

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Chief Executive and Town Clerk

to

Audit Committee

on

22 September 2010

Report prepared by: Linda Everard, Head of Internal Audit

Cross Partner Internal Audit Working Group Update Report

A Part 1 Public Agenda Item

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Audit Committee on the work of the Cross Partner Internal Audit Working Group (the Group).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **The Audit Committee notes the report attached and joint work proposed for 2010/11.**

3. Governance Arrangements of Key Strategic Partnerships

- 3.1 In July 2010, Southend Together Executive (Executive) agreed the Group's report on the Governance Arrangements of Key Strategic Partnerships. The full report is attached for information. The Executive is currently waiting to see how the Government's views regarding partnership working develop over the coming months. Once there is more certainty, the Executive will look to embed the principles outlined in the report within the partnership boards or groups that remain.

4. Proposed work programme for 2010/11.

- 4.1 In 2010/11, each of the significant partners¹ were asked to provide some audit resource to support cross partner audit reviews. This was on the basis that during this year the Group would get involved in:
- the three Total Place Deep Dives covering:
 - Independent Living
 - Mental Health

¹ Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, NHS South East Essex, Essex Police Authority and Essex County Fire & Rescue Service

- Domestic Abuse
 - reviewing the processes each partner has in place to ensure that recommendations arising from serious case file reviews relating to children are properly implemented.
- 4.2 The process being adopted to undertake each of the Total Place Deep Dives is different. However the Group has four potential functions with regard to this work:
- to independently document and test the process that is currently in place to provide information for officers to challenge
 - to provide a critical friend challenge to the teams undertaking these reviews throughout the process
 - to audit the new process once implemented to ensure that the controls within it are adequate and operating as designed
 - to provide assurance throughout these exercises that the change management arrangements are robust and will deliver what is required.

Independent Living

- 4.3 This review started in June 2010. The initial approach adopted was to:
- provide a general critical friend challenge; and
 - calculate indicative costs of the key events (i.e. services provided by significant partners) identified in the sample client 'journey maps' developed by the South East Essex Advocacy For Older People.
- 4.4 A workshop is planned for October 2010 where the significant partners and other relevant parties will consider:
- the key messages emerging from the client journey maps; and
 - potential ways to improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the services offered.

- 4.5 The Group will then review the controls within any redesigned process and assess whether they are appropriate to deliver the national Ageing Well programme at a local level.

Mental Health

- 4.6 For this review, a facilitator is working with a cross partner group of staff over 12 weeks to redesign how mental health services are provided. The core of this work is achieved through 10 workshops which started in August and finish in October 2010.

- 4.7 Internal Audit will be providing a critical friend challenge throughout this process and will attend the workshops in this capacity. It is possible that the Group will document and test some elements of the current process to provide the evidence for the working group to consider. It will audit any redesigned arrangements to ensure that the control environment remains sound.

Domestic Abuse

- 4.8 This work is not programme to start until October 2010 with a view to it being completed by March 2011. The Group's role within this is still to be confirmed although it is anticipated that some aspects of each of those elements outlined in 4.2 will be undertaken.

Serious Case Review (Children)

- 4.9 The Terms of Reference for this work has been produced. The intention is to agree this with the Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LCSB) in September 2010. The purpose of this work is to assess whether the LCSB and partner agencies have robust arrangements in place to effectively implement the lessons learnt from serious case reviews to improve the overall future protection of children in Southend. This will involve:

- auditing the processes within each partner body for ensuring recommendations in service case review action plans are implemented
- checking that recommendations made have actually been implemented.

- 4.10 This work will primarily focus on one case where the actions arising should all now have been implemented and includes:

- Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- NHS South East Essex
- South Essex Partnership Foundation NHS Trust (SEPT)
- Southend Borough Council Department for Children and Learning
- Essex Probation Service
- South Essex Homes

Change Management

- 4.11 Going forward, Internal Audit will provide feedback on how robust these change management activities are where it is involved as a critical friend.

5. Corporate Implications

- 5.1 Contribution to Council's Aims, Priorities and Outcomes

Operating robust governance arrangements to support partnership working supports the delivery of all Council aims', priorities and outcomes.

The service specific reviews support the delivery of the following aims and priorities:

- Health: Continue to improve outcomes for vulnerable adults and older people
- Excellent: Becoming a higher performing organisation

5.2 Financial Implications

The key outcome from a successful Deep Dive review will be financial savings as well improvements in service delivery through more joined up working by the partners.

This audit work is being resourced from the partners audit plans.

5.3 Legal Implications

None

5.4 People and Property Implications

None

5.5 Consultation

Internal Audits involvement in this work has been approved by Southend Together and the respective partners who have provided resources.

5.6 Equalities Impact Assessment

None

5.7 Risk Assessment

Failure to join up working amongst key partners could result in less effective and economical services.

5.8 Value for Money

All work by the Group aims to enhance the value for money of the services provided by significant partners by considering processes on a whole process, cross-organisational basis.

Supporting successful Deep Dives will result in financial savings as well improvements in service delivery

5.9 Community Safety Implications and Environmental Impact

None

6. Background Papers: None

7. Attachments: Report of the Internal Audit Working Group: Audit Committee Member Workshop: Governance and Partnerships