

Crookall Review

To provide members with assurance that work is being progressed on the issues identified in the action plans arising from the Special Report by the Director of Resources and the subsequent Independent Review of Herefordshire Council's ICT Financial and Contractual Governance Arrangements (Crookall Review), Cabinet agreed at its meeting on 27th March 2008 that progress be monitored within the overall performance and risk reporting framework provided by the Integrated Corporate Performance Report (ICPR).

The updated action plans are attached below. Those actions previously reported as completed have been removed to avoid unnecessary repetition. Of the 13 remaining actions a further 3 have been completed. The remainder are being progressed in line with the recommendations. As they are all continuing (for example organisational development, officer and member training, or a rolling programme of policy reviews) it is more appropriate for the actions to be taken forward as part of service plans and performance monitoring. This is therefore the final report in this format.

Crookall Review Action Plan

	Action	Lead	Progress
2.	Member Development Policy Group be asked to give consideration to the suggested actions in respect of member training, support and development, and bring forward an action plan to Cabinet.	Chief Executive/ ACE (L&D)	The Leadership Centre for Local Government is providing facilitation for this work liaising with the Member Development Policy Group and aligning with the overall organisational development programme.
3.	Consideration be given to the suggested actions in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure for management and effective deployment of the key corporate resources. • The development and team building of the senior management teams of the council. 	Chief Executive/ ACE(HR&OD)	The unified senior management structure is complete with interim arrangements in place in respect of the DCE post. Organisational development (OD) initiatives are now underway across the Council, including leadership, management and team development. This includes work with JMT facilitated by the Office for Public Management and member development activities facilitated by the Leadership Centre for Local Government. This OD activity is being aligned with other initiatives within the PCT, such as the OD Plan for World Class Commissioning and will feed into an overarching Organisational Development Strategy which will provide the framework for all future initiatives.
4	Consideration be given to how best to re-establish trust and confidence between members and officers, and between officers and officers, based on an approach which encourages appropriate challenge, resolves issues with a way forward that is supported by all, and creates the discipline to follow through and abide by decisions taken.	Chief Executive	To be progressed through organisational development and member development work mentioned above, ensuring both dovetail throughout the respective processes.
5	Consideration be given to the suggested actions in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The need for additional specialist audit ICT resource (b) Proposals for strengthening the strategic 	DoR(HC)	(a) Completed. The new Audit services structure has been implemented. All appointments will be taken up by December. Vacancies are currently being covered by temporary resource. (b) Completed. The final report on the council and

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	Action	Lead	Progress
	<p>procurement function (c) Proposals for appropriate financing models for corporate services and bring forward an action plan to CMB.</p>		<p>PCT's procurement arrangements was received at the end of September. The RIEP has offered further funding to assist in taking this forward. (c) In early June 2008, the Chief Executive initiated a Shared Services Strategic Review. Integrated Shared Support Services is confirmed as one of the key strategic service improvement programmes. The shared service review will encompass consideration of appropriate funding models for each corporate support service, and will produce its full options appraisal in Spring 2009.</p>
6	<p>The relevant professional officers (Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, Interim Head of Human Resources) be asked to lead reviews of the Council's procedures and protocols, and the corporate rules, standards and processes to ensure they are fit for purpose, proportionate and workable. Review programmes to be reported to CMB.</p>	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A policy approval procedure has been put in place to support consistency in policy and procedure development, communication and embedding. • Over the past 12 months high risk policies have been reviewed and refreshed and a number of new policies have been developed with trades union colleagues across the Council and PCT. The new policy re processes for the engagement and payment of external contractors (i.e. interims) will be considered by JMT at its meeting on 24 February. Lower risk policies are now being reviewed and a rolling programme for future review established. • A register of policies now exists, including dates for when policies are to be reviewed. As existing lower risk policies are reviewed these are added to the register. • A fundamental review of the Council Constitution has been commenced, with a view to a refreshed constitution being available for adoption by Annual Council in May 2009.

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	Action	Lead	Progress
7	Consideration be given to the suggested actions in respect of refreshing and embedding an effective performance management culture, and an action plan brought forward to CMB.	ACE(HR&OD)/DCE	Work is already underway on revisions to the performance appraisal system, which will have a significant impact on the performance management culture. Performance management systems and reporting mechanisms are currently being reviewed and further strengthened to give a renewed, sharper focus to performance management; actions arising from the review will be implemented in the first quarter of 2009.
11	Clear guidelines be established and embedded in respect of close personal line management relationships.	ACE(HR&OD)	Completed. New policy in place.
12	Consideration be given to the suggested actions in relation to officer training and development needs, and an action plan be brought to CMB.	ACE(HR&OD)	Requirements are being considered within the organisational development process. Training and awareness specifically in relation to policies is now built into the new policy approval process.

Special Report Action Plan					
	Issue to address	Agreed corporate response	Responsible officer(s)	Revised date	Progress
4.	Establish permanent managerial arrangements for ICT and Customer Services.	CMB to discuss and agree proposals from DC&CS.	DC&CS CMB	Subject to substantive DCE appointment	Interim managerial arrangements have been in place since April 2007. Permanent managerial arrangements will be established as part of the revised senior management structure.
9.	Improve the quality of working papers/files recording business activity.	Guidance on the standards of record keeping needs to be devised.	Information Manager Democratic Services Manager CIA	April 2009	Work is being undertaken by DCE and ACE (L&D) across the council & PCT re governance and reporting arrangements including quality of reports presented. Aligned to this, standards are being developed linked to the Data Quality Policy and information management requirements, for the maintenance of efficient and effective records, and to ensure consistency of approach.
11.	Improving financial governance in ICT and Customer Services.	DC&CS to implement agreed action plans for the FMS system in ICT, travel and expenses and use of contractors audit reviews.	DC&CS DoR	October 2008	Completed. Actions have been completed to time. Internal Audit were scheduled to complete an 'Audit of Audits' during the first quarter of 2008/09; this was rescheduled to the second quarter. The Chief Internal Auditor reported to the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee in November 2008 that he was very pleased with overall progress and was confident that this will be maintained.
16.	Enhance Key Manager's financial skills and knowledge of the Council's approved corporate governance framework, ensuring the message is constantly reinforced through effective training.	Make attendance on training courses a pre-requisite to getting a "licence to practise" as a manager. Attendance at refresher training courses will also be mandatory.	HoHR HoFS MO CIA	2009/10	Financial Management training (including procurement) has been revised to incorporate the new Financial and Contractual Procedure Regulations. A leadership framework has been developed as part of the organisational development work facilitated by OPM. During 2009/10 this will be further developed to include the identification of key skills for managers, and mandatory training requirements. Member training has also been implemented.

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19.	Enhance strategic procurement capacity to ensure compliance with the Council's contracting policies and procedures.	CMB to agree additional resources to centralise monitoring of contract procedures within Resources. This can be met from the existing base budget for the Resources Directorate.	CMB DoR	December 2008	Completed. Council's Procurement Strategy was revised as reported to Cabinet in July. The West Midlands Centre for Excellence completed a review of the council and PCT procurement arrangements. The RIEP has offered further funding to assist in taking this work forward.
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