

AUDIT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 10
2 NOVEMBER 2009	PUBLIC REPORT

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Seaton, Resources Portfolio Holder	
Committee Member(s) responsible:	Councillor M Dalton, Chair of Audit Committee	
Contact Officer(s):	Steve Crabtree, Chief Internal Auditor	☎ 384 557

FEEDBACK AND UPDATE REPORT

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

This is a standard report to Audit Committee which forms part of its agreed work programme.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

This standard report provides feedback on items considered or questions asked at previous meetings of the Committee. It also provides an update on any specific matters which are of interest to the Committee or where Committee have asked to be kept informed of progress.

3. FEEDBACK RESPONSES

Appendix A sets out the outstanding feedback items. Following approval by Committee the identified actions will be transferred to the record of Actions completed for the municipal year.

AUDIT COMMITTEE: RECORD OF ACTION TAKEN (FEEDBACK REPORT)

MUNICIPAL YEAR: MAY 2009 - APRIL 2010

DATE ISSUE RAISED	SUBJECT / ITEM	AUDIT COMMITTEE COMMENTS	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE	ACTION TAKEN	SIGN OFF DATE
1 June 2009	Agenda Item: 5 Internal Audit Annual Report 2008/2009	Follow discussions on follow up arrangements and the levels of implementation, or otherwise, of audit recommendations, it was agreed to provide all Audit Committee Members with a copy of the current Audit Charter. This will be reviewed by the Chief Internal Auditor to : (1) Reflect any changes / improvements now reflected in the performance indicators; (2) Highlight improved protocols to follow up late responses to draft Audit Reports which will include a separate letter of endorsement from the Chief Internal Auditor and Chair of the Audit Committee; and (3) Reiterate the importance of responses by inviting officers to attend future Audit Committees to explain their performance in implementing audit recommendations and the controls in their systems / departments	Steve Crabtree Cllr M Dalton	The original Audit Charter, approved by Audit Committee on 9 November 2006, has been circulated to Members for information on 16 June 2009. The Audit Committee Handbook has now been reviewed and a number of sections have been updated. The revised Handbook will be issued to members by December 2009.	
1 June 2009	Agenda Item: 8 Audit Committee Work Programme	Request for the Head of Strategic Finance to provide an appropriate training session before the next Audit Committee meeting on the scrutiny of the final accounts.	John Blair	Scheduled on agenda for 6.00 p.m.	29 June 2009
29 June 2009		THERE WERE NO NEW REQUESTS FROM THIS MEETING			

AUDIT COMMITTEE: RECORD OF ACTION TAKEN (FEEDBACK REPORT)

MUNICIPAL YEAR: MAY 2009 - APRIL 2010

DATE ISSUE RAISED	SUBJECT / ITEM	AUDIT COMMITTEE COMMENTS	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE	ACTION TAKEN	SIGN OFF DATE
7 Sept 2009	Agenda Item: 5 Internal Audit Quarterly Report 2009/2010 (to 30 June 2009)	Members sought clarification on the sickness management processes, including an overview of the involvement of Occupational Health in long term sickness cases.	Steve Crabtree	<p>Staff sickness was originally part of the remit of the Business Efficiency Scrutiny Panel and a full report was presented at its meeting on 9 April 2009. Following the Panels' demise, this now falls under the remit of the Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee. Members can access the full report on the Council website. Although summarised below are the key points from the report:</p> <p>What are the council doing to address the issues?</p> <p><u>Sickness Management</u> Return-to-work interviews are rated as the most effective approach to managing short-term absence, followed by trigger mechanisms for reviewing attendance and the use of disciplinary procedures. The top three most highly rated approaches to managing long-term absence are occupational health support, the provision of rehabilitation programmes and flexible working. These processes are all used within Peterborough City Council and are being rigorously applied.</p> <p>Since the adoption of the Business Partner model in the last HR restructure considerable effort has gone into developing a closer working relationship with line managers, coaching them to take more ownership of OH issues, and supporting them in the management of agreed action plans working towards satisfactory case conclusion. Some areas report sickness figures started to increase initially when this approach was introduced, but closer working is now resulting in greater ownership and more effective management of sickness.</p> <p>HR Business Partners are reporting to Departmental Management Teams on sickness progress raising the profile of health management issues. Business Partners discuss with managers every long term absence to ensure the appropriate action \ referrals are in hand. They have identified managers with high levels of sickness in their</p>	

				<p>team and provided coaching sessions on sickness management. There are regular monthly reviews between Business Partners and Occupational Health on progress.</p> <p>A more robust referral process has been introduced.</p> <p><u>Health Referral</u> During the year the council has been using the services of AXA to obtain more specialist advice in long term sickness cases replacing its previous use of a general practitioner. The aim has been to improve timely, professional advice on long term sickness cases. This is currently being evaluated by the OH Nurse Manager. One concern is ensuring the best possible turn around time on advice.</p> <p><u>Consideration of future Occupational Health provision</u> There has been significant investment of officers' time over the last 12 months in investigating attendance management and preparing a range of responses in order to maximise business efficiency and reduce sickness absence. The work has involved a comprehensive review of the existing Occupational Health provision as well as setting out proposals for formally incorporating wellbeing as part of the strategy to attract and retain the best candidates to deliver our services.</p> <p>The provision of occupational health and wellbeing services and strategies are increasingly recognised as important factors in achieving business effectiveness and supporting an environment where employees feel valued and respected.</p>	
28 Sept 2009	Agenda Item: 4 Statement of Accounts and Summary Accounts 2008 / 2009	Members requested information on the arrangements in place for assets between Peterborough City Council and the Peterborough Urban Regeneration Company (Opportunity Peterborough) as highlighted in the report on page 35.	Claire Boyd	A formal response will be provided at the next meeting.	