

Part A

Report to: Audit Committee

Date of meeting: 6 December 2018

Report author: Environmental Health & Licensing Section Head

Title: Safeguarding

1.0 Summary

1.1 At the September 2018 Audit Committee, the Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head made a request for a further extension for the one outstanding audit recommendation:

- We recommend that the next review be approved by Leadership Team and Members.

1.2 This extension was requested to enable an external review and action plan to be presented to Leadership team by the consultant employed to undertake the review. This has now been undertaken and will be presented to Portfolio Holders on 17th December 2018.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Failure to deliver safeguarding functions to an acceptable level	Impact on individuals and the wider community. Reputational impact	Implement the action plan identified as part of the review and regularly monitor performance	Treat	4

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 Committee notes the contents of this report.

Further information:

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Report approved by: Alan Gough, Head of Community and Environmental Services

4.0 Current situation

- 4.1 Further to the audit of safeguarding functions by SIAS in 2015/16, which gave a moderate assurance, the actions identified and agreed were implemented. These focussed around recognition that safeguarding had evolved and the new areas such as modern slavery, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation needed to be reflected in policies and procedures.
- 4.2 In recognition of this increasing remit and the synergies with community safety functions it was decided to amalgamate the safeguarding and community safety functions together within one Section. This was planned for 2017/18 and it was agreed that a full review of safeguarding would take place to inform this alignment.
- 4.3 The audit requirement outstanding referred to updating Leadership Team and Members at the next review point. Perhaps mistakenly, over time this has been read by officers to be the external review planned as part of the transfer of functions between Sections. Annual audits as required by the Hertfordshire Children's and Adult's Safeguarding Boards have continued to be undertaken with the last one reported to Leadership Team in 2017 and the next one already booked in with HSAB for January 2019. This is what the original audit requirement referred to but Officers haven't recognised these as a "review" and therefore this audit requirement could actually have been progressed some time ago.
- 4.4 However, notwithstanding point 4.3 the external review has taken longer than anticipated as has been reported to Audit Committee. This has primarily been due to the difficulty in procuring a suitable consultant. The initial procurement exercise was unsuccessful and once we found someone suitable their availability dictated the process. Work hasn't ceased during this time however, services continue to develop, training be undertaken and referrals have been made.
- 4.5 In October 2018 Leadership approved the review and associated action plan. This is being presented to Portfolio holders on 15th December 2018 and therefore fully satisfies the outstanding audit requirement. In recognition of the importance of safeguarding an annual update will be presented to Members going forward.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Head of Finance comments that there are no financial implications of this report.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 Legal & Democratic Services Section Head comments that there are no legal implications of this report.

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 No proposed service change or new policy.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 None

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 None

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 None, the action plan is approved for implementation.

5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 None

Appendices

None

Background papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.