

INTERNAL AUDIT - SITE MANAGEMENT
WDA/09/15

Recommendation

That:

1. Members note the contents of the report from the Internal Auditor.

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Report of the Treasurer

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The Authority is required to maintain an effective Internal Audit as a part of its statutory governance arrangements. The Authority's Internal Audit is provided by St Helens Council. The Auditor reviews the arrangements at the Authority and reports to Members on any weaknesses and recommends improvements. This report brings to Members attention the outcome of the latest review.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Authority is required to manage the environmental and health safety risks at sites which were formerly used as landfill sites. The Authority is responsible for managing seven of these Closed Landfill sites and maintaining them to standards that are established by the Environment Agency.
- 2.2 The purpose of the review is to provide assurance about the adequacy of the controls in place to ensure that the Authority's site management objectives for the sites are more likely to be achieved.
- 2.3 The Auditor's report is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

3. Review of contracts

- 3.1 The review considered the adequacy of arrangements in place in respect of systems for site management, including adherence to Health and Safety procedures on site, and a review of the costs and contract monitoring of site maintenance.
- 3.2 The review did not consider the environmental monitoring aspects of the work at closed landfill sites, which will form part of a later audit.

3.3 The Auditor concluded that in their overall opinion substantial assurance could be taken from the system and the way it was operated. This means that:

“The majority of expected controls are in place but there is some inconsistency in their application. Whilst there is basically a sound system of controls, there may be weaknesses in the design and/or operation of these and recommendations have been made to enhance the control environment further.”

3.4 The auditor has confirmed there are no Key Issues arising from this review to bring to the attention of Members.

3.5 The auditor has made a number of recommendations for improvements as a consequence of the review, regarding:

- documenting the value for money obtained for new equipment purchases;
- full completion of the asset register;
- updating the asset register; and
- ensuring the Manager’s review of the asset register.

3.6 In respect of the recommendations, which are accepted in full: the reference to documenting value for money reflects equipment purchased prior to the move to the current offices, and for which quotes in the form of e-mails are no longer accessible from the former IT systems; the comments in regard to the asset register are correct, but may imply that the asset records do not exist elsewhere. In fact the assets have been recorded on a number of separate records, and officers recognised that in addition, bringing those separate records together to form a single, easily accessed, reference point was important, which is why the work on completing the asset register is ongoing.

3.7 The recommendations have been included in an action plan attached to the audit report, which also sets out the response of officers to the recommended improvements. The recommendations are agreed and are either implemented already or will be implemented in full by 31st March 2015.

4. Risk Implications

4.1 There are no new risks arising from the auditor’s review

5. HR Implications

5.1 There are no new HR implications

6. Environmental Implications

6.1 There are no new environmental implications

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report

8. Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

9. Conclusion

9.1 Internal Audit reviews the Authority's governance arrangements. The recent review confirmed that arrangements were appropriate and there are no Key Issues for Members. The recommendations for improvement are being actioned appropriately. Members are asked to note the report.

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The background documents to this report are open to inspection in accordance with Section 100D of The Local Government Act 1972 - Nil.