

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

1. Meeting:	Audit Committee
2. Date:	26th September 2012
3. Title:	Audit and Inspection Recommendations Update Report
4. Directorate:	Resources

5. Summary

This report summarises the progress against recommendations from across all key external audits and inspections of council services.

It is intended that this report provides a high level analysis of progress with a particular focus on outstanding recommendations and new inspections since the date of the last report (January 2012). A summary of these are detailed within the table in Appendix A. In summary;-

- Since the last report there have been five new inspections and external assessments resulting in 33 new recommendations
- There are currently twelve action plans relating to Inspection and Audit recommendations which are still “active” in the authority (ie contain outstanding recommendations which are still relevant)
- Across these action plans 21 recommendations have been completed and 25 remain outstanding

6. Recommendations

That the Audit Committee:

- **Note the progress achieved against outstanding actions**
- **Advice further actions as necessary**

7. Proposals and Details

The monitoring of Audit and Inspection recommendations provides evidence that the Council is able to respond to external challenge in a timely manner and is committed to continuous improvement. Additionally through analysing the recommendations we are demonstrating our ability to identify and rectify detrimental trends or issues and to deliver service improvement.

Progress against Recommendations

Since the previous January 2012 report progress against recommendations is good. This has resulted in a number of action plans being signed off as complete as either all recommendations have been implemented or subsequent inspections have assessed that there is no need to progress the issues of concern further. Subsequently future audit and inspection reports and associated appendices will omit their details. These are;

- ALMO (November 08)
- Adult Social Care Annual Assessment 2010 (October 10)
- Annual Performance Assessment (December 08)
- Safeguarding / Looked After Children (July / August 2010)
- Local Authority Adoption (January 2011)
- Peer Challenge (October 11)

In addition the Council is no longer formally assessed and accredited to the Customer Service Excellence Standard, although we continue to embed the principles of the standard across the council. Therefore for the purposes of this report, progress monitoring will not continue and individual recommendations closed.

Analysis of outstanding recommendations

Progress against all outstanding audit and inspection recommendations of council services are monitored by Performance & Quality Teams. Currently there are 25 recommendations which still need addressing. However it is worth noting that 24 of these are from five new inspections and external assessments. All are currently progressing and are on track to be delivered within set timescales.

The other ongoing recommendation is from the Audit Commissions review of Health Inequalities in 2009 and relates to breastfeeding. Progress remains ongoing and breastfeeding initiation has dipped and is off target. We are currently off target as the performance has decreased to 57.8% (Q1 2012/13). A planned Health Equity audit will help us to understand the dip in performance and service delivery issues.

New Inspection Reports received

There have been five new inspection judgements received since the last report.

- **Safeguarding Peer Challenge of Children and Young People Services**
This was undertaken in October 2011 by the Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID). Overall strengths included;
 - A positive journey of improvement was acknowledged
 - Strong political and managerial leadership was evident

- There is a commitment to safeguard Rotherham's children
- There is a strong focus on developing user engagement
- Evidence of partnership and joint working
- Good Learning and Development Practice

Due to the nature of the challenge review no recommendations were made however they identified a number of 'areas for consideration'. These were consolidated into six key development areas by the Children and Young People's Services improvement panel

- Clarity of Strategic Governance
- Communication to staff
- Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy
- Commissioning and Value for Money
- Quality Assurance and Performance
- Aspirations and Accountability for our most vulnerable

- **Thematic Inspection of disability services**

Rotherham was one of 12 Local Authorities who were chosen to take part in this inspection process, a single report was published in August pulling together the findings from all 12 Local Authorities identifying good practice and the practice that they found which is not so good, (this report was anonymised). Feedback from the inspectors at the time highlighted good practice in CAFs, co-location of disability services and multi-agency engagement. Eleven improvement areas were also highlighted eight of which are outstanding. In summary these relate to Voice and Influence of the child, Quality Assurance of practice and systems.

- **Review Report On The Registration Service**

This audit was largely positive identifying only three areas for improvement; timeliness of death registrations, registration appointments and documentation of Staff training evaluation

- **Food Standards Agency Audit**

This was undertaken in July 2012, we are fully compliant and no further issues identified.

- **Unannounced inspection of child protection**

This inspection was carried out under the new framework and the Authority was only the second in the country to have such inspection at that time. The new framework now covers 4 judgements, a rating is given to each judgement (including the overall effectiveness judgement)

- Overall effectiveness - Adequate
- The effectiveness of the help and protection provided to children, young people, families and carers – Adequate
- The quality of practice – Adequate
- Leadership and governance – Adequate

The inspectors recognised the series of improvements that have been made since 2009. In some areas the inspectors said that the services provided are good, while in other areas, changes that have been made were seen to be positive but it is still too early to

judge their full impact - hence the overall grading. The key element of the judgements given was in relation to lack of consistency across the whole of the service.

A summary of progress against all recommendations from "Active" Inspection & Audit action plans is provided in Appendix A. The Performance and Quality Team continue to work with services to ensure that the associated outstanding recommendations are completed and ensure services are prepared for new or changing inspection and assessment regimes.

8. Risks and uncertainties

Any risks and uncertainties are highlighted in the report above and should be noted as a matter of interest in light of the potential impact on other aspects of Council performance.

It is essential that in this time of uncertainty and in the absence of any national performance regime (other than children and adult services) that we continue to be able to demonstrate continuous improvement and self regulation through the implementation of any previously recommended actions.

9. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Approaches to inspection and assessment of local authorities are being developed across Government in the light of the decentralisation and localism agenda. In future any central inspection will be focused on the most vulnerable i.e. help to maintain high standards in children's services and adult social care. Intervention will focus on cases of serious risk or failure.

In addition, the Government has now published a draft Audit Bill that confirms changes to the external audit regime applicable from 2012/13. New external audit appointments have been made to all local authorities by the Audit Commission, and these include confirmation of KPMG as Rotherham MBC's external auditor for the next 5 years. The Draft Bill confirms that the scope of external audit will remain substantially the same as in the current regime, which means we do not expect there to be any significant changes to the external audit programmes in the future.

10. Background Papers and Consultation

- All inspectorates' reports, letters and action plans since mid 2007.
- All new and follow up audit reports.
- All inspectorate frameworks, arrangements and guidance documents

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Summary of Recommendations from “Active” Inspection & Audit action plans (which took place from 2007 to Present)

With summary of progression against recommendations since the last report and in total

Inspection / Review (date)	External Assessor	Number of recommendations	Implemented at last report	Implemented since last report	Still outstanding	Overall Completion Date for Recommendations	STATUS
Resources							
Addressing Health Inequalities (January 09)	AC	10	9	0	1	2012	Ongoing
Customer Service Excellence (January 11)	EMQC	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Dec 11	Closed** (No longer active)
Environment and Development Services							
Review Report On The Registration Service In Rotherham (July 11)	Home Office	3	N/A	0	3	Mar 12	Ongoing
Neighbourhoods and Adults Services							
ALMO (November 08)	AC	35	34	1	0	Dec 11	Complete
Adult Social Care Annual Assessment 2010 (October 10)	CQC	3	0	3	0	Dec 11	Complete
Food Standards Agency Audit (July 12)	Food standards agency	0	N/A	0	0	July 11	Fully compliant
Children's Services							
Annual Performance Assessment (December 08)	Ofsted	10	9	1	0	Mar 10	Complete
Safeguarding / Looked After Children (July / August 2010)	Ofsted	10	8	2	0	Nov 10	Complete
Local Authority Adoption (January 2011)	Ofsted	4	2	2	0	Jan 12	Complete
Unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements (May 2011)	Ofsted	4	1	3	0	May 12	Complete
Peer Challenge (October 11)	LGC	6	N/A	6	0	June 12	Complete
Thematic inspection of disability services (March 12)	Ofsted	11	N/A	3	8	Jan 13	Ongoing
Unannounced inspection of child protection (July 12)	Ofsted	13	N/A	0	13	Mar 13	Ongoing
Total Recommendations in “Active” Inspection & Audit action plans		109	63	21	25		

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