

Strategy and Improvement

Improvement and Recovery Board





Progress Report
23-Nov-23

Report Owner: Sarah Hayward, ED Strategy and Improvement
Report Author: Strategy and Improvement Team



Headline Commentary

- Member behaviours addressed with re-drafted protocol – report included on agenda from Sarah Wilson.
- Positive response to adverts for initial Director roles for new senior management structure. Closing date 23 November. Planned interviews and potential offers before the end of the calendar year.
- All councils now submit a detailed record of all adult social care clients to DHSC (Client Level Data). Our quality report from DHSC was rated as Excellent and ranked in the top tier of council responses for data quality.
- DfE review undertaken and SEND written statement of action produced. Sue Butcher will provide a verbal update as agreed at the last meeting.
- Collation of evidence to inform Commissioners second annual report underway. Discussion required at IRB to agree requirements to evidence 'closing the gap'.
- Work to develop operating model initiated further to discussion leading up to and at last IRB. Session with Leader and Deputy Leader being arranged.
- Data Centre Move executed successfully over weekend of 11 and 12 November.



Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion of Current Phase	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
1	Functional Capability Assessment	Sarah Hayward	Dean Tyler		01-Dec-22		=	14/10 - Service plans have been completed, which will address gaps in capability. These are continuing to be iterated to ensure coherence across services and alignment with the corporate plan. SLT will act as the governance body for the service planning. Next steps are to develop reporting arrangements for monitoring progress in delivery, and ensure lessons for next year are captured.
2	Avoid Poor Governance or Financial Mismanagement	Adele Taylor	Ruth Hodson/Thomas Mulloy	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-24		=	14/11 - Update provided to RTB. Q2 report rescheduled to December Finance Board. 11/10 - Action plan agreed, monitoring to be included in the finance board going forwards. 10/08 - Action plan overview discussed with Commissioner and Lead Member. Paper will go to cabinet in September.
3a	Financial Sustainability Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Ruth Hodson/Thomas Mulloy	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-24		▼	14/11 - Update provided to RTB. Q2 report rescheduled to December Finance Board. 11/10 - MTFS development underway ahead of draft budget to be considered at December cabinet. Still a gap identified hence reducing the RAG status until next review meetings are undertaken in the coming 2 months before the cabinet paper. All processes and steps in place.
3b	Democratic Governance Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Leader	31-Mar-24		=	16/11 - - New streamlined Member/officer protocol in development. - Various improvements to cabinet office processes and support including e.g. allocation of lead support officers to cabinet members, stronger demand-led agenda items for LM&Ds; the Leader has been consulted and is content with LM&Ds as it currently stands however we anticipate this continuing to evolve. - On the recruitment of the permanent monitoring officer and succession planning, an advert has been posted, interviews expected before end of November. - Increased community engagement in the work of scrutiny is a stated ambition of the new scrutiny chair and is a live consideration in the scoping of all T&F groups. However, this priority will be picked up in earnest in the second, third and fourth years of this administration, allowing time for the new scrutiny chair, members and committee to learn and develop their approach in the first year.

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3c	Scrutiny Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee	31-Mar-24		=	<p>17/10 - Draft work programme now agreed, ASC T&F is preparing its final report for November, reports published for 24 October meeting with a clear focus on drivers of the council's improvement. A workshop-style pre-meeting has taken place for the first time, representing progress in members' development as a committee although not all members attended.</p> <p>11/09 – Permanent scrutiny officer position has been filled with immediate effect and they led the first meeting of the Adult Social Care Task & Finish Group on 06/09; a scope was agreed by the group. Reports for the 26/09 Scrutiny Committee meeting were submitted on time last week, and Commissioner Curran praised the revised draft work programme, having seen an advance copy.</p>
3d	Internal Audit Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Satbachan Seehra	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-24		=	<p>10/10 - High rated actions are being given priority and are reviewed monthly by DLT's and Executive Directors. Responses from management on audit actions/audit reports are closely monitored and delays are escalated to the Executive Director - Finance and Commercial.</p> <p>08/09 - All outstanding audit actions and reports were discussed with the representative Associate Directors and Heads of Department at the Risk and Audit Board that was held on 5th September 2023. This will be a recurring theme in future meetings. The next meeting will be held on the 6th December 2023.</p>

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3e	Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Clare Priest	Lead Member for Financial Oversight, Council Assets, Procurement and Revenues & Benefits	31-Mar-24		=	<p>01/11 Attended SME event at Arbour park and further opportunity to engage with SME's is taking place on 15 November which has been organised by Natwest. Confirmed as one of two local authorities piloting contract management process mapping with local partnerships, this is taking place on 28 November. Outcomes from the session will inform the work of developing improved contract management procedures. Commercial strategy has been drafted. Reported to Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee on 24 October on improvements in service.</p> <p>04/10 - Improvement plan to implement recommendations from process mapping exercise is live, which includes improvements to processes and procedures. Work to develop a contract management framework and refresh of the commercial strategy has commenced. Successfully recruited a procurement category manager, a further round of recruitment will be undertaken to recruit to the 2 remaining posts. Social value pilot underway and work with SME's has commenced, working with the economic development team on an event in October. Reporting to October Corporate Improvement Scrutiny committee.</p>
3f	Information Technology Action Plan	Sarah Hayward	Simon SharkeyWoods	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	31-Mar-24		▲	<p>14/11 - Data Centre Move executed successfully and as of Monday morning only two issues were remaining. They were connectivity to the public services network (PSN) and a failure of our security access system. Both were resolved by the end of the working day on Monday 13th November.</p> <p>06/11 - November ICT&D Update Cabinet report has been signed off by all stakeholders, including the Commissioners and will be discussed at the meeting on the 20th November. ICT&D will be undertaking an annual review of the ICT&D Strategy in Q1 2024 and the updated version taken to Cabinet so that the new administration of the Council can take full ownership of the direction of travel. To support the annual review and with agreement of the commissioners, an LGA peer review will be undertaken around ICT&D and this will be a useful input for the updated strategy. The data centre move project has identified a number of risks since the last update but through good engagement across the Council the team has managed to maintain the envisaged timeline and the work will take place across the weekend of the 10th - 12th November. Progress on provisioning better, more reliable end-user devices has been good and the team is still on track to begin releasing devices to staff to the new standard in the New Year.</p>

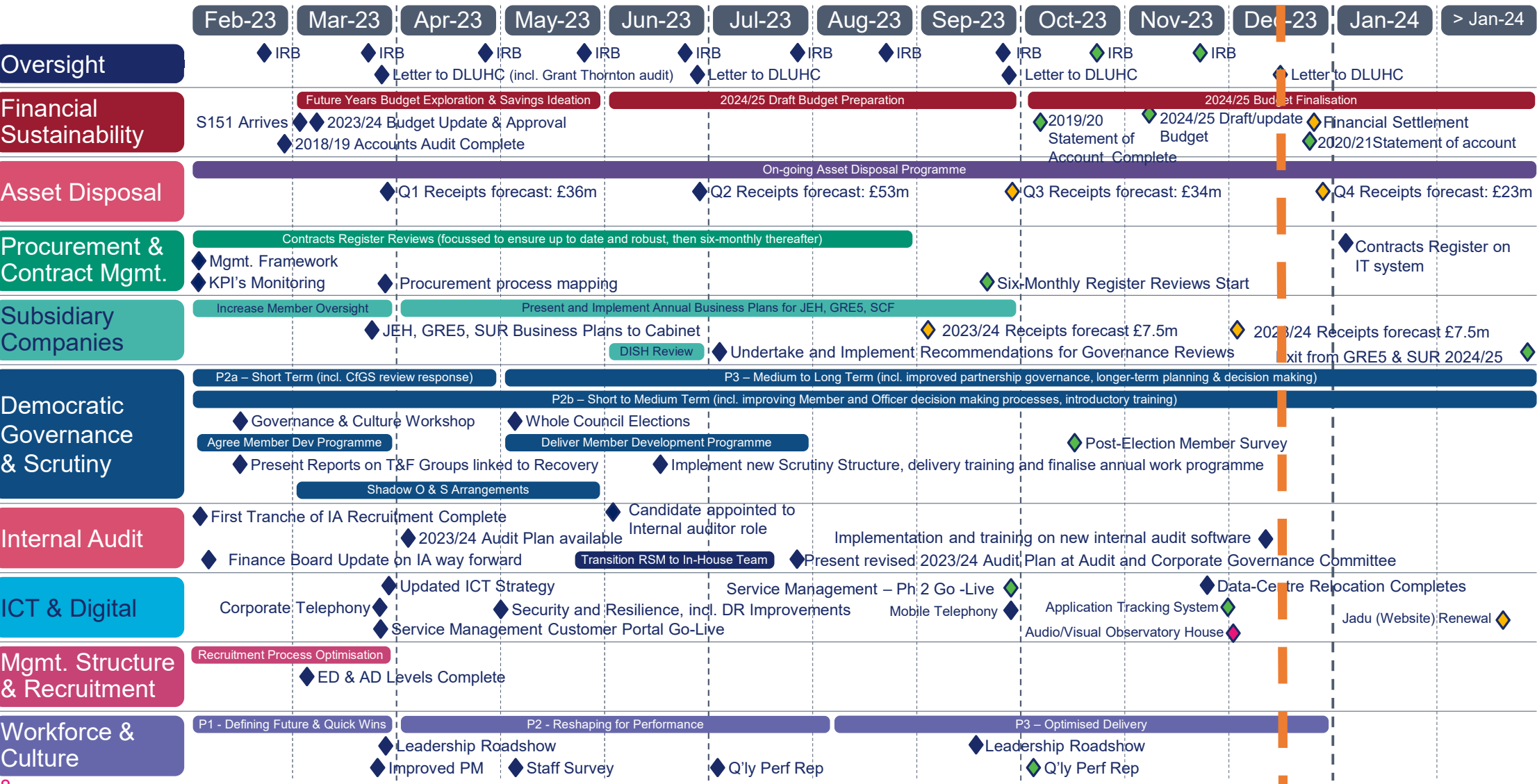
Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion of Current Phase	RAG		Commentary / Progress
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3g	Suitable Officer Structure and Scheme of Delegation	Stephen Brown	Sarah Wilson (MO)	Leader	01-Oct-22		=	Please see direction 8.
4	Improvement Plan Monthly Reporting	Sarah Hayward	Andrew Merritt Morling/ Deemple Brain	Leader	31-Mar-24		=	<p>16/11 Discussing with the Directors how the Corporate Plan can be strategically implemented across their service and link in with Service plans</p> <p>10/10 Improvement plan monthly reporting has been implemented for a year. Reporting will be refreshed upon agreement of the assurance framework.</p>
5	Culture Change	Stephen Brown	Sarah Hayward	Leader	31-Mar-24		▲	<p>16/11 CLT workshop planned for 22 Nov with LGA Facilitators. Workshops taking place throughout November/mid December with staff on cultural challenges. Hybrid working policy implemented and lessons learned to be performed</p> <p>10/10 - Next CLT workshop now been targeted for November with external facilitation being lined up. Refresh of headline plans progressing well.</p>
6	Subsidiary Company Review	Adele Taylor / Sarah Wilson	Mark Halligan	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-24		▲	<p>16/11 - Update to RTB on Slough Urban Renewal, James Elliman Homes, DISH, GRE5. SUR is a Joint Venture.</p> <p>- SUR scope is under review, and land asset sales underway - update report to Cabinet in September.</p> <p>- GRE5 - update report to Cabinet in September. Work underway to make building safe.</p> <p>- JEH and DISH. Working through Director roles due to staff leaving. Companies House changes underway.</p> <p>- Next paper planned to go to March Cabinet.</p>
7	Evidence Based Decision Making	Sarah Hayward	Dean Tyler	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	31-Mar-24		▲	<p>08/11 - Feedback from DHSC programme lead that new Adult statutory return rated as 'Excellent'.</p> <p>October - Performance Management Workspace now live. First iterations of Power BI reporting dashboards developed.</p> <p>22/09 - Business case approved for interim additional data analyst capacity in Adult Social Care and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.</p>

Directions Progress Summary

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						Curr.	Trend	
8	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment	Commissioners	Stephen Brown		31-Mar-23	C	=	<p>13/04 - Now considered BAU, however a restructure at the AD and levels immediate below is about to get underway.</p> <p>03/02 - ED for Strategy and Improvement has been appointed. This was the last remaining vacancy in CLT.</p>
SEND	DfE Issued SEND Direction	Sue Butcher	Neil Hoskinson	Cabinet Member for Education, Children's Services, Lifelong Skills and Governance	31-Mar-24 (FOR REVIEW)	A	▲	<p>13/11 - DfE Formal Review of the intervention took place in Observatory House. DfE and Commissioner provided positive feedback on progress, whilst noting there is further improvement required over the next few months.</p> <p>10/09 - Draft SEND action plan reorganises the actions in the 7 priorities in the Written Statement of Action into 5 workstreams to mitigate against silo working.</p>

Recovery Plan on a Page – Updated December 2023



Note, RAG Status against individual milestones does not represent overall service status

Finance Improvement Action plan

- Presentation is different style as per agreed at September 2023 Finance board – highlight RAG status and progress in dashboard style and exception reporting
- The action plan remains a living, breathing document and will be closely linked to outcomes of internal audits during the year
- This report considers progress against those actions where work is underway and/or deadline for completion is imminent.
- Project support resources identified to support the oversight of the improvement action plan delivery, to be in place ahead of the next reporting cycle

Reporting by exception

Completion of statement of accounts – Green to Red

- The plan for completion of statement of accounts is well underway and will be discussed with GT once further national framework is confirmed in Nov 23 instead as originally planned Oct 23
- Earliest set of unqualified accounts likely now to be 2023/24 now instead of 2022/23 due to government proposing a backstop where any accounts including 2022/23 will be issued a disclaimer opinion

Financial budget monitoring and reporting – Green to Amber

- The Quarter 2 report was due to be presented in November Finance Board and this will now be presented in December

Reporting by exception

Treasury Management - Green to Amber

- Both 22/23 outturn and Q1 23/24 reports have now been delayed to the next Audit & Corporate Governance Committee, rather than on 22nd Nov.

Deep Dive Projects – Green to Amber

- This project is currently an Amber as no completion dates have been assigned for these projects

Asset Disposals – Forward Month

The priorities for the Asset Disposal Programme over the next month include:

- Secure the approvals necessary to move forward with transactions from the HRA
- Seek clarity on the approach to appropriating assets from HRA to GF in connection with the disposal programme, so that the GF secures some financial benefit from the disposal of assets currently within the HRA.
- Develop Cabinet report to seek some portfolio wide delegations for the HRA (non-residential) stock
- Progress review of Net Book Values of pipeline sales.
- Seek to launch sites where revised Net Book Values align to anticipated capital receipts.
- Complete October auction sales and prepare sites for future auctions.
- Continued identification of further disposal opportunities.
- Finalise reports for December Cabinet on the Estate Strategy and Observatory House business case.

Internal Audit Actions Report

November 2023

Update on Internal Audit Actions

21/22 internal audits:

- Actions completed as at end of October number 238 or 73% of the total due. A concerted effort is being made by CLT to close the remaining 89 actions or 27% that are overdue.

22/23 internal audits:

- 225 actions have been raised for 2022/23. As of end of October 2023, 59 actions or 26% are overdue and 97 or 43% complete. 69 actions or 31% are not due.

23/24 internal audits:

- 4 audit reports have been finalised with 5 audit reports are in draft status. 66 actions have been raised for 2023/24. 8 actions or 12% are overdue and 27 actions or 41% are not due. 22 or 33% of actions have not been allocated.

23/24 Internal Audit Plan Update

- Four audits have been finalised, with five audits in management review.

Status	Name of Review	Classification	Total Number of Findings		
			High	Medium	Low
Draft	Follow Up	Little Progress	2	3	4
Draft	Cash Collection and Management	Minimal Assurance	2	4	1
Draft	Matrix	Minimal Assurance	2	5	1
Finalised	Adult Safeguarding	Partial Assurance	2	4	1
Draft	Schools Audit - St Bernard's	Partial Assurance	1	6	3
Finalised	Schools Audit - Wexham	Reasonable Assurance	0	1	2
Finalised	Enrolment, School Places and Attendance	Reasonable Assurance	2	4	2
Q1 Total			11	27	14
Finalised	Council Tax	Reasonable Assurance	0	7	1
Draft	Travel and Expenses	Minimal Assurance	3	2	1
Q2 Total			3	9	2

Update on Internal Audit Actions

As of 31 October 2023

Total 21/22				
Totals	Total	High	Medium	Low
Not Due	0	0	0	0
Overdue	89	3	53	33
Complete	238	52	105	81
Not Allocated	0	0	0	0
Totals	327	55	158	114

The number of overdue audit actions has decreased from 98 to 89 since prior month.

As of 3 October 2023

Total 21/22				
Totals	Total	High	Medium	Low
Not Due	0	0	0	0
Overdue	98	9	55	34
Complete	229	46	103	80
Not Allocated	0	0	0	0
Totals	327	55	158	114

The overdue actions are recommendations not being implemented by their due dates, due to factors such as (but not limited to) resourcing.

Update on Internal Audit Actions

As of 31 October 2023

Total 22/23				
Totals	Total	High	Medium	Low
Not Due	69	15	40	14
Overdue	59	18	27	14
Complete	97	21	50	26
Not Allocated	0	0	0	0
Totals	225	54	117	54

The number of overdue audit actions has decreased from 60 to 59, since prior month.

As of 3 October 2023

Total 22/23				
Totals	Total	High	Medium	Low
Not Due	75	17	41	17
Overdue	60	18	30	12
Complete	90	19	46	25
Not Allocated	0	0	0	0
Totals	225	54	117	54

The overdue actions are due to recommendations not being implemented by their due dates.

Update on Internal Audit Actions

As of 31 October 2023

Total 23/24				
Totals	Total	High	Medium	Low
Not Due	27	4	16	7
Overdue	8	1	4	3
Complete	9	3	5	1
Not Allocated	22	6	11	5
Totals	66	14	36	16

The number of overdue audit actions has increased from 7 to 8, since prior month.

The overdue actions are due to recommendations not being implemented by their due dates.

As of 3 October 2023

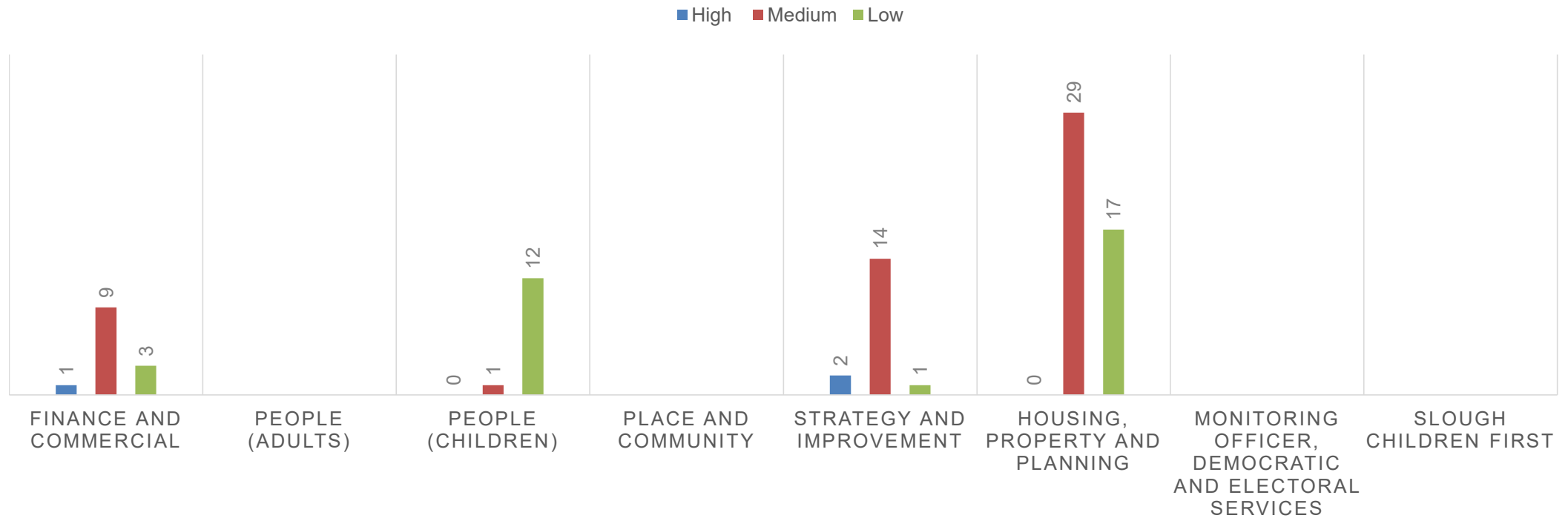
Total 23/24				
Totals	Total	High	Medium	Low
Not Due	14	4	5	5
Overdue	7	0	4	3
Complete	0	0	0	0
Not Allocated	46	11	27	8
Totals	67	15	36	16

22 actions have not been allocated, down from 46, due to two additional audit reports having been finalised since prior month.

Internal Audit Actions By Directorate

As of 31 October 2023

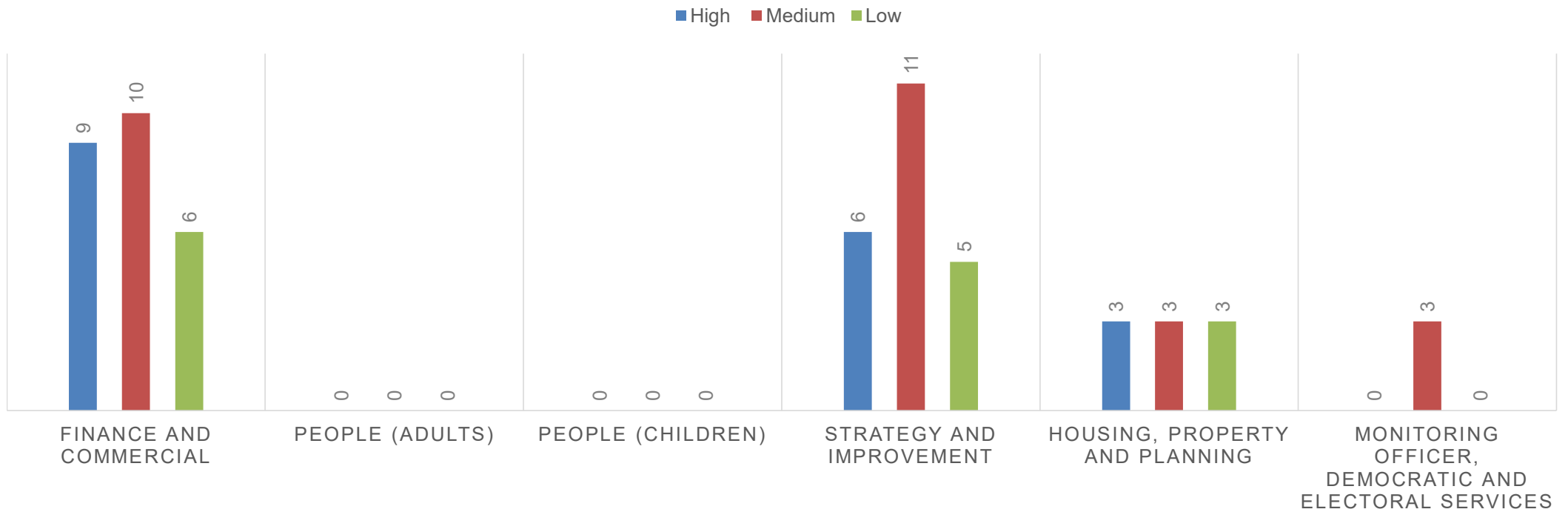
2021/22 OVERDUE AUDIT ACTIONS BY DIRECTORATE



Internal Audit Actions By Directorate

As of 31 October 2023

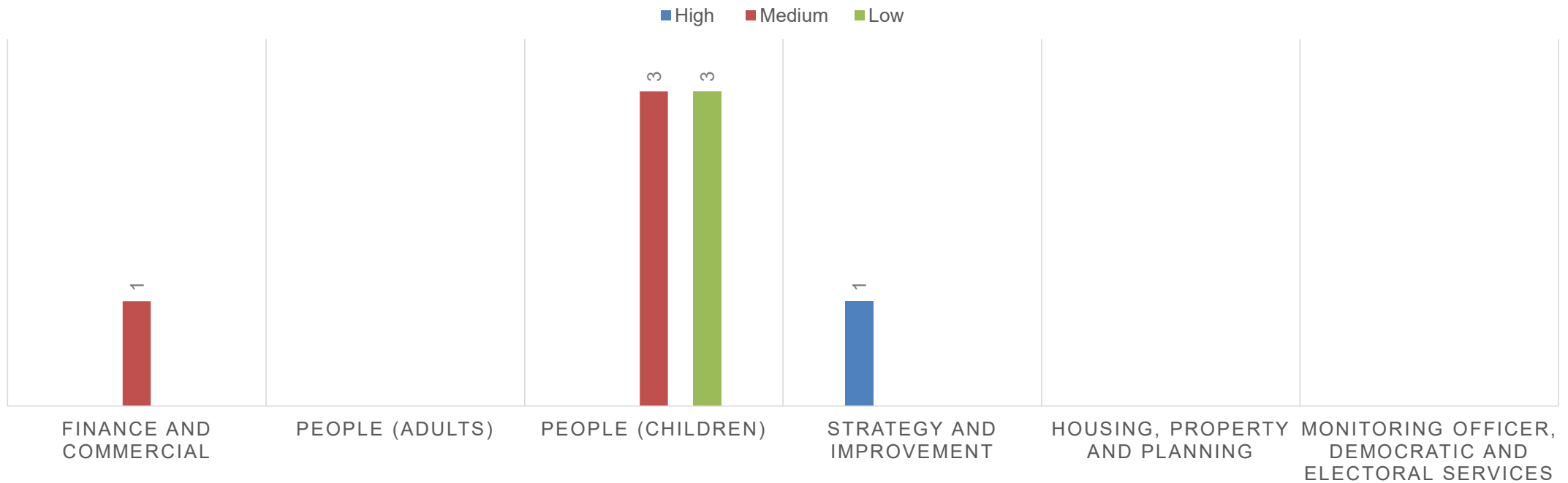
2022/23 OVERDUE AUDIT ACTIONS BY DIRECTORATE



Internal Audit Actions By Directorate

As of 31 October 2023

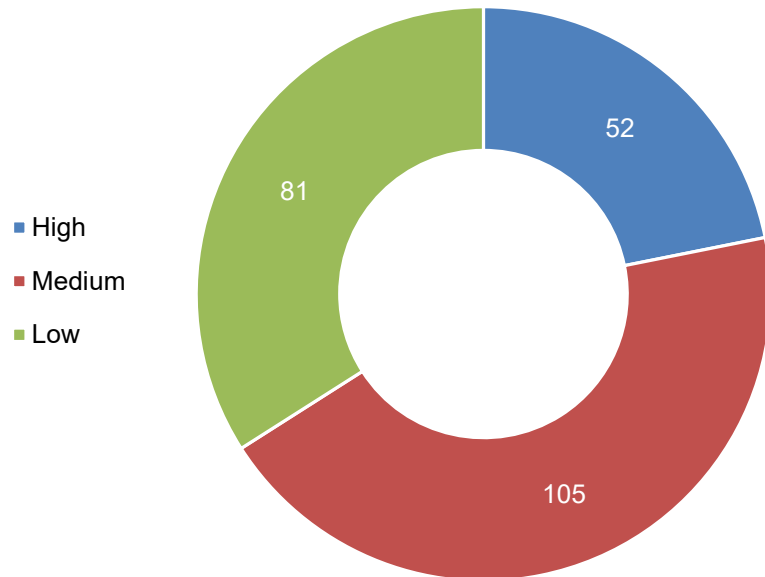
2023/24 OVERDUE AUDIT ACTIONS BY DIRECTORATE



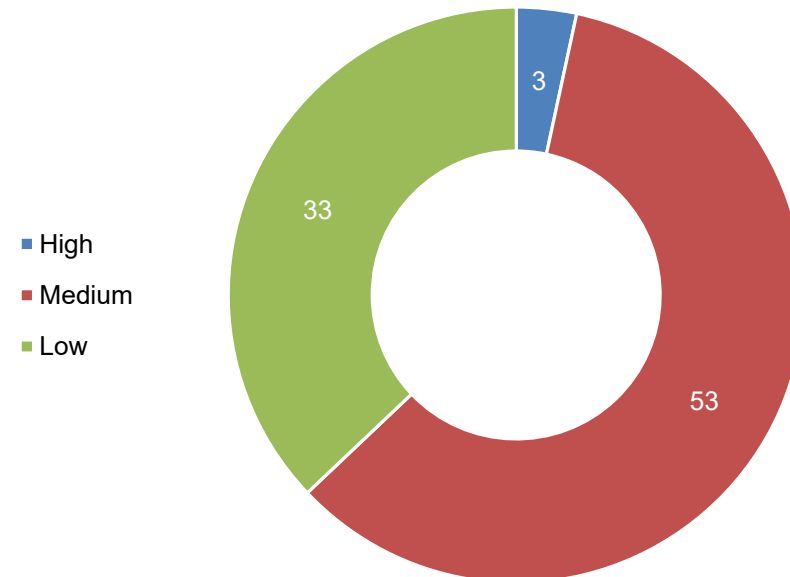
Internal Audit Actions 2021/22

As of 31 October 2023

2021/22 COMPLETED Audit Actions



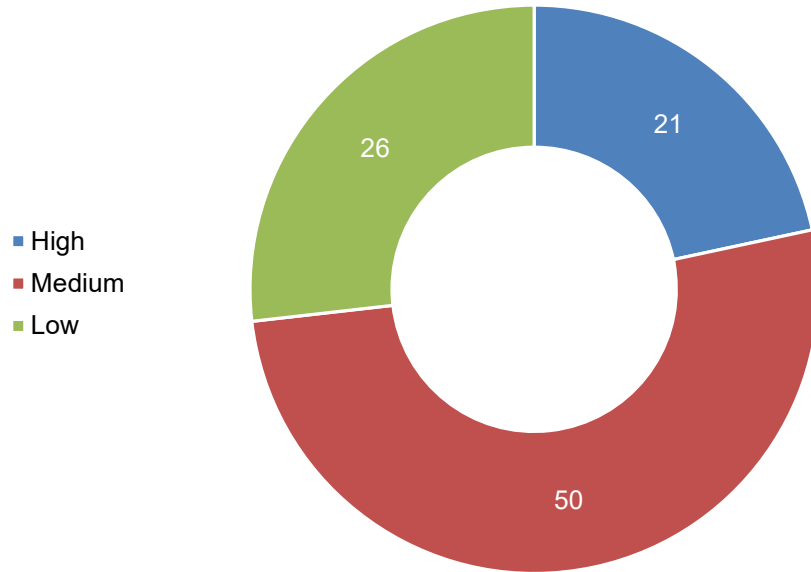
2021/22 OVERDUE Audit Actions



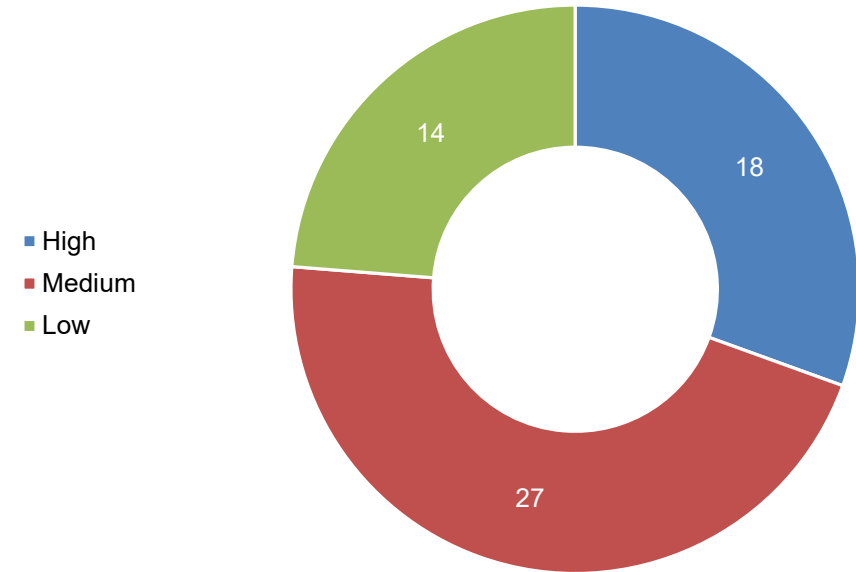
Internal Audit Actions 2022/23

As of 31 October 2023

2022/23 COMPLETED Audit Actions



2022/23 OVERDUE Audit Actions



1. Contracts register is being used as a business-as-usual tool in forward planning procurement activity, this includes consideration of longer-term procurement activity required for high value, high risk contracts. Meetings with Executive Directors and their management teams to commence in November.
2. Utilising existing IT systems for the contract register – options for the implementation on Agresso commenced in July 2023 and currently looking at either pursuing the Agresso option or using Microsoft Office tools, with support from SBC's IT team
3. The training programme on the council's contract procedure rules continues. 126 staff have been trained to date. Further date scheduled on 8 November 2023.
4. Continue to build a permanent in-house team. Further round of recruitment successfully appointed one procurement category manager, working with HR colleagues to find creative ways to attract candidates which has had a wide reach for further recruitment rounds.
5. Reported to October Corporate Improvement Scrutiny committee, to update on improvements, including implementation of the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish group on contract management
6. Confirmed as one of two councils on local partnerships contract management process mapping pilot

Further key development activities

1. Implement the contracts register on IT system – by January 2024 (options appraisal in progress)
2. Develop a framework to ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to contract management.– from January 2023.
3. Tiering and risk assessment of contracts and contract management plans for high risk contracts – by March 2024
4. Process mapping procurement – implement improvements to processes and procedures including making best use of automated tools– By March 2024
5. Establishment of Contract Management Assurance Board to drive best practice in contract management – December 2023
6. Ensure KPI's are meaningful and monitored effectively – from January 2023.
7. Programme of continuous contracts register reviews to ensure the council is getting the best value for money – from September 2023 and six monthly thereafter, this will include improvements to reporting.
8. Develop a commercial strategy to replace the procurement and contract management strategy and implement actions throughout the 2023/24 financial year.
9. Pilot a social value policy and engage with SME's- from August 2023
10. Direction deep dive on procurement and contract management to the October Corporate Improvement Scrutiny committee

The ICT & Digital Team Strategy and Plan

The ICT & Digital strategy adopted by the Council in March is our reference point for improvement work. The table below covers the three key themes and the recent against each:

Theme	Recent activities
<p>Improving the reliability of technology services and transforming the way support is provided for them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first phase of testing of the new end-user devices has started with the ICT&D team and work is still on schedule. This will mean that the new approach for device provision will commence for staff across the Council in the New Year. • With the agreement of Commissioners, an LGA peer review will be undertaken on the current state of ICT at Slough. This will be a useful input to the annual review of the ICT&D strategy that will be completed in the New Year and submitted to Cabinet. • Following a number of risk conversations with departments across Slough, the date for the data centre move has been held and works will begin at 4pm on Friday 10th November and run throughout the weekend. There are some significant risks, but additional mitigations have been worked up to lower the impact on live services.
<p>Resetting the council's approach to the way residents access services and increasing the volume of interactions through lower cost digital channels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The upgrade of our core digital platform, Jadu, has been completed and the impact to digital interactions has been minimal. Changes to the site that enhance our ability to offer translation for residents who may not have English as a first language have now commenced. • Work to progress more extensive use of the CRM element of Jadu (CXM) by all departments has begun. Increasing the data flowing into CXM will ultimately provide a single customer view and enable the Customer Services team to deal with more queries at first point of contact.
<p>Supporting the exploitation of data more effectively so that the council can prioritise precious resources to have the most impact for residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trial of a data integration and presentation layer to help with improved reporting and analysis, focusing on Housing continues. • The discussions about roles and responsibilities for managing platforms and data in departments are including an increased focus on data. Increasing each department's ability to serve their own needs for business-as-usual activity will enable central teams to focus on more strategic advanced analytics.

1. Leadership Workshop (CLT) with LGA taking place on 22nd Nov.
2. Further activities taking place to review the lessons learned from the Hybrid working roll out.
3. Staff workshops will take place throughout Nov/Dec to address the cultural issues identified through the staff surveys and to build this into a single action plan.
4. Staff roadshow implemented on 30th October raised a number of concerns that are being answered by CLT and cascaded to staff.
5. Members and cabinet development programme being rolled out and further sessions being planned
6. HR Improvements are being reviewed and further actions to transform the service in line with the TOM and strategic objectives are being identified