

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

AUDIT COMMITTEE

10 SEPTEMBER 2012

1. **REVIEW OF ORGANISATIONAL ASSURANCE**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer.

RECOMMENDED

THAT the Committee notes the update on progress of implementation of the Organisational Assurance recommendations.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**


This report is submitted to inform Members of progress to date on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on Organisational Assurance.






3. **BACKGROUND**




3.1 On 9 January 2012, the Audit & Performance Management Committee noted the contents and recommendations of the report that followed a review of Organisational Assurance




3.2 **Progress Against Recommendations**

The table below details progress to date and expected completion dates of work to fulfil the recommendations.

	Recommendation	Update	Status
1	Produce an Assurance Map that develops the Corporate Risk Register to enable provision of clear evidence of assurance and to provide a more robust indicator of areas which require developed assurance provided internally or externally.	The Corporate Risk Assurance Map has been populated and engagement with risk owners to familiarise them in its use is ongoing. The map will be used as the basis for reporting to members in the next review cycle. It will also be used to drive the scope of the Internal Audit needs analysis and inform the 2013/2014 Internal Audit Plan.	

2	To enable the provision of robust evidence at the second level of the proposed assurance map, a process should be developed which enables subject matter experts or specialists to come together with individuals with audit skills to conduct a clearly defined audit of a specific area which has raised concern or note at level 1 of the Assurance Map.	This recommendation is now complete.	
3	a) The content and costs of the proposed 2012/13 Internal Audit Plan be rigorously examined with the intent of reducing the size of the plan whilst still providing appropriate assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's governance, risk management and internal control processes. This work should form the basis of a further report back to the Audit and Performance Committee in March 2012. b) On the appointment of the new external auditors, a review of the Authority's overall internal audit requirements, cost and provision should be undertaken.	a) The scope of the 2012/13 internal audit plan has been agreed. b) The appointment of Grant Thornton as External Auditors for West Midlands Fire Authority has been confirmed. Grant Thornton will take up post on 1 September 2012.	 
4	It is recommended that work to complete the debrief workbook is completed without delay.	This development is now complete.	
5	Develop peer review arrangements with comparable Metropolitan FRSs to provide external operational assurance.	The proposed peer review has been superseded by implementation of the Operational Assessment (OpA). The Peer Review Team have conducted the peer challenge and we await the final report.	

6	A review of the provision of legal services should be undertaken. This will explore the full range of options available to ensure that efficiencies and value for money is achieved along with improved service provision.	Work towards the review of legal services has been delayed by the Operational Assessment. Now scheduled for completion by the end of September.	
7	Develop a process which enables feedback to be sent to an individual, highlighting inaccuracies in the output of their work, raising their awareness and asking for the work to be corrected. This will support 'the requirement to improve data quality through active support for right first time principles', and ensure responsibility for this is apportioned at the correct level. This will also support the detailed review of data quality being conducted by John Robb in the SPIRiT.	This recommendation is now complete.	
8	In order to ensure a clear and consistent approach to these developments, a review should be conducted into Standing Order 22/07 Corporate Risk Management and other relevant policies. This will include elected members' awareness, including their involvement in developing the necessary tools and policies. Managers whose input into the risk management processes is critical will also be involved in these developments to ensure that the developments are effective and appropriate for all concerned.	Development of supporting policies is on schedule.	

Status key;	
	Item complete
	Item behind schedule
	Item on schedule

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.
- 4.2 The matters contained in this report do not relate to a policy change and represent a progress update on previously agreed actions.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications from this report as it is an update on previously agreed actions.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications from this report as it is an update on previously agreed actions.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

VIJ RANDENIYA
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER