

Audit Committee – 28th August 2008

6. Update on Homelessness Service Audit Action Plan

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Purpose of the Report

This report has been requested by Audit Committee to update members on the actions taken to improve processes and internal controls in the Homelessness part of the Housing & Revenues service following the internal audit of this service in 2007.

Recommendation

To note the actions and progress made.

Background

The South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) reported their findings of the review of the Homelessness Service in March 2007. At that time the Auditors opinion was as follows:

“I cannot provide assurance for the Homelessness Service as the areas reviewed were found to be inadequately controlled. Risks are not well managed and systems require the introduction or improvement of internal controls to ensure the achievement of objectives.”

A report was brought to Audit Committee in December 2007 updating members on the progress made to date on the action plan.

Review – April 08

A follow up to the original audit was undertaken by Ian Baker (Group Auditor) in April 2008. The findings of this are shown below.

“Based on the evidence and commitment I have seen, I feel able to improve the level of assurance we can offer to Partial Assurance in that some of the key areas reviewed are still not adequately controlled. However, if the current momentum is continued, I feel that the prospects for improvement are positive.”

Progress Update on Action Plans

The only two items outstanding are 6.1b (the Homeless Prevention Fund report to District Executive) and part of 8.1a, which relates to the income budget for rent in advance and deposits, which will also be in the District Executive report.

I am pleased to be able to report that the level of assurance that the SWAP Auditor can offer has improved from “None” to “Partial”. Clearly the aim for the service is to improve this still further in order that a “Reasonable” level of assurance is achieved. The Homelessness Service will be subject of an Operational Audit again in Quarter 4 of this financial year.

I have provided members with an updated version of the original audit report action plan from 2007 (see pages 5-12) to show what actions have been taken and the current status where appropriate.

Financial Implications

None.

Background Papers: *Audit Committee Agenda and Minutes - December 2007*
 Internal Audit Report of Homelessness Service - March 2007
