2015/16 & 2016/17 Completed Audits

Reported at the 24th November 2016 Audit Committee Meeting

Report Title	System Overview	Department & Directorate	Work Finalised	Audit Days	Key Messages	Audit Opinion
Housing Solutions (Homelessness)	The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 strengthens the duty on local authorities to take reasonable steps to prevent and relieve homelessness, with an emphasis on prevention and service user engagement. This is being achieved in BCBC by means of a number of initiatives including: • Social Housing Allocations Policy • Common Housing Register • Supported Accommodation • Homelessness Prevention Fund • Partnership arrangements The audit review was confined to the Housing Solutions section and the effectiveness of the processes in place to aid in the prevention of homelessness.	Housing & Community Regeneration, Operational and Partnership Services Directorate	October 2016	20 days	During the Audit a number of strengths and areas of good practice were identified as follows: ▪ The Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) has a dedicated section relating to Housing Solutions and has a comprehensive reporting function. ▪ The Housing Solutions team is working towards increased provision of supported accommodation. The key issues identified which need to be addressed relate to: ▪ The expiry of the framework contracts for B&B accommodation and the requirement to ensure that required checks are performed and evidenced. ▪ Accuracy of the billing	Reasonable

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					process for the recovery of expenditure for bonds and rent in advance, removal and storage costs, rent arrears and collection of tenants' contributions towards the cost of emergency accommodation.	
Sharepoint	SharePoint is used as a platform for Bridgenders, the intranet site for staff of Bridgend County Borough Council, as well as isolated sub-sites and workspaces that are used for projects and collaborative working.	ICT, Operational and Partnership Services Directorate	Sept 2016	10 days	No significant issues were identified during the course of the audit. The following strengths were noted: ▪ The set-up of sites and workspaces within BCBC was seen to comply with Microsoft's SharePoint Governance Planning whitepaper for all sites to follow a consistent baseline design, thus helping to improve usability across sites. ▪ The page history within SharePoint provides an audit log of amendments by user, date and time. Additionally, version control is in operation to differentiate between new versions and previous versions when changes are	Substantial

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					made. This utilises track changes to allow any version to be directly compared against any other previous version.	
Waste Management PI's - Zero Waste	The Welsh Government has set a target for all Local Authorities to recycle /compost 52% of its waste by 2020, rising to 70% by 2025. If Local Authorities fail to achieve their targets, the Welsh Government is able to impose financial penalties of £200 per tonne. In 2014/15, BCBC was set a limit of 20,976 tonnes of Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW) sent to landfill. It was reported by Natural Resources Wales that 5,880 tonnes was sent to landfill and the Authority therefore achieved its target. The target set for BCBC in 2015/16 was 20,000 tonnes and only 8,358 tonnes were sent to landfill.	Neighbour-hood Services, Communities Directorate	Sept 2016	16 days	No significant issues were identified during the course of the audit and therefore no recommendations were made. A number of strengths and areas of good practice were identified as follows: ▪ The 2015/16 waste data has been validated by Natural Resources Wales. ▪ There is sufficient source evidence through weighbridge tickets and spreadsheet reports to support waste figures entered into the Waste Data Flow System. ▪ Quarterly returns for 2015/16 were submitted on time and in accordance with the Natural Resources Wales timetable.	Substantial

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HR Self Service	HR is in the process of rolling out an extra element of Trent to all employees in order that they can access their own details via a web based interface known as Employee Self Service (ESS). Employees designated as being a line manager will also have access via Manager Self Service (MSS). iTrent Employee self-service is a simple online portal which provides a quick, reliable and convenient way for staff to access their personal details and their payslip information. iTrent ESS allows staff to ensure that their personal details are up to date, such as address, equality information and emergency contacts and amend them where necessary	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Operational and Partnership Services Directorate	October 2016	8 days	Identified strengths include: ▪ The ESS module enables employees to take ownership of their own information and provide a central point of reference for employees regarding employment, training and personal details. This should reduce the number of routine queries received by HR. ▪ Line Managers can instantly access employee data and keep on top of team absence. The MSS portal also provides the functionality to review and authorise annual leave. ▪ Both employees and managers have demonstrated a positive attitude towards the introduction of self-service. Recommendations were made in respect of: ▪ HR have not yet identified whether each user with access to self-service has the correct reporting manager but this will need to	Substantial

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					be done prior to the annual leave element being rolled out. ▪ Working patterns need to be reviewed to ensure they are correctly input to Trent, particularly if an employee works variable hours or is employed on a casual contract. This could cause implications for an individual's leave balance if hours are incorrect on a day the employee has annual leave authorised.	
Absence Management	The objective of the audit was to ensure that the Authority has robust systems in place for recording absence and actively monitoring absence levels with a view to reducing them. A review of Absence with School based staff will be undertaken as part of a separate audit. The Resources Directorate Business Plan documents that a priority of the Resources Directorate is to *'Provide advice and support to the Council in reducing levels of sickness*	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Operational and Partnership Services Directorate	October 2016	24 days	▪ The BCBC sickness policy has accompanying Managers Guidelines which have recently been updated. The arrangements in respect of Absence Management and Occupational Health are detailed in these two documents ▪ All documentation and associated support mechanisms for absence management have been reorganised into "toolkit form" which includes newly developed FAQ's, to enable	Substantial

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	absence.' There are a number of milestones and indicators set against this priority to support the Council in achieving reduced sickness absence levels. For the period 2013/14 to 2015/16 the number of working days lost per FTE due to sickness has marginally increased from 9.8 to 10.85 and is above the public sector average.				easy access to all the available information. ■ Monitoring reports are produced by HR in order to identify outstanding documents in relation to sickness absence and to make Managers aware of their sickness levels. Recommendations have been made in the following areas: ■ Between April 2016 and July 2016 only 31 attendees across the entire Council had attended absence management training courses. ■ Not all supporting documentation is stored consistently. Some documents are indexed to information@work and others are retained in the HR Absence outlook mailbox. ■ There is inconsistent practice in chasing absence documentation across the Council.	