Colchester Borough Council
Annual Governance Statement – Action Plan for 2020/21
Interim Review December 2020

Significant Internal Control Issues – Relating to 2019/20 Financial Year

No.	Issue	Action	Due Date	Responsible Officer	Position Update
1	**Procurement / Purchasing** The internal audit of the procurement process identified several areas for improvement.	It was recommended that a strategic review of the procurement process is undertaken that includes risks and opportunities for collaborative working and joint procurement, assessing training needs, benchmarking with other authorities and ensuring the strategy complies with LGA National Procurement Strategy 2018. Management should ensure that cumulative expenditure is reviewed regularly and that the contracts register is updated across the organisation. The procurement SharePoint site should be developed to ensure that is captures all documentation relating to procurement, including evidence of quotation decisions.	31 October 2020	Assistant Director of Corporate & Improvement Services	Following the award of a grant from the LGA Productivity Experts scheme, an independent report has been received which provides a strategic review of the Council's procurement processes. A procurement board has been set up to steer the implementation of the actions outlined in the audit and independent report. It will look for collaborative opportunities, drive efficiencies in upcoming procurements and develop training and understanding. The Council's procurement strategy is being reviewed to include the requirements in relation to social value and environmental impacts. The SharePoint site is under development, this will capture all of the procurement records.

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2	**IT- Social Media** The increasing use of social media to promote Council business creates additional opportunities for information and data to become corrupted or inappropriately accessed. The Internal Audit of Social Media identified several areas where controls needed strengthening to increase data security.	Recommendations included strengthening of password controls, completion of a business needs assessment for new social media platforms, use of external monitoring tools to ensure appropriate use of accounts, inclusion of social media in the Information Security Policy and regular training of officers responsible for the social media accounts.	31 October 2020	Assistant Director of Corporate & Improvement Services	All of the recommendations were accepted, and have been actioned. Internal Audit have been asked to confirm completion as part of the follow-up arrangements.
3.	**Payment Controls** During the course of the Internal Audit review of the payment system, control improvements were identified to strengthen the security of the process.	Recommendations included reviewing how payment files could be amended after authorisation, ensuring officers only had one level of authorisation, strengthening password controls and ensuring two officer authorisations to process payment runs.	30 June 2020	Assistant Director Customers	All of the recommendations were accepted, and have been actioned. Internal Audit have been asked to confirm completion as part of the follow-up arrangements.