

Overview of Service-Based Governance Statements 2014/15

Background

All Heads of Service were asked to complete the annual review and update of their Service Based Governance Statements for 2014/15. This process involves the following elements:

- Review of the operation of the Council's system of internal control within their service area and identification of supporting evidence
- Assurance that the control environment operated effectively during 2014/15 in respect of the service areas for which they have responsibility
- Review of actions taken during the year to address any weaknesses and identification of any further areas for improvement in 2015/16.

When reviewing arrangements last year, Heads identified 11 actions to improve governance arrangements during 2014/15.

Summary of progress against actions for delivery in 2014/15

Action identified for 2014/15	Progress	Service Area
Category: Strategic direction and statutory obligations		
Implement new structure within Housing to ensure the service is fit for purpose and takes into account recent legislative and regulatory change	New structure for front line service team is now complete	Housing Management & Housing Property Services
Ensure the recently formed Housing Management Board is adequately trained.	Training has been carried out and the Housing Management Board is now fully operational.	Housing Management & Housing Property Services
Category: Stakeholder communication and engagement		
Strategic communications campaigns to be developed to ensure stakeholders, including staff, are briefed on progress against key priorities	The strategic communications campaigns have been agreed by Strategic Management Board	Business Strategy, Community & Customer Services
Category: Performance Framework		
Data quality checklists to be produced for new balanced scorecard measures for Business Strategy, Community and Customer Services service unit	This action is being carried forward to 2015/16 with a pledge for a full review of the service's checklists.	Business Strategy, Community & Customer Services
Data quality checklists required for existing and new balanced scorecard measures for Human Resources and Organisational Development service unit.	New data quality checklists for new measures are now complete and the review of existing checklists is in line with review deadlines	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development
Review of the Housing performance management system	New Housing performance management system has been purchased and is being used by Housing	Housing Management & Housing Property Services

Regeneration Manager (when appointed) to review all active project plans to ensure there are up to date project plans and adequately identified project risks	The service's operational risk register has been reviewed to ensure it identifies all active project plan risks	Planning, Regeneration & Transport
Category: Financial Management		
Review Building Maintenance Operation financial reporting systems to identify how improvements identified by Internal Audit can be implemented	The improvements identified by Internal Audit regarding the operations financial reporting system are being implemented.	Housing Property Services
Financial training required for new members of Housing team	Financial training for the Housing Team has been provided.	Housing Management & Housing Property Services
Category: Business Continuity		
Business continuity plan for Customer Service Centre to be reviewed	The business continuity plan has been reviewed and the service took part in a business continuity desk top exercise this year to validate and test the plan	Business Strategy, Community and Customer Services
Category: Partnerships		
Regeneration Manager to ensure Partnership arrangements comply with the Council's partnership arrangements	This action is on hold until the way forward regarding partnership guidelines has been reviewed. This action will therefore be carried over to 2015/16	Planning, Regeneration and Transport

Actions for completion in 2015/16

As identified above, two follow on actions from 2014/15 are carried forward for completion. Three new actions to enhance service governance arrangements were identified by Heads of Service for delivery in 2015/16.

Action identified for 2015/16	Service Area
Strategic direction and statutory obligations	
Completion of recruitment process within the Regeneration Team to provide adequate resources	Planning, Regeneration and Transport
Rejoin HouseMark in order to benchmark services against a wider range of social housing providers.	Housing Property Services
Performance framework	
Action carried over from 2014/15 Data quality checklists to be produced for new balanced scorecard measures for Business Strategy, Community and Customer Services service unit	Business Strategy, Community & Customer Services

Staff performance and conduct	
Managers in the Property Services service unit to ensure that the new appraisal process is completed for all staff to the appropriate timescales	Head of Property Services
Partnerships	
Action carried over from 2014/15 Regeneration Manager to ensure the service's partnership arrangements comply with the Council's partnership arrangements	Head of Planning, Regeneration and Transport