

Internal Audit Recommendations - Response

The performance at face value looks poor at 0% for three directorates. However, it should be noted that this is overall just 4 major recommendations outstanding, 3 of which are longstanding as follows:

- In Adults, Health and Well-Being, the outstanding action relates to the procurement of a money management service to help adult clients manage their financial affairs including any direct payments made to them by the Council to pay for their care. The delay is due to the service provision being incorporated into a broader review of commissioning of social care support services.
- The two outstanding recommendations in the Learning and Opportunities (CYP) Directorate both relate to the 'Aiming High' Service and are, specifically, (1) to ensure there are performance targets in place relating to the care assessments completed by the team – eg relating to timeliness and quality, and (2) to improve the processes for establishing and procuring care to ensure these meet clients' needs while being cost-effective. These recommendations are being progressed.
- The 4th outstanding recommendation, included in the statistics within the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate, relates to the launch of the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework, which has been on hold pending the agreement of the Doncaster Growing Together Plan. Following the approval of the DGT Plan, the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework is due to be launched in November 2017, at which point this outstanding recommendation will be cleared.

The position is much improved compared with the recent past. For example, just two years ago there were 17 outstanding late major recommendations.

Three things in particular have led to this improvement:

- The inclusion of a set of governance indicators in the quarterly finance and performance challenge process, including relating to the number of outstanding audit recommendations, has ensured there has been a robust focus on this and other governance matters, and has underpinned improved responses by management.
- Considerable work has been done by Internal Audit and the respective directorates to clear outstanding major recommendations.
- Regular reports are provided to the Audit Committee explaining progress made and highlighting any outstanding recommendations and audit concerns (the Audit Committee has responsibility within its Terms of Reference for monitoring the implementation of audit recommendations). On several occasions in the last 2 -3 years, the Audit Committee has required directors to attend to explain the actions they are taking to implement recommendations.

Taken together, the quarterly reporting process, Internal Audit's follow-up, the regular updates provided to the Audit Committee and the attendance of senior management to provide explanations to the Audit Committee ensure there is regular and ongoing pressure on the implementation of audit recommendations.