

Audit and Governance Committee



Date of meeting:	28 March 2022
Title of Report:	Audit Actions Review
Lead Member:	Councillor Nick Kelly (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director:	Brendan Arnold (Service Director for Finance)
Author:	Carolyn Haynes (Financial Controller)
Contact Email:	carolyn.haynes@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Finance/CH
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee with an update on the tracking of Audit recommendations from Grant Thornton and Devon Audit Partnership.

Recommendations and Reasons

Members of the Audit and Governance Committee to note the content of the report.

Reason: To update members on audit recommendations.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None as the Committee agreed to receive an update of all audit recommendations.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The implementation of all agreed audit recommendations are fundamentally linked to delivering the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan and assists with ensuring limited resources are allocated to priorities which will maximise the benefits to the residents of Plymouth.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Delivery of the audit plan will assist the Council in delivering value for money services.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No direct implications

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

Implementation of agreed audit recommendations is an intrinsic element of the Council's overall corporate governance, risk management and internal control framework.

Appendices

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Devon Audit Partnership Audit Recommendations							

Background papers:

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Brendan Arnold

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes

Date agreed: 17/03/2022

Cabinet Member approval: by Cllr Nick Kelly by email

Date approved: 17/03/2022

Audit Action Review

I. Introduction

- I.1 Audit Committee has agreed to receive regular reports which set track the completion of agreed recommendations to improve controls and minimise exposure to risk. This will provide ongoing assurance to Senior Management and Members (Audit & Governance Committee) that scheduled actions are taking place. As previously reported the Council recognises and responds promptly and effectively to the independent assurance work completed by our external auditors, Grant Thornton (GT) and our internal auditors, Devon Audit Partnership (DAP).
- I.2 There are no outstanding audit recommendations from GT and Appendix one provides an update on recommendations from DAP

Status of Internal Audit Recommendations January '22

The chart to the right provides an overall breakdown of progress made by management in implementing audit recommendations. The pie chart shows the figures in percentage format and the legend details the actual numbers.

Not all recommendations can be quickly and easily implemented with some having other, longer dependencies which have to be addressed, before the recommendation can be actioned.

In addition to the 64 recommendations showing as fully implemented, management responses received indicate that a further 23 recommendations are currently work in progress (partially implemented). See table 1 below for breakdown across audits.

Of the 26 recommendations not yet implemented, it should be noted that a number have target implementation dates in the future. Table 2 below provides a brief summary of all the recommendations which are now overdue (including those which have been partially implemented), based on the target date provided by management when the draft report was finalised.

Please note, it is a coincidence that the number of recommendations not yet implemented (Table 1) and the number of recommendations reported as past their target date (Table 2) are the same (27).

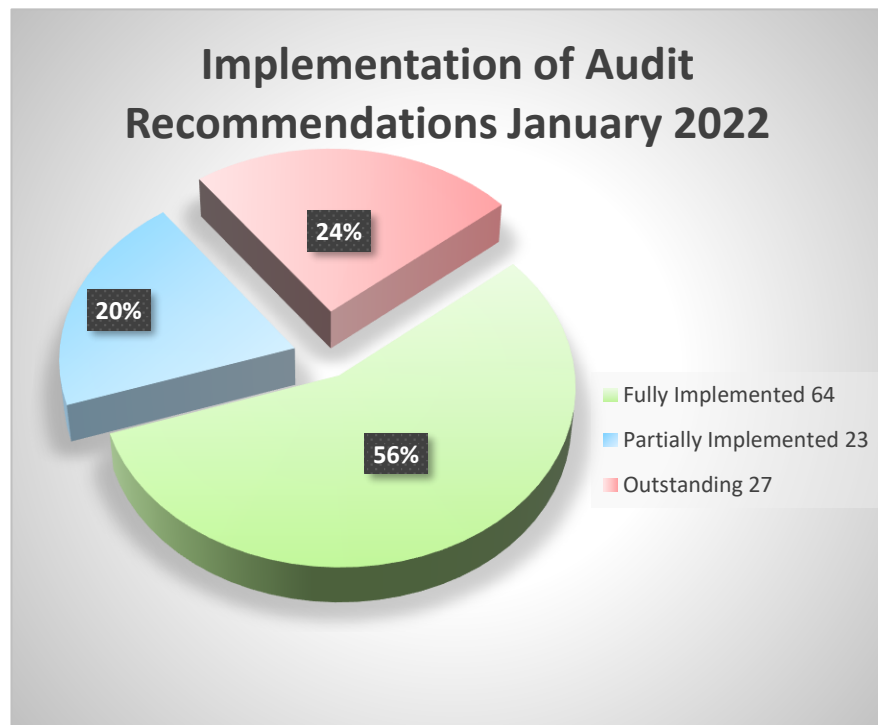


Table 1

Audits	Total Number of Recommendations	Fully Implemented	No Further Action	Partially Implemented	Not Yet Implemented
Council Tax	11	9		1	1
Creditors	6	4		2	
Sundry Debtors	9	5		3	1
Capital Programme	11	5			6
Purchasing Cards	11	7		2	2
Electoral Registration (Follow-Up)	4	3			1
Special Guardianship Orders	36	23		12	1
Street Lighting	14	8		3	3
Risk Management	3				3
CYPF Additional Spend	9				9
TOTAL	114	64		23	27

The audits listed below have been removed from Table 1 above as all High, Medium and Low recommendations have been actioned.

- Business Rates
- Housing Benefits
- Main Accounting System
- Treasury Management
- Empty Homes Scheme
- Information Asset Management
- Data Quality

Table 2

Audits	Overdue Recommendations	Summary Update
Council Tax	2	Not yet implemented due to pandemic and pressure on resources
Capital Programme	6	The review of the capital programme governance arrangements is underway, . The recommendations outstanding are all low priority.
Special Guardianship Orders	13	Nine recommendations are partially implemented with fulfilment reliant on introduction of revised operational procedures following an external review. Three are reliant on the Eclipse Project. One currently impacted by an ASC backlog.
Empty Homes Scheme	1	Work continues with the Portfolio Holder to develop Plan for Homes 4 with Empty Homes Plan being integral to it. These discussions will continue between now and May 2022.
Street Lighting	5	Two medium priority recommendations partially completed with one awaiting final completion of procedural manuals and pending restructure. Three medium or low relating to financial management procedures still to be addressed.
TOTAL	27	