

Appendix 2 - Significant governance issues

It was agreed at a previous meeting of the Governance, Audit and Standards Committee that significant governance issues arising from the most recent Annual Governance Statement would also be considered alongside the quarterly performance report, and that lead officers for the issues would attend to provide updates to the committee on developments. The three issues highlighted for this period are:

- a) ***Mandatory training*** - requirements are unclear and staff are not completing known requirements such as financial rules training - the committee will receive an update on the PDR review and update on completion statistics following January Employment Committee.

Progress Update: Consideration has been given to three key elements of mandatory training - the induction, the annual assessment of learning, and the annual Performance Development Review (PDR).

In relation to **Induction:**

- The induction day for new starters has now been created - to act as a welcome to new staff, provide an overview of key policies and to give essential information about mandatory training areas (i.e. Information Governance, Financial Rules, Equalities etc.)
- The session has been piloted within the training team and a further pilot with selected new starters from the last six months is scheduled for March
- There will be an assessment of learning at the end of the day (of the mandatory areas) to ensure that new starters leave with the key messages about working safely in these areas
- Delegates will be advised that this day is intended to cover the basics, but they need to apply this key information to their own work place (e.g. what are the local procedures for keeping information safe and protected?)
- Discussion and consultation has taken place to ensure that new starters attend this day (e.g. wording in the probation policy that expects attendance)
- New starters need to get their knowledge of mandatory training areas up to the expected level, for all staff, in their first year (i.e. they will need to pass the annual knowledge check that is required for all staff)
- The process of alerting new starters to the expectation that they attend the training will be automated (via MLE). An automated message will be sent to all new starters (in every month) to advise them of booking arrangements.
- Training will run regular reports on attendance on the induction course, to track compliance.

For the **annual assessment of learning**, it has been agreed that rather than mandate attendance on a course / completion of e-learning (which is achieving a low level of compliance and potential exposure to risk because the focus is on

training rather than demonstration of knowledge), we will mandate that people can demonstrate the required level of knowledge (courses, information and e-learning is still available to support people to pass the assessment. This will ensure that we minimise impact on business time (spent in sometimes unnecessary training) and that we can demonstrate that all staff have the required level of knowledge to work safely.

The annual **PDR** PDR paperwork now includes statements about the application of key knowledge to local work practices (e.g. I understand Data Protection arrangements for my work place). As the majority of knowledge of mandatory areas is about local work practices, this will help to ensure that local learning takes place (as this can never be covered to sufficient depth within any corporate training).

b) *Non-completion of financial rules training resulting in non-compliance with Financial Rules*

Progress Update: Financial Rules training is delivered through MLE as an online training resource. It is for line managers to ensure that their staff undertake the required training in accordance with the needs of their job role.

Financial Rules were updated following a major review conducted in 2013. Since this review, the content of the Financial Rules training material has also been reviewed. The conclusion from the review is that modules 1 & 2 remain fit for purpose and relevant, but modules 3 & 4 require some updates to reflect some changes since they were originally designed, such as a change in the financial limit applied to the Gateway Process which (lowered from £100,000 to £75,000); and the merger of the Section 151 Officer and Head of Finance roles.

The review also highlighted that the Contract Procedure Rules are currently being reviewed by Procurement and Legal Services staff. On completion of that review, it is expected that further changes will be required to Financial Rules and the on-line training material.

Consideration has also been given to how we ensure that the correct staff are receiving the correct level of financial rules training, and are able to demonstrate and apply the required level of knowledge. In line with the approach to mandatory training set out in section a) above, Heads of Service now receive a regular report that can be shared with managers so that staff who need to undergo the training can be identified and trained accordingly.

c) *Report on action points following **Ofsted inspection** in July 2014.*

Progress Update: Portsmouth local authority was inspected under Ofsted's Single Inspection Framework in June/July 2014. The report published on the 1st September 2014 gave the following judgements;

Overall Effectiveness	Requires Improvement
Children who need help and protection:	Requires Improvement
Children looked after and achieving permanence	Good
- Adoption performance	Good
- Care leavers	Requires Improvement
Leadership, management and governance	Good

The full report can be viewed at:

http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/local_authority_reports/portsmouth/051_Single%20inspection%20of%20LA%20children%27s%20services%20and%20review%20of%20the%20LSCB%20as%20pdf.pdf

In response to the report and its findings, a detailed Improvement Plan was put together. This Plan was submitted to Ofsted in December 2014. This Improvement Plan is governed by the Portsmouth Children's Trust Board, as many of the improvement areas are closely related to the Children's Trust Plan 2014-2017. However, the progress is also reported into the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board and Corporate Parenting Boards respectively. Monitoring takes place on a quarterly basis.

In addition to the headline areas of improvement, the Improvement Plan is also informed by some of the detail in the text of the Ofsted report, the lessons we learnt about safeguarding and care through the inspection preparation and process and lessons learnt from the individual cases Ofsted raised with the local authority during the inspection

Each of the 11 areas identified for improvement has a simple action plan which includes;

a) Expected Outcome

- b) Measures of Success
- c) Actions

At this early stage in the implementation of the plan, there are no major areas of concern in the delivery of the improvement plan. Some actions have been delayed and some evidence of impact is under development (e.g forthcoming audits of cases), but as it stands, there is good progress against the issues identified by Ofsted in the Summer, and confidence among the lead officers that the current Action Plan will deliver the impact required.