

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT FOLLOW UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

September 2018



INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Ahead of each Audit and Governance Committee we follow-up those recommendations raised by Internal Audit which are due for implementation. We request commentary by responsible officers on the progress to our recommendations and for those High and Medium recommendations due we verify progress to source evidence and conclude either that the recommendation is complete or incomplete.

There were **seven** Medium recommendations due for September 2018. Please find below a summary of the **7** recommendations that were due for completion prior to the September 2018 Audit and Governance Committee. Please note that these are the 7 that are due for this Committee and does not mean all previous recommendations are complete. Previous recommendations may simply have a revised date that is post this Committee and therefore will be picked up at the next Committee.

2017 - 2018 Recommendations

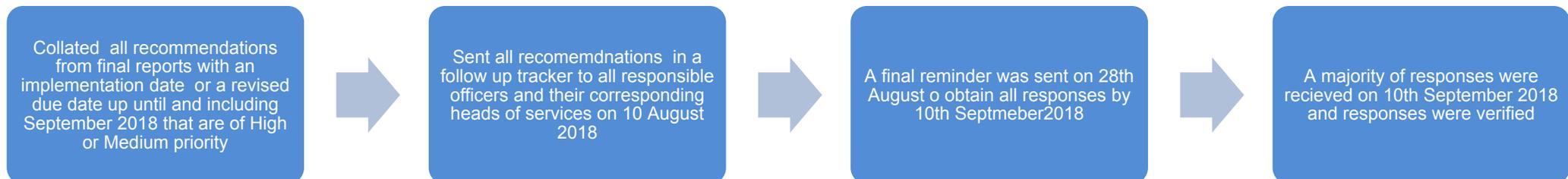
- Seven Medium recommendations have been implemented and can be removed from the Recommendations Tracker

For all incomplete recommendations we will:

99

1. Continue to emphasise to staff to be realistic about the implementation dates when completing their management responses at the completion stage of each internal audit review
2. Issue the recommendations tracker to all the relevant Heads of services on a monthly basis from the December audit committee onwards
3. Issue reminder emails 6 weeks prior to the follow up review to ensure timely completion of each recommendation

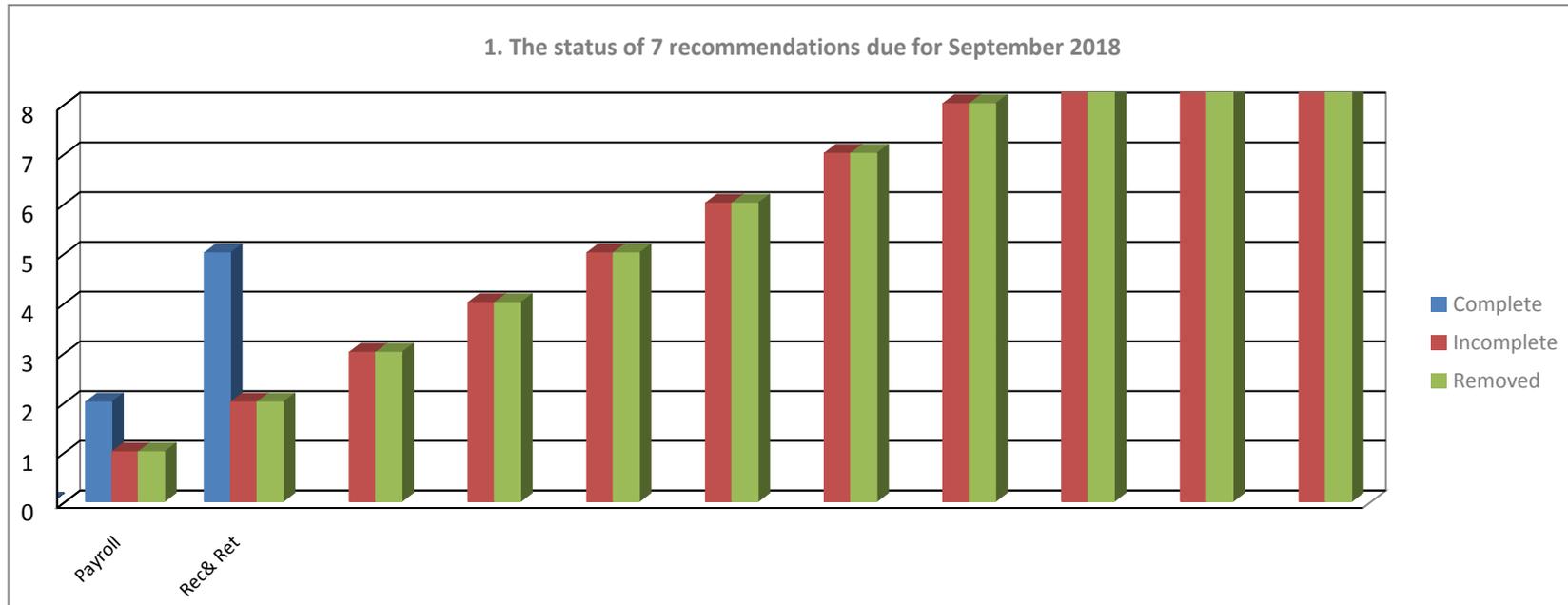
Flowchart of the follow up process – below we have included a process flow chart to explain how follow up responses are obtained timescales are achieved



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The charts below reference the number of recommendations due up until and including September 2018. In total there were 7 recommendations due for follow up, chart 1 demonstrates the number of recommendations due for September 2018 of which, 7 recommendations were complete.

67



Please note the number of incomplete recommendations have decreased in comparison to the previous Follow up report issued in March 2018:

Month	No. of Recommendations incomplete	No. of Recommendations complete	% of recommendations incomplete (Incomplete/Total Recommendations)
March 2018	9	18	33% (9/27) ↓
July 2018	7	11	39% (7/11) ↓
September 2018	0	7	100% (7/7) ↓

RECOMMENDATIONS COMPLETE

89

Audit	Recommendation made with reference to the corresponding Internal Audit report	Priority Level	Manager Responsible	Head of Service	Original Due Date	Notes on Completion
2017 – 18 Recruitment and Retention	<p>1) To progress the paper which is currently in draft to final and specifically ensure that future arrangements enforce: Quarterly reports should be produced by the relevant HR teams, focusing on recruitment and staff performance KPIs and presented to the management meeting or; a one-off exercise examine critical KPIs to the department level such as agency spend, vacancy rates and staff turnover with actions taken once this analysis has been complete</p> <p>If a one-off exercise is taken instead of a routine quarterly check, the next review date must be agreed which cannot be greater than 1 year from the previous one-off exercise.</p>	M	Paul Adams, HR Manager	Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement	Jun – 18 Sept -18	The Business Improvement Service Plan 18/19 has been agreed with a section explicitly on Recruitment - Employer of Choice. This contains a programme of activities that include: using different methods of recruitment; developing the employee brand; devising a talent management programme; implementing the next apprenticeship cohort; reviewing employee benefits; agreeing and delivering an equalities action plan; implementing a structured work experience programme; improving exit interviews; improving attendance management; devising a mental health programme; implementing on-line performance management. These initiatives are all on track for delivery as per the timescales attributed.
2017 – 18 Recruitment and Retention	<p>2) Optimum guidelines on the recruitment process should set out clear expectations and guideline timelines for each stage of recruitment</p> <p>HR to focus their attention on those Hiring Managers who do not often recruit staff and therefore may be at greater risk of inefficient recruitment. This focus should be documented by ensuring the Hiring Managers are identified and communicated proactively.</p>	M	Paul Adams, HR Manager	Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement	Jun – 18 Sept -18	Revised recruitment and selection training has been developed and is available for managers to book onto via iTrent. A number of training sessions have now been delivered, which have received good feedback from delegates. HR Business Partners currently work with their service areas to ensure recruitment follows procedure, and therefore are on hand for managers less experienced at recruitment. Information provided to recruiting managers to guide them through the key stages of the recruitment process has now been reviewed by the end of Q2.

Audit	Recommendation made with reference to the corresponding Internal Audit report	Priority Level	Manager Responsible	Head of Service	Original Due Date	Notes on Completion
2017 – 18 Recruitment and Retention	3) Agency spend should be discussed with the Finance Panel to confirm if they feel benefit in seeing this information. Subsequent action taken accordingly Trends and reasons for agency staff requests in each department should be learnt and analysed. Plans for reducing future agency demand should be initiated accordingly This should be linked with the Retention Strategy which will be discussed in finding 4.	M	Paul Adams, HR Manager	Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement	Apr –18 Sep -18	A detailed report is now being sent (since April 2018) on a monthly basis to all Heads of Service and the relevant HR Business Partner, which provides information on agency staffing spend, the length of time the agency worker has been in the service as well as the expiry dates of fixed term contracts within the service. HR Business Partners discuss this report with their clients as part of the business as usual activity.
69 2017 – 18 Recruitment and Retention	4) A Retention Strategy should be put in place for all employees in the Council. See Appendix III for detailed advice on initiating an effective Retention Strategy. Interim interviews should be conducted by individual line managers every three months, particularly for new starters, to understand staff concerns, promote initiatives and make staff feel their opinions are valued.	M	Paul Adams, HR Manager	Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement	May –18 Sep -18	New starters are subject to a probationary review period of six months, during which the line manager meets regularly, on both a formal and informal basis, to discuss progress, issues of concern and the support required to enable the new employee to make an effective and lasting contribution to the council. Outside of the probation process for new starters, all line managers and team leaders are expected to hold regular meetings with their teams to discuss service innovation, development and improvement, share key information on council initiatives and updates on new developments within the council that impact on them. Finally, all line managers are required to hold bi-monthly review meetings as part of the annual Appraisal review process to discuss and address such issues.

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2017 – 18 Recruitment and Retention	5) To develop a Plan to integrate the use of Social Media into the recruitment process with the majority of roles issued being also promoted via Social Media	M	Paul Adams, HR Manager	Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement	May – 18 Sep -18	Greater usage of social media for recruitment is being developed within the plans to improve different methods of recruitment and as part of the development of the employer brand. This is all scheduled in the recruitment and retention plans articulated in the Business Improvement Service Plan 18/19. This has been documented in a communications plan by the end of September 2018. Anything outstanding will be picked up in the current Retention review.
2017 -18 Payroll	1) Undertake checks on forms to ensure they have been authorised appropriately with managers held to account where it has not been done. Review errors identified during testing and ensure appropriateness.	M	Paul Adams, HR Manager	Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement	Aug – 18 Sep - 18	A structured sampling procedure has been implemented to ensure that the instruction received from line managers for key payroll processes provides both accurate information and appropriate authorisation. Based on the outputs from this process will result in revised guidance to managers and/or follow up discussion (as appropriate). This is therefore deemed complete
2017 -18 Payroll	1a) Implement an appropriate approval process whereby the final review and sign-off is completed by someone who has not had any input in pulling the pay run together 1b) Retain evidence of final sign-off to ensure a robust and complete audit trail	M	Paul Adams, HR Manager	Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement	Sep -18	HR & Payroll Manager now signs off payroll runs. Documentary evidence to support sign off are retained for review.



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