

To the Chair and Members of the AUDIT COMMITTEE

**REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING EXTERNAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION
RECOMMENDATIONS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report provides an update on the report presented to the Audit Committee at its last meeting in September 2013, about progress made in implementing audit and inspection recommendations. This is because full details of the position on inspection recommendations were not available when the previous report was presented. Further work has now been done on the position on outstanding recommendations and while there remains an imperfect picture in some areas in Children's Services, this report provides a fuller update of the overall position.

External Audit Recommendations

2. The September 2013 report identified the very good progress made in implementing outstanding external audit recommendations. From an original 86 recommendations made since 2010, there are now only 2 outstanding recommendations (excluding recent recommendations made by the external auditor at the conclusion of the 2012/13 audit). The outstanding recommendations relate to completing an Organisational Development strategy (due by 30 November 2013) and the completion of an IT disaster recovery plan (to be completed by 31 December 2013). Both are expected to be completed on time.

Inspection Recommendations

3. The previous report to the Audit Committee showed there had been 129 recommendations made in inspection reports since 2010. Of these:
 - 65 recommendations have been fully implemented (50%).
 - 9 are in progress and within their original expected timescales (7%).
 - 55 are outstanding and beyond their implementation date (43%).
4. The report explained the corporate process for the monitoring of inspection recommendations by the Governance Group had commenced only shortly before the report had been drafted for the Audit Committee. In part, this lack of corporate monitoring meant there were a large number of recommendations that needed to be progressed or where a further more detailed update was needed.
5. After completing a further update, the position on the recommendations is summarised in the table below. Details of outstanding recommendations can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Inspection and Date	Number of rec'ns	Fully Implemented	Part implemented/ In progress	In progress but late – Nov '13	Comparison: In progress but late – Sept 13
Corporate Reports					
Information Commissioner Office Inspection (2013)	34	30	0	4	9
Children & Young Peoples Service					
Adoption Service Inspection (Sept 2011)	9	4	0	5	9
Fostering Inspection (2010)	11	10	0	1	0
Lord Carlisle (2013) **	19	9	0	10	15
Protection of Children (2012)	18	14	0	4	6
Safeguarding & Looked After Children 2011)	25	13	0	8	12
Unannounced Contacts, Referrals & Assessments (2012)	6	3	0	3	3
Regeneration and Environment					
Trafalgar House incident Improvement Notice (2013)	1	1	0	0	1
Total Recommendations	123	88	0	35	55

** now excludes 6 national recommendations previously included

6. It should be noted that this analysis excludes Schools, which are subject to a separate monitoring regime at this time.
7. Overall, the position is better than reported at the September 2013 Audit Committee meeting. The Trafalgar House improvement notice has been lifted, following appropriate actions by the Council, and progress has been made on the Information Commissioner's challenging action plan, although 4 recommendations with an original target date of July 2013 will take until February 2014 to complete.

Children and Young People's Service Inspections

8. Better information is now available corporately on progress on CYPS inspection recommendations. However, caution is still required with regard to the summary presented in this report because (a) there has at this stage been a lack of evidence presented to support some updates given and (b) some of the details put forward have still to be verified by Internal Audit and/or the Corporate Performance Team.
9. Additionally, in a number of cases there are no estimates of completion dates, to enable officers and Members to assess whether progress is reasonable.
10. With the above points in mind, the following progress by CYPS is apparent:
 - There are 5 recommendations made in the inspection of the Adoptions Service in 2011 that require completion. Most are now close to completion, although the inspectors' original target for completion was March 2012

- There is one outstanding recommendation relating to the Fostering Service inspection which was carried out in 2010. This involves the monitoring of discharges from care.
 - Various activities have taken place and new procedures implemented following the Safeguarding & Looked After Children inspection in 2011, but there remain 10 actions to be completed, including ensuring some of the new procedures are effective.
 - Four significant actions are still to be completed following the Inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children in 2012. These had original expectations set by inspectors, ranging from November 2012 to March 2013
 - There are 8 recommendations to be finalised from the 2013 Lord Carlile report, although some steps have been taken in each of these and all are progressing.
 - There are 3 recommendations to be completed arising from the unannounced Inspection of Contact, Referral & Assessments (2012). Actions have been taken but we need to ensure these are effective in achieving improved outcomes.
11. It is proposed that ongoing corporate monitoring and verification of progress should be carried out on these recommendations, and a further report be presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting in January 2014. At that point there should also be clear expectations identified with regard to completion dates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

12. The Audit Committee is asked:
- to note the updated position in respect of progress on external audit and inspection recommendations
 - to agree to the presentation of a further report in January 2014.

BACKGROUND

13. This report provides the Audit Committee with information on the outcomes from external audit and inspection work and allows the Committee to discharge its responsibility for monitoring external audit and inspection activity.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED & RECOMMENDED OPTION

14. This is not applicable to this report.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OBJECTIVES

15. Effective implementation of external audit and inspection recommendations provides evidence that the Council is able to respond to external challenge in a timely manner and is committed to continuous improvement.

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

16. The implementation of external audit recommendations is a response to identified risks and hence is an effective risk management action.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

17. There are no legal implications from this report although some of the recommendations may carry their own legal implications detailed within the originating report

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. There are no specific costs arising from this report.

CONSULTATION

19. There is consultation with managers at the outset, throughout and at the conclusion of individual audits in order to ensure that the work undertaken and findings are relevant to the risks identified and are accurate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 20 Audit and Inspection Reports.

APPENDICES

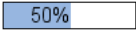
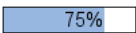
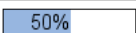
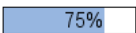
Appendix 1: Outstanding Inspection Recommendations

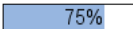

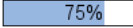

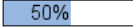
REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

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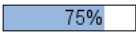
Simon Wiles
Director of Finance and Corporate Services

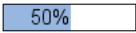
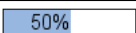
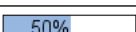
OUTSTANDING INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

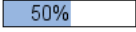
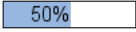
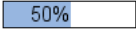
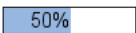
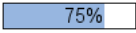
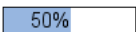
ICO Audit Recommendations (2013)			
Recommendation	Implementation Date	Percentage Complete	Comments
Identify and appoint business system owners, of an appropriate seniority, to assist IAOs	31-Jul-2013		The process of appointment has been set up and is ongoing. It is expected to be completed by February 2014.
Ensure all staff are made aware of the current retention and disposal periods as recorded in the new schedule	31-Jul-2013		Plans are in place to disseminate information to all staff by 31 December 2013.
Include the requirement for conducting Privacy Impact Assessments as part of a data sharing policy (see c1) as recommended in the ICO Data sharing Code of Practice.	31-Jul-2013		An assessment is being completed with a view to identifying a proportionate approach to this requirement, depending upon system size, sensitivity etc. It should be completed by February 2014.
Ensure shared data is accurate, retention and disposal arrangements have been agreed and assurance received that recipients will delete, destroy or return shared data once the purpose is served.	31-Jul-2013		A process has been drafted and is in the process of being rolled out. It should be completed by 31 December 2013.

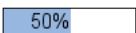
Inspection - Adoption Service (2011)			
Recommendation	Implementation Date	Percentage Complete	Comments
Ensure recruitment processes include checks and specific job descriptions	31-Mar-2012	 75%	All procedures are now in place. The Adoptions Service has asked for access to HR files to carry out an audit. The target date for completion is 30 November 2013.
Ensure the children's guide is appropriate to each child's understanding	31-Mar-2012	 90%	Guides have been completed and are expected to be published by 30 November 2013.
Demonstrate effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the agency	31-Mar-2012	 75%	Procedures are in place. Reports will be produced on performance quarterly and annually.
Ensure there is clear documentary evidence that feedback is sought from service users	31-Mar-2012	 90%	<p>Written feedback is received as a matter of routine from all Social Workers and Adopters when they attend Adoption Panel. These records are held by the Adoption service and reported on annually.</p> <p>A wider consultation is to be undertaken with regard to Adopters' experiences. A draft consultation document has been completed, and this is to be forwarded to all adopters in January 2014.</p>
Ensure life story books and later in life letters are produced in a timely manner and are all in a format appropriate to each child's age and understanding.	31-Mar-2012	 50%	<p>A Social Worker in training within the Adoption Service was tasked with researching this area of work and found only 10 of 21 adopters had received a Life story book, and 7 had received a 'Later in Life' letter.</p> <p>Consequently two training dates were provided to both Children's Social workers and the Fostering and adoption Social Workers. It is recognised the policy and procedure for timeliness need addressing, to improve both the level of scrutiny (quality) and ensure that the adopters are able to</p>



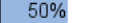
			<p>build on the Life story book by contributing to it from records made during introductions and the first days of placement.</p> <p>Actions include Policy and procedures regarding timeliness to be agreed and implemented, and an ongoing Training Programme is to be agreed and implemented (end November 2013).</p>
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Inspection - Fostering Service (2010)			
Recommendation	Implementation Date	Percentage Complete	Comments
Improve preparation for independence of older Children in foster care and ensure Pathway plans are completed	31-Dec-2010		The 16+ service has implemented a system to monitor all discharges from care and has more capacity to improve the quality of work undertaken. Pathway plans are produced earlier, ensuring compliance with Transition regulations.

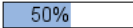
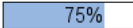
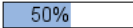
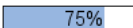
Safeguarding & Looked After Children (2011)			
Recommendation	Implementation Date	Percentage Complete	Comments
Ensure that the framework for the health and wellbeing of looked after children is implemented without delay	30-Jun-2011		Assessment process revised. Performance is improving but is still low.
Ensure that all key decisions and actions are recorded on the child's electronic case record	31-Aug-2011		Staff have been trained and a QA process implemented. Checks indicate decisions are being recorded but consistency and quality need to be improved.
Implement management development opportunities for inexperienced operational managers	31-Aug-2011		This action will be linked to the development of the national capability framework.
The LAC health nurses must provide young people leaving care with a comprehensive	31-Aug-2011	n/a	Further information needed

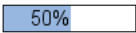
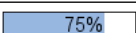
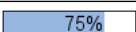
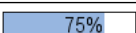
summary of their healthcare.			
Develop effective care pathways for children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) to ensure coordinated and timely assessment, diagnosis and treatment	31-Aug-2011		New ADHD pathway in place and communicated to staff.
Improve completion rate of Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs).	31-Aug-2011		CAF action plan in place and performance is improving
Improve the quality of sex and relationship education for all children and young people	31-Aug-2011		Review completed. Discussions held with schools and joint working with health undertaken ensuring a holistic and partnership approach.
Continue to strengthen the Children's Trust to enable it to fulfil its function of holding the Doncaster Safeguarding Children Board to account	30-Nov-2011		New DCS appointed and partnership arrangements being developed.
Continue to improve performance management arrangements across the partnership	30-Nov-2011		A new performance and quality assurance framework has been proposed. Data is available to provide information on performance within the new framework.
Improve computer based systems to enable full understanding of cost and usage data.	30-Nov-2011		Phase 1 completed and Phase 2 underway.

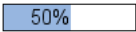
Inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children (2012)			
Recommendation	Implementation Date	Percentage Complete	Comments
Ensure strategy meetings have a multi-agency focus and input to enable all relevant information to be given full consideration in	30-Nov-2012		Enquiries are carried out by qualified social workers and are overseen by Team Managers and Advanced Practitioners as appropriate. There have been issues of inconsistency with regard to the membership / quality and content of strategy

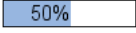
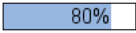
<p>planning what action needs to be taken to safeguard children.</p>			<p>meetings & enquiries across the borough.</p> <p>An operational liaison group has been established in order to review existing minimum standards and working practice between the Police and Social Care. CYPS has recently undertaken a small sample audit in relation to practice. This will inform service action plans and the ongoing collation of thematic improvements required, based on overarching analysis of audit activity. A multi-agency audit is planned in order to provide for a consistent multi-agency understanding of the issues and agreed multi-agency plan of address.</p> <p>Expected implementation is November 2013.</p>
<p>Ensure that all partners are engaging in providing a fully integrated early support service for children, young people and families that provides a consistent service and reduces the demand for statutory intervention.</p>	<p>30-Apr-2013</p>	<p> 50%</p>	<p>Early Help is organised around our Children Centres, with a 0-19 service consisting of Council services delivering targeted support to children, young people and families. One Team Working is the integration of Health and IFSS. Initially piloted in the North Area.</p> <p>As part of the new Improvement plan supported by iMpower, Early Help is being revised with a new strategy that will coordinate and integrate IFSS, OTW and Vision for families. A steering group is established chaired by the new DCS</p>
<p>Ensure children and young people are able to contribute effectively to their assessment and the care planning process</p>	<p>30-Nov-2012</p>	<p> 75%</p>	<p>In Progress. 50% of care plans audited in May 2013, one of the key issues identified was a lack of evidence of young persons' input & participation. A result of the audit, a best care plan guide, was subsequently distributed to all social workers. Follow up dip sample audit of 40-50 cases will evidence any improvements in social work practice. This activity is due by the end of November.</p>
<p>Improve communication and information sharing between the</p>	<p>31-Jan-2013</p>	<p> 50%</p>	<p>The new DCS is implementing new arrangements across the partnership.</p>

strategic boards, including the Children's Trust, Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Improvement Board.			Children's Improvement Board has clear links to DSCB. Current Trust arrangements are being reviewed. Stakeholder events are being planned with partners.
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Inspection - Lord Carlile (2013)			
Recommendation	Implementation Date		
Ensure that Doncaster Councillors are given far more opportunity to understand and scrutinise those services	31-Dec-2012		<p>Corporate performance training was delivered to Schools and the Children & Young People Scrutiny panel on the 10th Sept. The Mayor, along with panel members, attended the session where performance reports were reviewed / explained to enable Members to better interpret the information they receive within their performance reports.</p> <p>Scrutiny Chair briefing sessions are delivered prior to the panel meetings and reports are circulated in advance of the meeting as per agreed democratic service timetables, so that Members can review the performance reports before the meetings. Corporate performance reports are presented to Exec Board, Cabinet, OSMC and Scrutiny Panels.</p>
Doncaster and all Local authority Children's Services should continue to develop the best possible triage arrangements.	31-Dec-2012		<p>A review has taken place and a revised duty system has been implemented from August 2013. Its impact and ability to manage volumes is being monitored closely with the start of the new academic year. Co-location now includes health professionals and education professional.</p> <p>First contact and case management procedures have been improved. There are three dedicated professional telephone lines accessible and in place since April.</p>
Links between Children's Services generally and CAMHS	31-Dec-2012		CYPS has lead commissioner and task group established.
Developing intelligent systems for	31-Dec-2012		Work has begun on adapting the current case management

dealing with casework			system to ensure integration of case management across early help and statutory services. Case allocations in place, QA is in place to consider quality of practice and caseloads are manageable.
That a radical look be taken at the way interventions are assessed and dealt with	31-Dec-2012		Early Help review being done, interventions have been mapped and a steering group chaired by DCS will implement a new and more coordinated approach to Early Help
Doncaster Scrutiny Panel receive enhanced training	31-Dec-2012		Corporate performance training has been arranged for 10th September 2013. This will enable Members to better interpret the information they receive within performance reports to scrutiny, other Council committees and partnerships
The Career structure of social workers in Doncaster should encourage workforce stability	31-Dec-2012		New structures and HR procedures have been put in place to address the weaknesses identified. In recent months there has been some evidence of effective succession planning, with a number of Social Workers becoming able and confident to progress within the organisation.
The existing mentoring arrangements should be improved	31-Dec-2012		The existing mentoring arrangements for Social Workers are being targeted by the creation and development of the Advanced Practitioner post.

Unannounced Inspection of Contact, Referral & Assessments (2012)			
Recommendation	Implementation Date	Percentage Complete	Comments
Improve written outcomes of Contact enquiries	30-Nov-2012		A number of actions have been put in place to improve arrangements, (1) a significant reduction in the number of social work case holding, should better ensure that due process is followed. (2) 50 cases are audited across the service each month by managers. This is one of the areas looked at. (3) The QA function requires all managers to sign off assessments and check the quality of the work, this

			aspect in particular is looked at. (4) Throughout the year we dip sample to ensure compliance. The most recent sample was undertaken week commencing 30th September.
Improve checks regarding data protection/posting letters	01-Apr-2012		Checks are being conducted on outgoing letters.
Ensure Agency staff are sufficiently trained	30-Jun-2012		We have an active live recruitment process underway which unfortunately is still not predicted to give us the volume of permanent staff we will need. However a revised recruitment strategy which addresses both recruitment and retention financial packages should achieve more positive outcomes.