

Recommendations due beyond April 2020

Audit	Recommendation	Priority	Target date	Latest update	RAG rating	Owner
<i>Children and Families</i>						
External Residential and Fostering Placements 2018/19	We recommend that where issues have been identified with foster carers registered with a particular provider, quality checks should be carried out on other foster carers registered with the provider that the Council is using, or where they are out of county, should be requested through the framework.	3	1-July-20	QA monitoring visits are an ongoing task. Visits to be made to placements on an announced visit during the duration of placement or reactionary unannounced basis when concerns are raised.	Green	Placement Team Manager
External Residential and Fostering Placements 2018/19	We recommend that a review of Placement Manager's tasks should be carried out, and procedure notes put in place where no documents currently exist. The procedures should be prepared in line with the Herefordshire Council Policy Writing Procedures – March '18, available on the intranet.	3	1-July-20	Procedure notes to be written that are applicable to manager tasks.	Amber	Placement Team Manager
<i>Adults and Communities</i>						
Broker Placement - Provision of residential and nursing care	We recommend that the Assistant Director All Ages Commissioning undertakes the following regarding the provision of residential and nursing care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing the brokerage team access to task the brokerage request form to view once submitted</li> <li>• A short-term solution to ensure that the available placements information provided to the Locality Team staff from the brokerage team is as up to date as is reasonably possible</li> <li>• If eBroker is not able to rectify their reporting function in the timescale given how will the Council manage the available provision in the long term</li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities of both the Brokerage team and the Locality team staff should be reviewed to align to the broker placement process determined under recommendation 1.1.1 above</li> <li>• Guidance documents to be updated to ensure both the Brokerage team and the Locality team staff are clear regarding their responsibilities and how they should be performed.</li> </ul>	3	31-Jul-20	Brokerage are now located within the Commissioning team in Plough. A review of the function and processes is underway and will be complete by the end of March 20. A new project is also commencing to review and improve the Councils approach to complex care cases; this will include a review of the brokerage activities linked to this area.	Green	Assistant Director, All Ages Commissioning

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Broker Placement - Provision of residential and nursing care	We recommend that the Assistant Director All Ages Commissioning ensures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiators of care placements receive appropriate training and supporting documented guidance</li> <li>• A uniform and consistent approach to agreeing costs with providers is implemented to tackle the above rate of inflation increases to control costs</li> <li>• The average fee paid should be evaluated to understanding why it significantly exceeds the usual standard fee.</li> </ul>	2	31-Oct-20	Fee reviews for 20/21 are nearing completion. A new approach (as noted above for complex care) is commencing. Mechanisms for setting fees and fully costed care plans will be included in the commissioning work plan for 20/21.	Green	Assistant Director, All Ages Commissioning
Local Enterprise Resources Team	We recommend that Head of Community Commissioning and Resources undertakes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determines the corporate objectives, Health and Wellbeing strategy and Talk Community deliverable the LERT service objectives should focus on</li> <li>• Approves the service objectives and plan</li> <li>• Identifies the key performance indicators to be measured both qualitatively and financial and verify the information captured is correct e.g. statistics for hate crime</li> <li>• Agree the frequency of monitoring for both service and staff once the service requirements are agreed</li> <li>• Provide support to the Local Enterprise Service Manager so the appropriate performance monitoring mechanism is set up.</li> </ul>	3	31-Oct-20	1. Agreed format for logging key information. Some returns from staff members outstanding. 2. Procedure for telephone box removal consultation drafted, awaiting input from governance support, prior to sign off. 3. Procedure for channel panel guidelines drafted, with some slight revisions needed to follow HC procedure template.	Green	Head of Community Commissioning and Resources
<i>Economy and Place</i>						
Cemeteries & Crematorium	We recommend that Direct Services Manager ensure banking takes place regularly to reduce the risk of the Councils insurance limits being exceeded. Further to this, the Direct Services Manager must consider the insurance limits for transporting money when the banking is completed.	3	11-Dec-20		Complete	Direct Services Manager
Cemeteries & Crematorium	We recommend that Direct Service Manager ensures services provided by the crematorium are put on hold until payment is received for account holders who have overdue invoices.	3	11-Nov-20		Complete	Direct Services Manager
Trading Standards	We recommend that the Trading Services Manager: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviews the required frequency for compliance visits for Explosive and Fireworks Licence to be carried out ensuring thereafter that visits are completed at the</li> </ul>	3	25-Jul-20	A check form was created and used in November 2019 when the explosives inspections were carried out.	Green	Principal Trading Standards Officer

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	<p>agreed frequency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures that when visits are completed the date of visit is recorded in Civica</li> <li>Ensures a record of checks completed is retained in a format that the Trading Services Manager is satisfied with.</li> </ul>					
<i>Corporate Services</i>						
Treasury Management	<p>We recommend that the Cash flow procedure notes should be reviewed and updated as required.</p> <p>We further recommend that the reconciliation procedures are reviewed and updated to contain more detail as to the processes.</p>	3	30-Jun-20	Procedure notes are in the process of being updated.	Green	Head of Corporate Finance
Treasury Management	<p>We recommend that the Payroll Team provide the Corporate Finance Team with details of the monthly payroll figures when the payroll is run.</p>	3	30-Jun-20		Complete	Head of Corporate Finance
Main Accounting 2019/20	<p>1.1</p> <p>We recommend that the Payroll Manager ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the monthly payroll analysis relating to the previous period's payroll payments be made promptly each month to the Transactional Officer via email to facilitate prompt completion of the salaries &amp; wages bank reconciliation</li> </ul> <p>We further recommend that the Senior Team Leader (Finance) ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Salaries &amp; Wages procedures be reviewed and updated as required, with both the review date and next review date noted on the documents.</li> </ul>	3	30-Jun-20		Complete	Corporate Finance Manager
Reserves Management	<p>1.1</p> <p>We recommend that a brief outline of intention be put into next financial year's Statement of Accounts to state what the Council will review if the strategic reserves are maintained at an average of over the 5% limit of net total budget for the fy2019-20.</p>	3	31-May-20	The intention will be added as a footer to the reserves note in the accounts that will be published at the end of June 2020. The intention will be added as a footer to the reserves note in the accounts that will be published at the end of June 2020	Green	Head of Corporate Finance
Members Allowances and Expenses 2019/20	<p>1.1a</p> <p>We recommend that the Democratic Services Manager ensures that a full review of the current process is completed to address the control weaknesses identified.</p>	2	31-May-20	Governance support assistants have written out to all members to offer one-to-one training on	Green	Democratic Services Manager

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	<p>This includes ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members complete expense claims consistently, accurately and with sufficient detail, this may require additional training to Councillors,</li> <li>• Claims are scrutinised appropriately and rejected if they are not in line with the policy including sufficient narrative, evidence of receipts. Where clear receipt evidence is not available other proof should be requested e.g. invoices/bank statements</li> <li>• Consideration is given to a centralised calendar and clarity regarding what constitutes a reasonable event is outlined,</li> <li>• The 14 potential duplicate claims are investigated further,</li> <li>• Consideration is given to generic drop down box responses for some claims e.g. regular committee meetings.</li> <li>• Consideration is given to an automatic process of approving expenses of a certain value with spot checks carried out to provide additional assurance.</li> </ul>			<p>submitting expenses claims an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Scrutiny of members expenses occurs via the GSAs for claims over £100. In line with the recommendation below, for all claims under £100, members can submit these via business world and subjected to the auditing protocols in place for claims under £100. This change in practice took place 10 April, 2020.</p> <p>There is a centralised calendar which highlights all member training/meeting events which allows democratic services to triangulate the events being claimed for by members. This is routinely maintained and updated.</p> <p>The generic drop down boxes has been investigated, but the business world technology does not support this request. The main reason this was suggested was due to members claims being misspelt in some instances.</p>		
Members Allowances and Expenses 2019/20	<p>1.3a</p> <p>We recommend the Democratic Services Manager considers including specific guidance amounts for subsistence in the Councillors allowance scheme.</p>	3	31-May-21	No action taken – which is as expected - awaiting commencement of the IRP.	Amber	Democratic Services manager and Democratic Services Officer
Members Allowances and Expenses 2019/20	<p>1.4a</p> <p>We recommend that the Democratic Services Manager ensures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Allowance Scheme is updated to outline the</li> </ul>	3	31-May-20	This work is underway, however, it is taking on a new dimension for some members. Covid 19 means that our	Amber	Democratic Services Manager/Governance support assistants and Information Governance

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	arrangements relating to data limits and personal usage of the mobile phone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An annual review is completed regarding mobile phone usage and allocations</li> <li>• Prompt response to contracts that have reached their limit is taken to ensure the Council achieve value for money.</li> </ul>			meetings are being carried out virtually. For some members with weak broadband but strong mobile coverage, they are using their smartphones to attend virtual meetings. This has led to significant increases in data usage for some members. This is being actively monitored and managed by the Democratic Services Manager.		
Members Allowances and Expenses 2019/20	1.5a We recommend that the Democratic Services Manager ensures a standard operating procedure document exist to cover the full processes in relation to member expense approval.	3	31-May-20	This is underway and will need to be undertaken in coordination with Business World colleagues.	Amber	Democratic Services Manager
Income Charging 2019/20	1.1 We recommend the Chief Finance Officer ensures a review of the current income charging principles is carried out including consideration as to whether a corporate Income Charging Policy Document/procedure document would be beneficial.	3	30-Oct-20	Currently being reviewed.	Green	Head of Management Accounting/Chief Finance Officer
Savings Targets 2019/20	1.1 We recommend that the Chief Finance Officer ensures that all savings proposals are supported with a formal documented plan/proposal that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detail as to how the savings will be achieved including financial rationale/calculation that has been validated by relevant officers</li> <li>• Costs that will be incurred to achieve the savings target,</li> <li>• Responsible officer(s) and required officer sign off,</li> <li>• Status of achievement of status including monetary achievement and reasonableness of achievement.</li> </ul>	2	31-Oct-20	Verto is being used to record and monitored savings plans. Initial meetings have set up options for reporting progress, these are currently being reviewed. The Verto and business world interface is also in being progressed. The action is on track.	Green	Head of Management Accounting
Savings Targets 2019/20	1.2 We recommend that the Chief Finance Officer reviews the current RAG categorisation used to report against performance of savings targets. When a method of categorisation is agreed upon officers should retain justification/rationale for categorisation and guidance	3	31-Oct-20	This is included in the Verto solution.	Green	Head of Management Accounting

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	should be available to staff relating to categorisation. Checks should be completed to ensure performance reporting is accurate and correct.					
Savings Targets 2019/20	1.3 We recommend that the Chief Finance Officer ensures a corporate process is developed to ensure savings targets that are identified as not being achieved are actioned/escalated. Non achievement or changes to savings targets should be reported with the quarterly performance report.	2	31-Dec-20	This is included in the scope of the Verto solution.	Green	Head of Management Accounting
Savings Targets 2019/20	1.4 We recommend the Chief Finance Officer ensures consistent regular monitoring of performance targets takes place across the directorates.	3	31-Oct-20	This is included in the scope of the Verto solution.	Green	Head of Management Accounting

Blue	Green	Amber	Red
Projects/programmes/activities that have been completed	Projects/programmes/activities that are progressing as planned and outputs will be delivered to agreed specification within agreed timescales.	Projects/programmes/activities that are experiencing obstacles that <b>may</b> prevent the delivery to agreed specification, timescales or costs but there is confidence that delivery can be brought back on target.	Projects/programmes/activities that are experiencing obstacles that <b>are likely to</b> prevent the successful delivery to agreed specification, timescales or costs and significant involvement is necessary to bring that project back in line with original expectations or revised plan for delivery is needed