



West Mercia
POLICE

Outstanding Legacy Actions – Internal Audit

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BACKGROUND

This report outlines the current position relating to the aged County Council Internal Audits (pre March 2021). Any audits conducted during April 2021 – March 2022 are not covered in this report as they have either been addressed and closed or are less than 6 months old (and are actively being addressed).

PRE-APRIL 2020

These audits relate to when West Mercia Police were either still operating under the Alliance or part of the Shared Services arrangements. All actions have been reviewed to assess whether they are applicable for West Mercia Police.

Mash (17/18) – 2 outstanding recommendations

This particular audit originally had 10 recommendations with the final 2 having remained outstanding for a considerable time.

Since the original audit was conducted, a number of actions have been undertaken to meet demand through incremental process change, in addition to the move of resources within the HAU under central command to ensure this is achieved. During this time the HAU has continued to meet its demand in the face of considerable growth in the number of vulnerable children and adult incidents. The monitoring of resource levels is now 'Business as Usual' (BAU) within the Vulnerability and Safeguarding team and processes continue to evolve as system changes and effective practices from elsewhere are recognised.

MASH boards have been established across each Local Authority under the Children's Safeguarding Partnerships who monitor effectiveness of partnership delivery.

Procedural guidance is being incrementally updated and published to ensure consistent working practices (following national recommendations, effective working practices elsewhere and Athena updates).

This is a BAU on-going process which, with future monitoring through the Vulnerability Delivery Group (which reports into the Crime & Vulnerability Group under ACC Cooper).

Based on activity and evidence provided it has been determined that these 2 outstanding actions should now be considered as closed. This recommendation has been submitted to the Auditors as part of the most recent updates.

ICT Active Directory (18/19) – 2 outstanding recommendations

This audit originally made 6 recommendations. The final 2 outstanding recommendations have remained open for a considerable time.

Audit Logging - 118 potential systems/databases were investigated to see if audit logging is on and running. Internal investigations have taken place. It has been established that 14 of these are confirmed development, test or training systems. Of the remaining systems/databases, approximately 45% are complete with levels of logging available. In respect of the remaining systems/databases (that are still being investigated) it may not be that all require logging and a more accurate figure can be provided when this is concluded.

Next steps include; contacting suppliers and GTT to investigate ability of audit logging and costs and working with DST Application Migration Project to ensure logging is switched on as applications are migrated across to Greenfield.

It has been determined that this action needs to remain open.

Password Expiry – New password policy has now been implemented, all elevated access requests go through a formal documented process in Digital Services and accounts are given expiry dates.

Based on activity and evidence provided it has been determined that this outstanding action should now be considered as closed. This recommendation has been submitted to the Auditors as part of the most recent updates.

ICT Database Admin and Security (18/19) – 1 outstanding recommendation

This audit originally made 9 recommendations. The final 1 outstanding recommendation has remained open for a considerable time.

There is now a process in place for all access requests as part of BAU. Greenfield (DST) access requests are also monitored as part of the BAU process. During the DST Application Migration project a further review of access rights is part of the project which Digital Services will work alongside DST to achieve. This action could be closed as it is part of business as usual.

Based on activity and evidence provided it has been determined that this 1 outstanding action should now be considered as closed. This recommendation has been submitted to the Auditors as part of the most recent updates.

HR Management Recruitment (19/20) - 1 outstanding recommendation

This audit made 1 recommendation.

A Resourcing Policy has now been drafted and has gone out for consultation at the beginning of September with a view to being presented at JNCC in November 2022. This now falls into BAU activity.

Based on activity and evidence provided it has been determined that this 1 outstanding action should now be considered as closed. This recommendation has been submitted to the Auditors as part of the most recent updates.

APRIL 2020 – MARCH 2021

Consultants - 1 outstanding recommendation

This audit originally made 6 recommendations with the final outstanding recommendation being open for a considerable period of time.

Between April and July 2022 training was focussed on the 3rd party contractors agreement for Digital Services Transformation. As of 16/8/2022 all training has now been completed.

Based on activity and evidence provided it has been determined that this 1 outstanding action should now be considered as closed. This recommendation has been submitted to the Auditors as part of the most recent updates.

Seized Property - 1 outstanding recommendation

This audit made 1 recommendation and relates to work required by Estate Services (OPCC Office).

The works to the wider estate access control will take some time to scope and work through and be put forward as a project for future years. As such, it will not be appropriate to include these specific requirements in that wider piece of work.

The Force have therefore included the required swipe card access to the property stores on this year's planned programme. All planned programme works are currently being scoped with the intention to tender during Sept/Oct, for completion this financial year.

It has been determined that this action needs to remain open.

Payroll - 1 outstanding recommendation

This audit made 6 recommendations with 1 currently remaining outstanding.

Payroll have 90% of SOPS completed, the only outstanding piece of work is for them to be updated with the new look version of Itrent, which came in last year. The process and functionality is the same, albeit it looks different when members of staff log on. The current SOPs do however outline the "as is" process steps and are considered fit for purpose.

The team are concentrating on documenting process changes at the moment which are making them more efficient to work as one team, which are, in fact, SOPs in their own right. The aim is for all SOPs to be updated within 2 months, in the meantime, the department is confident that the current SOPs could be used to action payroll variations if required. On this basis, it is

deemed that these updates now fall into BAU and any amendments will be picked up as part of process changes.

Based on activity and evidence provided it has been determined that this outstanding action should now be considered as closed. This recommendation has been submitted to the Auditors as part of the most recent updates.

Medium Term Financial Plan - 2 outstanding recommendations

This audit originally had 4 recommendations. There are currently 2 outstanding.

Process to achieve sign off – below actions/activities are now in place:

- The template for Business Area Business Plans is created for this year and has a back page that requires sign-off up to Chief Officer level.
- The proposal is that Business Plans will get signed-off at a planning stage ie. at the point that the Budget Planning Proposal Workbooks are signed off by the BP Panel after Presentation 2 on the 17th and 18th October, 2022. A Decision log will also be created to capture this sign-off and logged in the Strategy, Planning and Insight Register with a URN.
- The Benefits that are identified in the Proposal Workbook will be transferred to the Business Plans to ensure a clear picture of the outcome of agreed funding and to hold Business Area leads accountable for delivering benefits where new activity has achieved funding.
- The Business Plans will then require amending once the Budget Line has been drawn to reflect which proposals are accepted and which will not be funded. This will, therefore, reflect the funded plan for all Business Areas for 2023-2024.

It is deemed that these activities satisfy the audit requirements and this can now be considered as a BAU process.

Based on activity and evidence provided it has been determined that this outstanding action should now be considered as closed. This recommendation has been submitted to the Auditors as part of the most recent updates.

Process to ensure the outcomes of Drawing the Line are reflected in Business Plans – below actions/activities are now in place – linked to the process outlined above;

- This year there will be Business Plans. They will be signed-off at the end of the final Presentations to the Chief Officer Panel in October.

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- There is a meeting scheduled between the Business Planning team and Head of Finance to ensure that this activity has been finalised and all Business Plans can be signed-off as active for the year ahead for the purpose of holding plan owners to account for the benefits claimed from investments funded and to acknowledge where cuts mean that services will no longer be funded and, therefore, expected. (February 7th, 2023)
 - Feedback on the first Budget Planning process last year included a lack of clarity for Business Area leads on what was agreed to be funded and what was not. This was due to a number of reasons, all of which have plans put in place to mitigate this time around.

It is deemed that these activities satisfy the audit requirements and this can now be considered as a BAU process.

Based on activity and evidence provided it has been determined that this outstanding action should now be considered as closed. This recommendation has been submitted to the Auditors as part of the most recent updates.

CURRENT SITUATION

As outlined above, the legacy audits had 11 outstanding long-term recommendations as reported at the last JASC. The recent updates and activity from the business leads has resulted in 9 of these now being recommended for closure, on the basis that the recommendations have either been completed or moved into a BAU activity (with relevant assurance provided).

RECOMMENDATION

The contents of this report are for noting with progress against the remaining 2 outstanding recommendations to be monitored at the Audit, Assurance and Compliance Board.

