

27th January 2016

**To the Chair and Members of the
AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**DONCASTER COUNCIL GOVERNANCE PLAN 2016 AND UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM
PREVIOUS YEARS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In the interests of good council management a specific Governance Plan has been produced. The Governance Plan combines the various actions and initiatives that are being undertaken to improve the Council and increase its ability to meet the specific and varied challenges. Since the 2010 Corporate Governance Inspection we have made significant progress in our governance arrangements. This can be demonstrated by coming out of corporate intervention earlier than expected and, more recently, by the reduced number of issues highlighted in this report.
2. Moreover, members will recall that the Annual Audit Letter 2014/15, presented at Audit Committee on 19 November 2015, had reflected the overall significant and positive progress made by the Council. It should be noted that no high priority recommendations were raised as a result of KPMG's 2014/15 audit work and therefore, no further activities have been included in the Governance Plan 2016, arising from the Annual Audit Letter 2014/15.
3. The Governance Plan has been incorporated into the Council's Corporate Plan in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of managing performance and assessing progress. It is reported on a quarterly basis in line with other corporate priorities.
4. Since the last Audit Committee meeting the following recommendation(s) has been implemented: R4 Preparation of the financial statements. Ensure that quality assurance procedures linked to the production of the financial statements are sufficiently resourced to enable timely delivery.

Governance Plan 2016

5. The Governance Plan for 2016 includes:
 - a) Issues raised by the Governance Group that contribute to the effective delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities shown at Appendix 1 as R1-R3;

- b) Recommendations arising from the Annual Audit Letters provided by KPMG. Currently there are only three recommendations included from previous Annual Audit Letters. These are from the 2013/14 Annual Audit Letter and are shown at Appendix 1 as R4-R6;
- c) Updates on progress made against the improvement issues identified in the 2014-15 Annual Governance Statement shown at Appendix 2 as R7; and
- d) Any relevant updates on the Council's Internal Audit Governance Strategy Action Plan (none).

Annual Audit Letter

- 6. The Annual Audit Letter provides a summary of the key findings from the external audit of the authority. Outstanding recommendations from the Annual Audit Letter 2013/14 are shown at Appendix 1 with relevant updates. The Annual Audit Letter for 2014/15 covers the audit of the authority's 2014/15 financial statements and the 2014/15 Value for Money Conclusion. The 2014/15 letter confirms the external auditor:
 - a) Issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's core financial statements and associated disclosure notes included in the Council's 2014/15 Statement of Accounts;
 - b) Concluded that the Council made appropriate arrangements to secure financial resilience and economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
 - c) Issued an audit certificate to demonstrate that the full requirements of both the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice and the Audit Commission Act 1998 have been discharged for the year.
- 7. In accordance with the request from Audit Committee on 28th September 2012, the Governance Group will continue to receive an update on all Governance Plan activities, and the Audit Committee will receive an update on an exception basis of those recommendations not yet completed. At its meeting held on 22 November 2013, the Audit Committee requested that future iterations of the Governance Plan include additional section information highlighting the risks involved.
- 8. Governance Plan updates should set out what progress has been made since the last meeting and whether the activity is on track to be delivered within the timescales by, if appropriate, answering a series of prompt questions to ensure that the provision of consistent and relevant narrative.
- 9. Paragraph 18 below provides an update on the activities that are causing particular concern. **Appendix 1** includes an update on the Governance Plan activities that are not yet completed. An update on the external recommendations that need to be monitored corporately will be provided separately by Internal Audit.

RECOMMENDATION

- 10. Members are asked to note and comment on the progress made in relation to the activities and progress in taking forward the Governance Plan for 2016, in particular that the following activities have now been completed and will now be removed from the Governance Plan:**
 - a) R4 Preparation of the financial statements. Ensure that quality assurance procedures linked to the production of the financial statements are sufficiently resourced to enable timely delivery.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

11. Effective monitoring of corporate governance arrangements adds value to the Council in managing its risks and achieving its key priorities of improving services provided to the citizens of the borough.

BACKGROUND

The Corporate Plan

12. The Corporate Plan combines and co-ordinates all the objectives and outcomes the Council needs to deliver during the year. This includes the activities undertaken by Directorates that contribute to the Borough Strategy, including the Partnership Stock Take outcomes, and deliver The Mayor's priorities; together with actions required to ensure that the Council improves and is governed effectively. The Council's refreshed Corporate Plan for 2014-17 was agreed at Full Council on 30th July 2015.

The Governance Group

13. The Governance Group was established by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services to promote and ensure good Governance practices across the Council.

Annual Governance Report (KPMG)

14. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services in his role as the Council's responsible financial officer approves the draft Statement of Accounts. The Accounts are presented to the Audit Committee.
15. Following approval of the Statement of Accounts an audit commences that includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the accounting statements and related notes. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the Authority in the preparation of the accounting statements and related notes, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Authority's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

Value for Money Conclusion

16. Our external auditor, KPMG, has to reach a conclusion on the arrangements the Council has put in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use

of resources. This is known as the 'value for money conclusion'. The report considers the arrangements that have been put in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the way resources are used.

Annual Governance Statement

17. The Audit Committee requested an update be provided to show progress against the issues raised within the Annual Governance Statement. This request has been embedded within the Governance Plan report to provide a single, concise update on current priorities.

Exception Report for Activities that are a Cause for Concern

18. The Governance Group has noted that the following activities are currently causing particular concern: There are some concerns over aspects of financial administration within some teams within Adult Services. These are being investigated as part of the Adult Services improvement programme. Initial indications are that some administration affecting customers is significantly below the standards expected and special remedial work will be required.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

19. The delivery of activities contained within the Governance Plan 2016 will help to ensure local people get value for money from council services – Corporate Plan Outcome 5 'Council services are modern and value for money' and contribute to achieving the Council's internal transformation outcome contained within Corporate Plan outcome 6 'Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance'.

Outcomes	Implications
Council Services are modern and value for money.	Monitoring of governance arrangements adds value to the organisation through a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the Council's Services
Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance'	The work undertaken to monitor our governance arrangements improves and strengthens governance arrangements within the Council and its partners.

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

20. The most significant risk is that the current improvement is not sustained and the performance of the Council deteriorates as a result, causing further reputation damage. The impact of this is assessed as critical, but at this stage it is unlikely to happen. Nevertheless, the risk must be robustly managed.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

21. Any specific implications will be reported separately and in the context of any

initiative proposed to be taken.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

22. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report; however, any costs incurred in the delivery of the Governance Plan must be contained within approved revenue and capital budgets. Where specific initiatives arise in response to the contents of the report, which necessitate the incurring costs, these will be reported separately.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

23. There are no specific Human Resources implications arising from this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

24. There are no specific technology implications arising from this report.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

25. The Council has a legal obligation under the Public Sector Equality Duty to consider how different people will be affected by their activity and service. Equalities and Due Regard issues will be considered as part of the individual policies and procedures that are contained within the Governance Plan and as a result a Due Regard statement has not been completed for this process.

CONSULTATION

26. Consultation has taken place with the Chief Executive, Directorate Management Teams, Recovery Board, Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, The Mayor and Cabinet during the development of the Corporate Plan 2014-17. The Governance Plan 2016 has been developed in consultation with the Governance Group. This report has significant implications in terms of the following:

Procurement		Crime & Disorder	
Human Resources		Human Rights & Equalities	
Buildings, Land and Occupiers		Environment & Sustainability	
ICT		Capital Programme	

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Council's Corporate Plan 2014-17
Annual Audit Letters
Annual Governance Statement 2014-15

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

Sandra Ranns Strategy and Performance Unit Telephone: 01302 737612
E-mail: sandra.ranns@doncaster.gov.uk

Simon Wiles
Director of Finance & Corporate Services

Doncaster Council Governance Plan 2016

ACTIVITIES IN PROGRESS

Key R1	Strand		Responsible Assistant Director
R1.1	Proposed activity to deliver the recommendation (Original recommendation reference number)	Target Completion Date	Completed (Date)

KEY ACTIONS BEING TAKEN FORWARD BY THE COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE GROUP FROM THE CORPORATE PLAN (R1-R3)

R1	Partnership Risks Managed		Lee Tillman
R1.1	Improve partnership risk arrangements	31/03/13	
	Update January 2016: During w/c 30 th November 2015 a series of dedicated training sessions were held for a multitude of Officers, Members and Senior Personnel on the stewardship of governing Partnerships. As a result of this training a number of additional actions were identified this will strengthen the partnership governance arrangements for Doncaster Council. In addition a further training session will be held on the 3 rd February 2016 to capture members of partnerships who represent Doncaster Council but are not Officers or Elected Members, ie drainage board members.	Additional Training session to be held 3 rd February 2016.	
Risks			
Update January 2016			
Risk 1: DMBC policies and procedures are not robust enough to protect individuals from exposing the Council to risk at a partnership meeting			

The very establishment of a Governance framework ensures the Council has robust procedures in place to protect both Officers and Members when conducting business at Partnership Meetings:

Risk Profile: 3x3=9

Mitigating Action: DMBC Partnership Team, Legal and Finance Officers continually review the effectiveness of our policies ensuring the Authority is protected in the unlikely event a policy is breached.

Risk 2: The Council fails to maintain an accurate and reflective list of both Officers and Members who sit on Partnerships/ Boards.

Risk Profile 3x1=3

Mitigating Action: The Partnership team maintains an accurate record of members and officers currently in situ on Partnerships and Boards, this will be routinely monitored and communicated via the annual announcement on the appointment to outside bodies.

Risk 3: Partnership Team loses partnership governance expertise as part of the PPR2 process:

Risk Profile: 4x3 =12

Mitigating Action: The PPR2 process has resulted in the loss of three partnership officers who all declared an expression for VR, all three were accepted. The officers have produced detailed hand over notes, in addition to intense work shadowing in there hand over period to help minimize disruption.

R2 Internal Audit Issues Addressed		Colin Earl	
R2.1	Performance manage critical audit actions		
	% of agreed critical, major and significant audit recommendations implemented on time	On-going	
	<p>Update January 2016</p> <p>Of the 13 major recommendations with agreed actions due for completion by the end of Q3, 8 have been achieved. These are divided between the directorates as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance and Corporate Services, 7 out of the 7 agreed actions have been implemented, including ensuring data protection training has been completed by officers, monitoring delays in raising invoices for the collection of debts, enforcing legal action for non-payment of debt, monitoring of non-compliance with the procure to pay process, the monitoring of performance indicators for procure to pay and dealing with mis-match invoices. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Adults, Health and Wellbeing Services, 1 out of 3 agreed actions have been implemented or sufficiently progressed to no longer be regarded as major risks. This action relates to establishing new outcome based contracting arrangements for external home care. Outstanding actions are to finalise arrangements for ensuring accurate and full client contributions are being made as appropriate towards care costs and the implementation of a new Resource Allocation System for managing Direct Payments. These are major work streams and progressing at a good pace now. • Learning, Opportunities and Skills: 0 out of 3 agreed actions due for completion by the end of Q3 have not been implemented, all of which relate to the development of Information Governance arrangements within the directorate. Outstanding actions relate to production of System Asset information and the development directorate information strategy and information governance strategies. • Regeneration and Environment Directorate had no major recommendations due for implementation during the period. • Internal Audit is overall satisfied that directorates are paying attention to outstanding recommendations and in particular is assisting Adults, Health and Wellbeing with strengthening its own arrangements for monitoring and ensuring the implementation of recommendations. 		
--	--	--	--

Risks

Update January 2016

If the required recommendations are not delivered within the agreed timescale there is a risk that there may be a negative impact on service delivery which may impact on the delivery of secure and effective services and the achievement of corporate objectives.

Risk Profile 4x3=12

Mitigating Action: The reviewing and monitoring of all critical and major audit recommendations is embedded into the Corporate Performance Management Framework. There is a corporate governance indicator assigned to each Directorate that highlights compliance to all critical and major audit recommendations, and these are challenge as part of the quarterly challenge process.

R3	Data Protection Incidents Minimised	Simon Wiles	
R3.1	Improved data protection arrangements	Ongoing	
	<p>Update January 2016 The major activities completed are continued training; monitoring training completed; initiating the development of scenario based training, upgrading the breach scoring criteria increasing the score if someone has purposefully accessed data in a system when they should not leading to disciplinary action (the score was felt to be too low). The process for reporting breaches has also been updated. We are continuing to work with services who breach so they can learn from what went wrong and put measures in place to deter. All activity is on track.</p> <p>The new Data Protection Regulations were announced in December, this means that the Regulations are standard across the EEA, the Council now has 2 years to implement these. The Data Protection Officer will now be putting together a plan to roll this out to ensure compliance with the deadline date.</p> <p>The Data Protection Officer is revising the Data Protection Breach Process which will now be renamed to the Data Protection Incident Process which will reflect that all reports of a 'breach' will now be an incident. If the incident has to be referred to the Information Commissioner's Office then the incident may become a breach but this will be determined by the Information Commissioner's Office.</p>		
Risks			
<p>Update January 2016</p> <p>Incidents in Data Protection Unfortunately, in quarter 3 there were 10 data protection incidents, 7 by the Council and 3 by Doncaster Children's Services Trust these incidents have increased since quarter 2.</p> <p>Risk Profile 4 x 3 = 12</p> <p>Mitigating Action: These were mostly due to human error and as always, mitigating actions are being taken such as approaching specific services, raising and discussing at the SIRO Board, completing investigations, implementing lessons learned and taking disciplinary action where relevant as well as all staff accessing data undertaking data protection training as mandatory.</p>			

KEY ACTIONS BEING TAKEN FORWARD FROM THE ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2013/14 (R4-R6)

R4	Preparation of the financial statements. Ensure that quality assurance procedures linked to the production of the financial statements are sufficiently resourced to enable timely delivery (R9)		Steve Mawson
	Update January 2016 All actions have been completed and the accounts signed off. KPMG, in its Annual Audit Letter 2014/15 issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's core financial statements and associated disclosure notes included in the Council's 2014/15 Statement of Accounts.	Completed	
Risks			
Update January 2016 Accounts have now been signed off and therefore there are no further mitigating actions required for this activity.			
R5	Medium term financial planning. The Authority should ensure that it develops savings plans to meet the full budget gap of £109m identified for financial years up to 2016/17 (R8)		Steve Mawson
	Update January 2016 The Mayor will make a formal announcement on the 2016/17 budget on 25th January 2016. This will contain initiatives to deliver the balance of the £109m savings detailed in the original recommendation.	2014-2017	
Risks			
Update January 2016 Failure to meet the budget gap of £109m. Risk Profile 3x2=6 – Mitigating Action: The DN17 Programme Team continues to focus on managing the projects to deliver the identified savings. Further work will progress to ensure a balanced budget is approved for 2016/17.			
R6	Digital Region Limited. The Authority should ensure it has appropriate arrangements in place to manage the closure of Digital Region Limited and to minimise the financial impact on the Authority (R7)	On-going	Steve Mawson

	<p>Update January 2016 The major activities completed are the continued managed close down of the company, which has ceased trading and dissolution papers filed at Companies House, and the appointment of PwC as the liquidator. The latest update provided by the liquidator showed no major problems but did not confirm the definite date where the Council's interest ends but was expected to be around the end of December 2015. As at 14th Jan 2016 we are still awaiting this confirmation.</p>		
Risks			
<p>Update January 2016</p> <p>Digital Region Limited costs of closure exceed the provision Risk profile 1 x 1 = 1 Mitigating Action: The latest update from PwC as liquidator raised no concerns and the level of contingency held by the Council has been reduced accordingly. Updates will continue to be reviewed and issues will be addressed accordingly</p>			

KEY ACTIONS BEING TAKEN FORWARD FROM THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

R7	2014-15 Annual Governance Statement Process (see Appendix 2)		
R7.1	Significant issues identified in 2014-15 7.11 Procure to Pay 7.12 Fraud Code of Practice assessment 7.13 Doncaster Children's Services Trust 7.14 External Funding 7.15 Doncaster Market	See Appendix 2	See Appendix 2
R7.2	Key improvement areas identified during 2013-14 that remain an issue in 2014-15 7.21 Direct Payments 7.22 Information Commissioner Office (ICO) Inspection and Recommendation 7.23 Corporate Procurement and Contract Management 7.24 Data Quality Arrangements 7.25 Income Management 7.26 Asset Register 7.27 Business Continuity	See Appendix 2	See Appendix 2

	7.28 Risk Assessment		
R7.3	<p>Key improvement areas identified for the Doncaster Childrens Services Trust during 2013-14 that remain an issue in 2014-15.</p> <p>Certain governance issues relating to the Doncaster Children’s Services Trust are indicated with an asterisk (*) and the Doncaster Children’s Services Trust has been notified</p> <p>7.31 *Respite Care Overpayments</p> <p>7.32 *Improving Children and Young People’s Services</p> <p>7.33 *Professional Practice</p> <p>7.34 * Children’s Service – Foster Care Service</p>	See Appendix 2	See Appendix 2
	<p>Update January 2016</p> <p>An update is presented at Appendix2.</p>	See Appendix 2	See Appendix 2

R7 2014-15 Annual Governance Statement - Progress Update
SECTION 1: Significant Governance Issues Identified in 2014/15

Appendix 2

7.11 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>Procure to Pay: Improve the performance of ordering and payment and fully embed the online processes across the Council. Revisited teams to ensure they are adopting the correct process, as well as communicating with suppliers to ask them to supply order numbers. The Council will also be monitoring and reporting on the payment of invoices, as has set a target of 95% (Invoices paid within 30 days), as part of the Corporate Plan targets.</p>	December 2015	Director of Finance & Corporate Services
<p>Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update</p>		
<p>The current performance on the payment of invoices at the end of October 2015 was 92% and the target of 95% is still expected to be achieved by the end of December 2015 and on line processes embedded across the council. The majority of invoices are now being received centrally. Teams have been revisited to ensure compliance with the P2P process and business processes are being reviewed where non-compliance occurs. Suppliers who are submitting invoices without an order number are being contacted by telephone and by written communication on a fortnightly basis. In order to achieve performance targets all receptors are being contacted on a weekly basis by telephone where there has been an invoice mis-match, this is in addition to receive an automatically generated E-mail from the system. The use of confirmation orders is also being monitored monthly and reported to Financial Systems Design Authority, Financial Systems Board and the Corporate Procurement Team.</p>		
7.12 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>Fraud Code of Practice Assessment: Deliver the improvement actions identified as part of our assessment against the new Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption. A full assessment against the Code of Practice for Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption will be undertaken and, where appropriate, an action plan will be created and action taken to address any improvements required. Assessment is due to be complete by September 2015. Implementation of actions to be agreed as identified and will be reported to Audit Committee as appropriate.</p>	September 2015	Director of Finance & Corporate Services
<p>Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update</p>		
<p>This work has been completed. A range of actions have been implemented and are ongoing in relation to the Council's anti-fraud and corruption arrangements, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full refresh of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy was carried out by officers and subsequently agreed by the Audit 		

Committee on 31 July 2015. The refresh ensured the Policy and Strategy reflected the requirements of the CIPFA Code

- The Council's Whistleblowing Policy has been updated and re-launched
- A survey has been completed with middle managers to establish awareness of fraud risks and to identify risk areas
- Fraud risk registers are being developed initially using the survey responses
- A number of workshops are being held with managers to further raise awareness, identify fraud risks, building on the survey results, and ensure appropriate mitigating actions are put in place to manage the risks.

These will ensure full compliance with the CIPFA Code and consistency with good practice.

7.13 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>Doncaster Children's Trust</p> <p>Continue to develop arrangements with Doncaster Children's Trust to ensure that all responsibilities are properly discharged and to ensure that joint working ensures the best possible impact on children in Doncaster. The Council have an agreed performance framework and monitoring arrangement with Doncaster Children's Services Trust which ensures that key statutory and contractual obligations are being effectively and safely met. Officers meet regularly to ensure shared service development in the context of the Children & Young People Strategy and the Doncaster Safeguarding Children Board Working Together requirements. For example in relation to developing mutual early help services as part of shared pathway and jointly assessing the delivery of service outcomes in readiness for future Ofsted inspection.</p>	<p>October 2015</p>	<p>Director of Learning & Opportunities: Children & Young People</p>
<p>Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update</p>		
<p>The formal arrangements to monitor and review the effectiveness and impact of services to children delivered by the Trust were jointly agreed by the Local Authority and the Trust and have been shared with the department for Education. These arrangements commenced in April 2015 but have been emboldened, such that by the summer of 2015 a system of performance monitoring meetings has been established which consist of monthly performance and financial meetings overseen by a high level quarterly monitoring group. In addition there is a regular strategic improvement group which meets at Assistant Director level between the two organisations. There are also other challenge fora, the Children's scrutiny panel, Corporate Parenting Panel and the Doncaster Children's Safeguarding Panel.</p> <p>The Ofsted inspection report of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers published on 27th November 2015, commented favourably noting that: 'A range of formal reporting mechanisms between the Trust and the Council are evident, with monthly and quarterly performance meetings that monitor progress against the contractual requirements. Meeting minutes show appropriate attendance at senior level Formal meetings for the Council to monitor and challenge performance by the Trust exceed the requirements set out in the contract between the organisations... Meeting minutes show evidence of scrutiny of performance and appropriate challenge'.</p>		

7.14 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>External Funding An issue has arisen relating to European funding of the White Rose Way development scheme. Following an audit a claim has been made to potentially claw back funding over procurement procedures. Doncaster Council has completed a report which outlines the justification for the European Commission Audit (ECA) to rescind its correction order. The report is currently with Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) who will submit it to the European Commission Audit. Procurement procedures are to be reviewed dependant on the outcome of the European Commission Audit. We should hear the response to the report in December 2015.</p>	December 2015	Director of Regeneration & Environment
<p>Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update</p>		
<p>The activity is on track for delivery within the agreed timescales although we have no control over the European Commission Audit reaching a conclusion. Indications are that all issues have been satisfied with the exception of one issue which further supplementary information has been provided. There is still a risk of claw-back until we get the report back from the European Commission Audit. Whilst we should have heard from the European Commission Audit by the end of December 2015 we are still awaiting news on this topic.</p>		
7.15 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>Doncaster Market Deliver the improvements identified to upgrade the facilities in Doncaster Market and enhance the service offer. Numerous actions have been identified which include the implementation of repairs and maintenance programme; health and safety improvements; the introduction of a cashless system; a full review of all policies and procedures; improved communications; accessibility to the market; and footfall solution.</p>	April 2016	Director of Regeneration & Environment
<p>Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Issue</p>		
<p>The major activities completed are a comprehensive repairs and maintenance programme has been developed; health and safety improvements have now been implemented; the introduction of a cashless system has commenced and take-up continues to grow; a full review of all policies and procedures has been completed; improved communications are in place; accessibility to the market continues to be improved and a new footfall measuring solution is being procured.</p>		

SECTION 2: Improvement Areas identified during 2013-14 that remain an issue in 2014-15

7.21 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>Direct Payments An improvement area was identified in the recovery of direct payments and personalised budgets. Progress has been made on the actions agreed in the personal budgets and direct payments audit and 50% of the actions have been implemented. Work is on-going on the remaining actions and the Director of Adults, Health & Wellbeing has agreed a completion date of November 2015.</p>	November 2015	Director of Adults, Health & Wellbeing
<p>Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update</p>		
<p>There is still an outstanding risk of inappropriate amounts being paid to service users, inappropriate spend and inadequate recovery processes resulting in a loss of money to the Authority. This is because there are a number of actions and processes that still need to be put into place or be embedded. Substantial work and resources have been put into managing this area from staff within Adults, Health and Wellbeing and Finance and Corporate Services. The Service now has approval to appoint a further 4 full time equivalent (FTE's) posts to help with the work in this area. This issue is a key element of the transformation of adult social care. A full report will be presented to the Adults Health and Wellbeing Improvement Board on 25th January 2016.</p>		

7.22 Improvement Action	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>Information Commissioners Office (ICO) Inspection & Recommendation The information Commissioners Office (ICO) carried out a consensual audit in December 2012 with the outcome of 'limited assurance' against the Council's arrangements for Data Protection compliance. The Council now has a 'reasonable assurance' rating and all of the 34 ICO recommendations are either complete or on-going. The level of data protection breaches has reduced for the Council but breaches are still being reported within Doncaster Children's Trust. Work is on-going to embed data protection awareness and training within the Children's Trust to ensure breaches are reduced. This activity is on-going and the Director of Finance & Corporate Services will monitor quarterly</p>	On-going Monitoring	Director of Finance & Corporate Services
<p>Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update</p>		
<p>Unfortunately, in quarter 3 there were 10 data protection incidents, 7 by the Council and 3 by Doncaster Children's Services Trust these incidents have increased since quarter 2. These were mostly due to human error and as always, mitigating actions are being taken such as approaching specific services, raising and discussing at the SIRO Board, completing investigations, implementing lessons learned and taking disciplinary action where relevant as well as all staff accessing data undertaking data protection training as mandatory. The major activities completed are continued training; monitoring training completed; initiating the development of scenario based training, upgrading the breach scoring criteria increasing the score if someone has purposefully accessed data in a system when they should not leading to disciplinary action (the</p>		

score was felt to be too low). The process for reporting breaches has also been updated. We are continuing to work with services who breach so they can learn from what went wrong and put measures in place to deter. All activity is on track.

The new Data Protection Regulations were announced in December, this means that the Regulations are standard across the EEA, the Council now has 2 years to implement these. The Data Protection Officer will now be putting together a plan to roll this out to ensure compliance with the deadline date.

The Data Protection Officer is revising the Data Protection Breach Process which will now be renamed to the Data Protection Incident Process which will reflect that all reports of a 'breach' will now be an incident. If the incident has to be referred to the Information Commissioner's Office then the incident may become a breach but this will be determined by the Information Commissioner's Office.

7.23 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>Corporate Procurement and Contract Management An improvement area was identified in the procurement and contract management arrangements around the compliance with Contract Procedure Rules. Phase 2 of the Procurement Transformation Plan has been completed. Dates for commissioning and procurement training have been published and proposed changes to Contract Procedure Rules are being presented to Full Council in July 2015. The service plan for 2015-16 will extend and develop the commissioning procurement and contract management activity and process. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services will have implemented these actions by March 2016.</p>	<p>March 2016</p>	<p>Director of Finance & Corporate Services</p>
<p>Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update</p>		
<p>A review of procurement and commissioning was completed in November 2015 and drew positive conclusions about corporate procurement arrangements. The review will inform the future shape of the Council's procurement service and its functions. Changes to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules are being presented to full Council in January 2016. The proposed changes will enable the Council to achieve better value for money for the citizens of Doncaster, through simplifying the procurement process and increasing competition within the supply chain. The level of Council spend to organisations which are locally based in Doncaster, has increased from 49% (end March 2014) to 60.56% (end September 2015). A training programme has been introduced to provide support and guidance to private and voluntary sector organisations on how to do business with the public sector.</p>		

7.24 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>Data Quality Arrangements Internal Audit and the Corporate Performance Team highlighted an opportunity to improve the reliability of information to support performance management .The Data Quality Strategy 2013-15 implementation plans has slipped from its original timescale but work is clear and planned to fulfil the commitments within the Strategy. Officers responsible for submitting a statutory return will complete a data quality self-assessment to produce a</p>	<p>October 2015</p>	<p>Director of Finance & Corporate Services</p>

comprehensive picture of data quality across the organisation. This will inform the review of the Data Quality Strategy. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services has agreed a completion date of October 2015		
--	--	--

Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update		
---	--	--

The major activity regarding the data quality self-assessments has been completed. This is the first time an exercise on our statutory returns has been undertaken and the results from the self-assessment illustrate the majority of the return owner’s perception of low risks with regard to data quality for their returns. The results of this exercise will inform the new Data Quality Strategy that will be needed early in 2016.		
--	--	--

The activity that is not on track is the development of the Data Quality strategy which needs to gather pace and will do as the Strategy & Performance unit begins to form and assign work. A provisional project plan for the Data Quality Strategy has being developed but there is more work to do in 2016 to produce and implement the strategy. .		
--	--	--

7.25 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
-------------------------------	--------------------	----------------------------

Income Management Internal Audit identified an improvement opportunity regarding compliance with the Council’s procedures and associated best practice for monitoring and collecting debt. An Income Management project plan has been produced that aims to maximise all income opportunities, ensure all income due is identified and collected in a cost efficient and timely manner. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services has agreed this will be established by 2016	Established 2016	Director of Finance & Corporate Services
--	------------------	--

Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update		
---	--	--

Work has been delayed whilst a new Income Management officer has been recruited. The new post-holder started on Monday 30 November and will be working to a plan to address the major areas identified in the audit report and generate the £100k savings target. The objectives of the project will be to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fully maximise income opportunities; 2. Ensure all income due is identified and collected by the most cost efficient method in a timely manner; 3. Ensure all sums due are correctly accounted for in the financial systems; 4. Update all relevant procedures and documentation 5. Standardise reconciliation procedures; An action plan has been finalised and it concentrates on 4 areas: What to charge; how to charge; collection and recovery; and accounts and reconciliation.		
--	--	--

7.26 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
-------------------------------	--------------------	----------------------------

Asset Register The Council is reviewing its arrangements for maintaining its asset register to enhance arrangements and better facilitate accounting for assets. The Fixed Asset Register implementation is part of Phase 2 of the Enterprise Resource Planning programme. Early work has commenced on collating the information and drawing up a project	October 2015	Director of Finance & Corporate Services
---	--------------	--

plan for infrastructure assets. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services will provide an update on the Phase 2 project plan in October 2015		
---	--	--

Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update		
---	--	--

Although Phase 2 of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) programme has been deferred (with new deadlines to be agreed), the current fixed asset register has been enhanced and meets external audit requirements, therefore this issue is resolved.		
---	--	--

The fixed asset register (held on an excel spreadsheet) is now able to produce the statement of account information by using pivot tables directly from the register. External audit have been pleased with the improvements, it has led to a more efficient capital audit, through improved audit trails and working papers. Meaning that the process of capital accounting and the associated audit have become more efficient, less time consuming and accuracy has been improved through uniform reconciliations and control checks. This will continue to be included in the phase 2 ERP project to review and improve the current arrangements.		
---	--	--

7.27 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
------------------------	-------------	---------------------

<p>Business Continuity Plan</p> <p>Business Continuity Plan Review meetings have been held with 42 Heads of Service to date. 120 Doncaster Council priority activities have been identified and individual business continuity plans are being progressed for those activities which have been identified as priority. The full review of Business Continuity Plan has been completed and embedded across the authority. The Business Continuity Plan action plan is being progressed and the strategic steering group and Resilience and Emergency Planning continue to review Business Continuity Management with heads of services to identify priority activities the actions should be completed by December 2015. This is an ongoing priority for the Director of Regeneration & Environment.</p>	Ongoing	Director of Regeneration & Environment
--	---------	--

Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update		
---	--	--

The Business Continuity Policy, Strategy and Action plan has supported and enabled a full and effective review of Directorate Business Continuity Plans. 196 priority activity business continuity plans have been developed and approved by the Corporate Business Continuity Steering Group. These plans will support the continued delivery of priority activities during disruptive challenges to Doncaster Council.		
--	--	--

Where re-allocation of responsibilities and plans are required as a result of restructures this proving to be simple and effective.		
---	--	--

A Business Continuity Plan detailing response and recovery arrangements for the loss of the Civic Building is currently being progressed.		
---	--	--

7.28 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>Risk Assessment A recent incident highlighted a weakness relating to risk assessments on vacant buildings/land and some health and safety practices across the service. This is being addressed by managers attending Health & Safety training and implementing appropriate associated actions to identify and mitigate risk. Measures have now also been put in place to ensure the land transfers between council and contractors is clear and explicit and timely and procedures are in place to prevent a re-occurrence. This is an ongoing priority for the Director of Regeneration & Environment.</p>	ongoing	Director of Regeneration & Environment
Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update		
<p>All managers within the service have now attended Health & Safety training and have implemented appropriate associated actions to identify and mitigate risk. Measures have now been put in place to ensure the land transfers between the council and contractors are clear and explicit and timely and procedures are in place to prevent a re-occurrence. This is an ongoing priority for the Director of Regeneration & Environment. This activity is on track.</p>		

CERTAIN GOVERNANCE ISSUES RELATING TO DONCASTER CHILDREN’S SERVICES TRUST ARE INDICATED WITH AN ASTERISK (*) AND THE DONCASTER CHILDREN’S SERVICES TRUST HAS BEEN NOTIFIED. THESE ARE 7.31; 7.32; 7.33; AND 7.34 SET OUT BELOW

7.31 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>*Respite Care Overpayments A weakness was identified in the processing of respite care payments to respite carers. A full review is taking place to identify and correct these weaknesses. Additional capacity has been identified to oversee a review of commissioning, invoicing and procurement of services. The Director of Learning & Opportunities: Children & Young people has agreed a completion date of November 2015.</p>	November 2015	Director of Learning & Opportunities: Children & Young people
Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update		
<p>All foster care payments are managed by the placements team. This ensures separation of function between the fostering support and payments function. A random sample of payments are audited by the finance team prior to approval. This activity is completed</p> <p>Finance and Liquid Logic information systems are to be reviewed to ensure differentiation between respite and foster care payments to ensure improved management oversight of respite care payments. This activity has been delayed as a result of the two recent inspections of the fostering service but will be placed on the forward plan as matter of urgency</p> <p>Foster carer eligibility for respite care is currently under review. A letter of clarification and best practice has been sent to all foster carers and a task and finish</p>		

group are reviewing eligibility for respite care. This will be subject to consultation with our foster carers in the New Year. This is an additional piece of work to further strengthen our response - not required in the initial review

7.32 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>*Improving Children & Young Peoples Services An improvement action was identified to ensure robust performance reporting against outstanding arrangements and the implementation of actions as a result of recommendations emerging from internal and external audit/inspection recommendations. The Improvement Board continues to oversee the associated action plan. Specific areas of work are underway to address areas of concern and are monitored through the Doncaster Children's Services Trust Board. This is an on-going priority for the Director of Learning & Opportunities: Children & Young people.</p>	Ongoing	Director of Learning & Opportunities: Children & Young people

Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update

The major activity completed is the production of the Trust's Continuous Improvement Plan, summarised as the Delivery Plan for staff. Establishment of the Trust's Continuous Improvement Board, which owns the plan and ensures progress against each objective. Of the current 68 tasks and actions within the plan, the majority (87%) are on track or already completed, and progress is being made against each of the priority areas. Currently there are nine tasks that are showing some slight delay, in some cases due to the challenge of timely working with partner organisations, or delays in appointing resource to complete them. For each of the nine tasks, action is being taken to bring them back on track, and all will be delivered albeit past the original challenging deadlines. The Plan sets a clear focus on key priorities for the Trust, aligned to business plan. The next iteration of service plans will map to Continuous Plan.

Further work is underway to include recommendations and associated actions from recent Inspections of services delivered by the Trust. There are currently five action plans covering each service area, with a monitoring framework. These will be refined so that they are part of the continuous improvement plan.

A recent Ofsted inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers resulted in the following judgment:

Judgement Area	Latest Judgement
Overall Effectiveness	Inadequate
Leadership, Management and Governance	Requires Improvement
Children who need help and protection	Inadequate
Children Looked After	Requires Improvement
Adoption Services	Good
Care Leavers	Requires Improvement

7.33 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>*Professional Practice We continue to experience concerns around the consistency in quality of professional practice, highlighted in services own audits and confirmed by the 2012 Ofsted Inspection, of local authority arrangements for the protection of children. Improvement activity is underway in Doncaster Council and Doncaster Children Services Trust to improve practice and consistency through regular case file auditing, the use of supervision and continuous professional development. This is an ongoing priority for the Director of Learning & Opportunities: Children & Young people.</p>	Ongoing	Director of Learning & Opportunities: Children & Young people
Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update		
<p>The major activity completed is that staff with auditing responsibilities have received training from external audit specialists in order to introduce a higher level of rigour and consistency to the process, and therefore set a new and more reliable baseline for case file quality. The recent Ofsted inspection identified that Trust staff's thresholds for audit matched those applied by Inspectors. Both the training and recent Inspection have provided external calibration and assurance of the Trust's audit standards. The Trust has deployed a new and more granular audit tool, which is now embedded into Liquid Logic, allowing for greater analysis of case file quality and identification of themes for improvement. Practice standards manuals and associated materials have been cascaded with staff, which should also improve file quality over time.</p> <p>As a result of the recent Ofsted Inspection, the Trust is about to embark on appointing a Practice Improvement Partner with the specific aim of developing and equipping frontline staff, and line managers, to achieve a consistent standard of good practice.</p>		

7.34 Improvement Issue	Action Date	Responsible Manager
<p>*Children's Services – Foster Care Service During 2009/10 overpayments in excess of £225k were identified as being made to foster carers. In February and March 2013 management identified a number of new overpayments amounting to £50k. No substantial overpayments have been made to foster carers following the overpayments reported. Any minor overpayments are immediately resolved through amendment to the following weeks payments. Potential issue due to differing systems for foster care and Special Guardianship Orders payments will be resolved through the integration of all payments into the ContrOCC system and management through the placements service. The Director of Learning & Opportunities: Children & Young People has agreed a deadline of July 2015.</p>	July 2015	Director of Learning & Opportunities: Children & Young people
Improvement Action Progress update – Latest Update		
<p>The integration of all payments through the ContrOCC systems is scheduled for January 2016. In the meantime, no significant overpayments have been identified.</p> <p>The Council continues to take appropriate action to recover the overpayments made.</p>		