAP maintains a rolling development plan of improvements to the Service and customers. All recommendations of the external assessment of PSIAS and quality assurance were included in this development plan and have been completed. This will be further embedded with revision of our internal quality process through peer review.

Customer Service Excellence

DAP maintains accreditation by G4S Assessment Services of the CSE standard during the year. We have had some very complimentary feedback of where our team have been able to add value to the Council these may be found upon our [webpage](#). The chart on the right of this page summarises the customer satisfaction results received to date during 2022/23.

Inherent Limitations

The opinions contained within this report are based on our examination of restricted samples of transactions / records and our discussions with officers responsible for the processes reviewed.



Appendix 3 - Definitions

Definitions of Audit Assurance Opinion Levels

Confidentiality under the Government Security Classifications

Assurance	Definition	Marking	Definition
Substantial Assurance	“A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.”	Official	The majority of information that is created or processed by the public sector. This includes routine business operations and services, some of which could have damaging consequences if lost, stolen or published in the media, but are not subject to a heightened threat profile.
Reasonable Assurance	“There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.”	Official: Sensitive	The systems and controls generally mitigate the risk identified but a few weaknesses have been identified and / or mitigating controls may not be fully applied. There are no significant matters arising from the audit and the recommendations made serve to strengthen what are mainly reliable procedures.
Limited Assurance	“Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.”		
No Assurance.	“Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.”		

Devon Audit Partnership

The Devon Audit Partnership has been formed under a joint committee arrangement. We aim to be recognised as a high-quality internal audit service in the public sector. We work with our partners by providing a professional internal audit service that will assist them in meeting their challenges, managing their risks and achieving their goals. In carrying out our work we are required to comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards along with other best practice and professional standards.

The Partnership is committed to providing high quality, professional customer services to all; if you have any comments or suggestions on our service, processes or standards, the Head of Partnership would be pleased to receive them at tony.d.rose@devon.gov.uk