

Audit Committee	<b>Agenda Item: X</b>
-----------------	-----------------------

<b>Meeting Date</b>	19 September 2012
<b>Report Title</b>	Internal Audit report – Planning Enforcement
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Cllr Lewin – Planning Portfolio
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Pete Raine – Director of Regeneration
<b>Head of Service</b>	James Freeman – Head of Planning
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Andrew Jeffers – Development Manager
<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Forward Plan</b>	<b>Reference number:</b>

<b>Recommendations</b>	1. To note update report on the internal audit action plan for Planning Enforcement and the programme for a detailed report to be presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting on 19 December 2012.
------------------------	--

## **Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides a brief update on progress with regards to the Planning Enforcement Audit Action Plan with a view to a full report on progress at its next meeting on 19 December, 2012.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 At the Audit Committee on 8 March 2012 it was agreed that a further update on progress of the internal Audit Action Plan for Planning Enforcement should be presented in September 2012.
- 2.2 However, it is proposed that a full report be delayed for the 19 December 2012 meeting of the Committee given that many of the actions are programmed to be completed in September / October 2012. The later reporting would enable members to reflect on the outputs from those actions and to put forward suggestions for improvement should they be necessary. The delayed time also enables officers to review whether the actions are providing the benefits that were expected and to bring forward or suggest further improvements to the Committee as required.

## **3 Update on main actions in relation to the Audit Action Plan**

- 3.1 Of particular interest to members will be the progress on adapting the planning service IT system, Headway, to be able to provide reports on enforcement case

progress to ward members on a monthly basis. As reported at the Audit Committee, progress is on schedule for ward member based reports to be issued through the headway system by early October 2012 and to be issued on a regular monthly basis. It is anticipated that further revisions to the report will be needed following testing of the system during the first 3 months of operation with a view to having a finalised report meeting councillors expectations in place by the New Year.

- 3.3 Members also raised concern that they should have access to an enforcement case database as required. Discussions have taken place with ICT and the headway software provider with a view to establishing such a database. At this stage there are concerns about ensuring the confidentiality and security of the system, whether accessible to Swale House users or to those externally. Therefore, there are current uncertainties as to how quickly or whether these issues can be resolved, although I would expect to have a clearer view for the December meeting.
- 3.4 Additionally, Members may also wish to note that a Service Level Agreement is currently being drafted between the Planning and Legal Services which should provide greater clarity for dealing with the legal implications and processing of enforcement cases. This should be signed by the end of September and I will be able to report on its implementation at the next meeting. In addition to the Service Level Agreement, following the inception of the Legal Partnership, a SharePoint referral system has been set up which requires the use of instruction templates and some general information on outcomes.
- 3.5 Following the recent review of 1 year + enforcement cases by the Planning Committee Working Party, a further review of 6 month + cases will be undertaken by the Working Party in October 12.

## **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 This is an update report for noting and no alternative options are presented at this stage.

## **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 Internal Audit reports have been presented to the Audit committee on two previous occasions and this update report follows requests made at the last meeting.

## **6 Implications**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Corporate Plan	Proposals supports the Council's priorities for being 'Open for

	Business' and supporting a 'healthy environment'.
Financial, Resource and Property	There are no additional financial implications arising from the report beyond those already budgeted at this stage.
Legal and Statutory	Report includes reference to the drafting of a service level agreement between Legal Services and Planning Services in dealing with enforcement cases.
Crime and Disorder	<i>none identified at this stage</i>
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Ineffective planning enforcement could undermine the planning process and damage the Council's reputation.
Equality and Diversity	<i>none identified at this stage</i>
Sustainability	<i>none identified at this stage</i>

## 7 Appendices

None

## 8 Background Papers

None

Audit Committee	<b>Agenda Item: X</b>
-----------------	-----------------------

<b>Meeting Date</b>	19 September 2012
<b>Report Title</b>	Internal Audit report – Planning Enforcement
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Cllr Lewin – Planning Portfolio
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Pete Raine – Director of Regeneration
<b>Head of Service</b>	James Freeman – Head of Planning
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Andrew Jeffers – Development Manager
<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Forward Plan</b>	<b>Reference number:</b>

<b>Recommendations</b>	1. To note update report on the internal audit action plan for Planning Enforcement and the programme for a detailed report to be presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting on 19 December 2012.
------------------------	--

## **Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides a brief update on progress with regards to the Planning Enforcement Audit Action Plan with a view to a full report on progress at its next meeting on 19 December, 2012.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 At the Audit Committee on 8 March 2012 it was agreed that a further update on progress of the internal Audit Action Plan for Planning Enforcement should be presented in September 2012.
- 2.2 However, it is proposed that a full report be delayed for the 19 December 2012 meeting of the Committee given that many of the actions are programmed to be completed in September / October 2012. The later reporting would enable members to reflect on the outputs from those actions and to put forward suggestions for improvement should they be necessary. The delayed time also enables officers to review whether the actions are providing the benefits that were expected and to bring forward or suggest further improvements to the Committee as required.

## **3 Update on main actions in relation to the Audit Action Plan**

- 3.1 Of particular interest to members will be the progress on adapting the planning service IT system, Headway, to be able to provide reports on enforcement case

progress to ward members on a monthly basis. As reported at the Audit Committee, progress is on schedule for ward member based reports to be issued through the headway system by early October 2012 and to be issued on a regular monthly basis. It is anticipated that further revisions to the report will be needed following testing of the system during the first 3 months of operation with a view to having a finalised report meeting councillors expectations in place by the New Year.

- 3.3 Members also raised concern that they should have access to an enforcement case database as required. Discussions have taken place with ICT and the headway software provider with a view to establishing such a database. At this stage there are concerns about ensuring the confidentiality and security of the system, whether accessible to Swale House users or to those externally. Therefore, there are current uncertainties as to how quickly or whether these issues can be resolved, although I would expect to have a clearer view for the December meeting.
- 3.4 Additionally, Members may also wish to note that a Service Level Agreement is currently being drafted between the Planning and Legal Services which should provide greater clarity for dealing with the legal implications and processing of enforcement cases. This should be signed by the end of September and I will be able to report on its implementation at the next meeting. In addition to the Service Level Agreement, following the inception of the Legal Partnership, a SharePoint referral system has been set up which requires the use of instruction templates and some general information on outcomes.
- 3.5 Following the recent review of 1 year + enforcement cases by the Planning Committee Working Party, a further review of 6 month + cases will be undertaken by the Working Party in October 12.

## **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 This is an update report for noting and no alternative options are presented at this stage.

## **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 Internal Audit reports have been presented to the Audit committee on two previous occasions and this update report follows requests made at the last meeting.

## **6 Implications**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Corporate Plan	Proposals supports the Council's priorities for being 'Open for

	Business' and supporting a 'healthy environment'.
Financial, Resource and Property	There are no additional financial implications arising from the report beyond those already budgeted at this stage.
Legal and Statutory	Report includes reference to the drafting of a service level agreement between Legal Services and Planning Services in dealing with enforcement cases.
Crime and Disorder	<i>none identified at this stage</i>
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Ineffective planning enforcement could undermine the planning process and damage the Council's reputation.
Equality and Diversity	<i>none identified at this stage</i>
Sustainability	<i>none identified at this stage</i>

## 7 Appendices

None

## 8 Background Papers

None