

Subject:	Rossendale Borough Council Improvement Plan - Update	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Audit and Accounts Committee	Date:	28 th June 2016
Report of:	Head of Finance	Portfolio Holder:	Resources and Performance
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
Contact Officer:	Phil Seddon	Telephone:	01706 252465
Email:	philseaddon@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1.	RECOMMENDATION
1.1	That Members note the report and progress made to date on the Rossendale Borough Council Improvement plan..

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on the Rossendale Borough Council Improvement Plan, following the publication of the Internal Audit report on the East Lancashire Empty Homes Scheme.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
- **Regenerating Rossendale:** This priority focuses on regeneration in its broadest sense, so it means supporting communities that get on well together, attracting sustainable investment, promoting Rossendale, as well as working as an enabler to promote the physical regeneration of Rossendale.
 - **Responsive Value for Money Services:** This priority is about the Council working collaboratively, being a provider, procurer and a commissioner of services that are efficient and that meet the needs of local people.
 - **Clean Green Rossendale:** This priority focuses on clean streets and town centres and well managed open spaces, whilst recognising that the Council has to work with communities and as a partner to deliver this ambition.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- The Improvement Plan is specifically designed to assist in identifying, managing and mitigating future risk exposure to the Council.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

5.1 The management response to the Internal Audit report on Empty Homes was presented to Members in December 2015. Following on from that initial response offices have been forming a more in-depth response to, in particular, the anticipated controls expected of an efficient and effective council when dealing with any generic project, risk exposure or opportunities. At the March 2016 Audit & Accounts Committee a programme map and plan

was presented to Members together with a final format proposal.

- 5.2 It should be emphasised that the issues and implications arising out of the Empty Homes scheme go beyond matters associated with this one project but have implications for wider corporate governance, risk management and the organisations culture and behaviours. With that in mind the final report will focus on a wider organisational improvement plan. Members will recall that as part of this wider review an undated Risk Management strategy was presented to the last Audit & Accounts Committee with a view to assisting in the early identification of risk.
- 5.2 The senior management team has reviewed each of the expected controls an organisation is expected to have (see appendix 1); and as highlighted in the original report the majority of controls are in place other than those which officers have highlighted for further action.
- 5.3 In reviewing the expected control a number of themes or areas for improvement have been highlighted:
- Implementation of a organisational development programme in order to address behavioural and cultural change.
 - Alongside this we need to define what a good council looks like in order to identify our goal and ensure that senior managers job descriptions and person specifications accurately reflect the core competences required for a fit for purpose Council.
 - Review the Council's Performance Management framework and Project Management framework
 - Review of the Council's material partnerships and the due diligence of such partnerships
 - Review of Contract Procedure Rules
- 5.4 Without repeating the findings of the original Internal Audit report the review of appendix 1 has highlighted that the vast majority of controls are in place but that they were overridden by senior officers
- 5.5 The senior management team is planning to present the final improvement plan for presentation to the next Audit & Accounts Committee (September 2016).

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 6.1 Any financial implications arising are noted in the report.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

- 7.1 Any legal implications are commented upon in the report.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 8.1 Any policy implications are commented upon in the report.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Council is continuing to progress and develop its improvement plan in response to the Internal Audit report on the East Lancashire Empty Homes Scheme

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Internal Audit report on the East Lancashire Empty Homes Scheme	Council's website (Audit & Accounts Committee – November 2016)
Improvement Action Plan – work in progress documents	Council / Officer files