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Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Audit Committee

24 January 2023

AGS Action Plan Update

AGS ACTION PLAN FOR 2021/22 FOR IMPLEMENTATION DURING 2022/23

No	Findings	Actions	Lead Officers	Status as at December 2022
1.	<p>Ongoing savings proposals and continued strategic management of organisational changes to continue particularly in light of COVID19.</p> <p><i>Ongoing from 20/21 AGS</i></p>	<p>Continued management/reduced budgets, revised structures and commercial/ business approach which links to the continued development and implementation of revised governance framework.</p> <p>Financial impact of COVID19 under ongoing review.</p> <p>Further consultations on future savings where necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Executive • SMT 	<p>Documented actions are ongoing.</p> <p>In addition, it should be noted that saving opportunities are sought throughout the year and not just annually as part of the budget process. This allows the Council more time to develop saving proposals and deliver more creative solutions.</p>
2.	<p>All internal audits consist of an ethics questionnaire that is sent to a sample of staff in the team/areas being audited to demonstrate their understanding of corporate policies and whether staff feel supported.</p> <p>In a small number of responses returned it was noted that:</p>	<p>The induction process has already been updated and improved and further development is being carried out as part of an ongoing review of our employee offer.</p> <p>Further guidance for managers in respect to completion of regular 121's, supervision and team briefs.</p> <p>Development of service strategies underpinned by team plans which link</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMT/SDM • Policy & Development Manager 	<p>Face to face induction for all new starters was introduced in November 2022 with 50 new starters attending the first session. The face to face induction will run every 2 months and is mandatory for all new starters to attend. As part of the induction both OD and HR have a slot and personal development is discussed.</p> <p>As part of this Organisational Development are producing a new starter employee handbook which will contain guidance including 1-1s and APPDs.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some staff felt that training and awareness could be developed further Some staff do not have regular 1:2:1 supervision or team briefs <p>These findings have been shared when discussing individual audit reports with relevant SDM's and Directors and taken to SMT as part of reporting corporate recommendations.</p> <p><i>Ongoing from 20/21 AGS</i></p>	<p>to the Councils priorities. This link to the APPD process creating the organisational golden thread</p> <p>Roll out of a new, bespoke management and leadership programme commenced in January 2022 and forms part of an 18 month programme to contribute to the development of our employees.</p>		<p>All Directors have a service strategy and these were refreshed in line with service and financial planning strategy in November 2022. All service strategies are available on the Council intranet.</p> <p>APPD training/guidance sessions for Managers and employees have also been available for all employees to book on.</p> <p>The Management & Leadership programme has been running for 12 months and will continue into the new year.</p>
3.	<p>A small number of responses from Internal Audit ethics questionnaires sent out indicated that those staff questioned could have a greater awareness of some corporate policies.</p>	<p>Governance reminders sent to staff.</p> <p>Training and further publicity given on fraud/whistleblowing with new methods of reporting made available.</p> <p>Reminders on relevant policies applicable to the work undertaken by those being audited, and applicable to the wider workforce will be recirculated; for example, the Employee Code of Conduct, the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMT/SDM Policy & Development Manager Audit & Governance Lead Manager 	<p>Governance reminders have been sent to staff on a number of governance related matters.</p> <p>The Whistleblowing Policy is currently under review and will be widely publicised when finalised.</p> <p>Fraud awareness has been included in the new starter induction.</p> <p>The employee handbook also contains links to all relevant employee policies.</p>

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	<i>Ongoing from 20/21 AGS</i>	Whistleblowing Policy, the Business Activity & Private Work Policy and the Corporate Information Security Policy.		
4.	<p>The results of the annual governance certification process highlighted that in some service areas there were reductions in appropriate skilled staff numbers. Difficulties in recruiting have resulted in single points of failure or the use of agency staff.</p> <p>Service Delivery Managers are aware of these issues and where possible are putting measures in place to try and mitigate this.</p> <p><i>Ongoing from 20/21 AGS</i></p>	<p>Number of initiatives in place including service and workforce planning, apprenticeship scheme, Kickstart programme, etc.</p> <p>New bespoke management and leadership programme commenced in January 2022.</p> <p>Additional recruiting measures being used via social media platforms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Executive • Director of Finance & Human Resources • Policy & Development Manager 	<p>Work has been undertaken with Directors to review their workforce and consider gaps in future workforce skills and consider apprentices for this.</p> <p>Quarterly meetings with Directors take place to ensure that apprentices are being used to meet business need.</p> <p>Workforce planning sessions to review and update all Director workforce plans will be undertaken in the New Year subject to SMT approval.</p>
5.	The results of the annual governance certification process has highlighted that service areas have experienced data breaches and potential near	<p>Information Governance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure lessons are learnt after each breach and suggested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIRO/SMT • SDM's • Audit & Governance Lead Manager 	All data breaches/incidents reported to Information Governance are documented including lessons learnt.

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	<p>misses in respect to personal data.</p> <p>Where data breaches have been experienced, these have been reported to the Information Governance Team and managers have changed processes and procedures, where possible, based on lessons learned to prevent similar breaches occurring.</p> <p>It should be noted that the Information Commissioners Office has not taken any action against the Council during this time.</p> <p><i>Ongoing from 20/21 AGS</i></p>	<p>improvements communicated corporately where applicable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit & Governance to review current training materials. • The Information Security Breach Procedure has been updated and is available on the Council's intranet. This has been publicised to all staff. • Breaches are reported to the individual Director as and when they occur • Corporate Information Security Policy recirculated to relevant staff members • Breaches are reported to Senior Management Team meetings on a regular basis 		<p>A summary of lessons learnt are communicated corporately on a periodic basis.</p> <p>Information Governance training materials are being revamped and will be available in the new year.</p> <p>Breaches are reported to Directors.</p> <p>Register of concern letters are sent to officers whose actions contribute to a data breach/incident occurring.</p> <p>Information Governance are working with IDT to reduce the number of email related breaches.</p> <p>No ICO action has been taken against the Council in respect to data breaches.</p>
6	<p>A small number of managers reported delays in destruction of documents in line with retention policies throughout the year due to limited access to the secure storage areas as a result of COVID.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder to be sent to staff in relation to access to all Council buildings including. • Reminder to be sent on the use of the Council's document storage unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDM's • Audit & Governance Lead Manager • biT Service Delivery Manager 	<p>Reminders have been sent out by Information Governance on this.</p> <p>Information Governance continue to keep the situation under review.</p>

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	These access issues have subsequently eased.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminder to be sent to staff on the importance of complying with the Corporate Information Retention Schedule. 		
7	A small number of managers confirmed that their service's internal intranet content required updating.	Reminder to be sent to SDM's on keeping intranet content up to date.	SDM's	<p>SDMs responsible for keeping content up to date. Reminders have been sent on this.</p> <p>OD have recently launched a new OD SharePoint site.</p>