

## AUDITS COMPLETED BETWEEN 1<sup>st</sup> MAY 2019 & 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2019

### Purchasing Cards

#### Assurance Level

##### **Assurance: SATISFACTORY**

It is our opinion that controls currently in place within the system provide satisfactory assurance that risks material to the achievement of the systems objectives outlined in the Scope and Objectives section of this report are adequately managed.

#### Key Findings

Key Issues	Strengths and Improvements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing cards should be held securely and used only in accordance with the terms and conditions of issue.</li> <li>• All purchasing card expenditure should be supported by appropriate documented evidence and subject to regular approval by an authorised person.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Smart Data Online (SDOL) system is now being used by all cardholders.</li> <li>• Customisable reports detailing the spend on individual cards are easily accessible.</li> </ul>

#### Summary of Recommendations

An analysis of the recommendations categorised by risk and classification (regulatory or added value) is shown below:

Description	High		Medium		Low	
	R	A	R	A	R	A
Purchasing Card Allocation			1		2	1
Purchasing Card User Agreement					3	
Authorisation of Expenditure			1			
Transparency Agenda					1	
Monitoring of Contract/Non-Contract Spend						2
<b>Total</b>			<b>2</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>

## Council Tax

### Assurance Level

#### **Assurance: SATISFACTORY**

It is our opinion that controls currently in place within the system provide satisfactory assurance that risks material to the achievement of the systems objectives outlined in the Scope and Objectives section of this report are adequately managed.

### Key Findings

<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Strengths and Improvements</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A full review of system access should be undertaken to ensure that only relevant staff have appropriate access to the Council Tax system, and this should be kept up to date.</li> <li>The review/evidence requirements schedule should be finalised and implemented as soon as possible to ensure that all accounts in receipt of a discount/exemption are being reviewed regularly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payments are posted to customer accounts promptly.</li> <li>A satisfactory method of calculating the expected opening debit has now been established to facilitate reconciliation to the processed total.</li> <li>Processed work items are now sample checked to ensure that they are followed out correctly.</li> </ul>

### Summary of Recommendations

An analysis of the recommendations categorised by risk and classification (regulatory or added value) is shown below:

Description	High		Medium		Low	
	R	A	R	A	R	A
Inspections					1	
Quality Checks					1	
Discounts			1		4	
System Access			1			
Refunds					1	
Legislation					1	
<b>Total</b>			<b>2</b>		<b>8</b>	

## Pollution

### Assurance Level

**Assurance: SATISFACTORY**

It is our opinion that controls currently in place within the system provide satisfactory assurance that risks material to the achievement of the systems objectives outlined in the Scope and Objectives section of this report are adequately managed.

### Key Findings

<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Strengths and Improvements</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints are dealt with via the Council's Corporate procedure.</li> <li>Regulatory Information &amp; Management System (RIAMS) has been purchased to manage standards and regulatory information.</li> <li>Low number of statutory notices issued during 2018/19 (13).</li> </ul>

### Summary of Recommendations

An analysis of the recommendations categorised by risk and classification (regulatory or added value) is shown below:

<b>Description</b>	<b>High</b>		<b>Medium</b>		<b>Low</b>	
	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>
Procedure Notes					1	
Electronic Filing						1
Service Requests					2	
Equipment Security					2	
Air Quality					2	
Key Holder Registration Scheme					1	1
Contaminated Land					1	
Private Water Supplies					2	2
<b>Total</b>					<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>

# Housing Benefits

## Assurance Level

### **Assurance: SATISFACTORY**

It is our opinion that controls currently in place within the system provide satisfactory assurance that risks material to the achievement of the systems objectives outlined in the Scope and Objectives section of this report are adequately managed.

## Key Findings

<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Strengths and Improvements</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 'Risk Based Verification Policy' should be reviewed on an annual basis and submitted for approval by the appropriate body.</li> <li>• All new claims should be processed consistently in accordance with the Alliance's 'Risk Based Verification Policy'.</li> <li>• Staff should be regularly reminded of the DWP 'Confidentiality Agreement' and 'Employee Authentication Service (EAS) Terms and Conditions of Use' and the procedure in place for completion and storage of the LAST2 'System Access Record' and LAST1 forms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new benefit claims and changes of circumstances are received online.</li> <li>• The Housing Benefit Debt Service (HBDS) has been implemented in order to identify details of employers and earnings.</li> </ul>

## Summary of Recommendations

An analysis of the recommendations categorised by risk and classification (regulatory or added value) is shown below:

<b>Description</b>	<b>High</b>		<b>Medium</b>		<b>Low</b>	
	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>
Risk Based Verification			2		2	1
Backdated Claims					1	1
Claims Processing					1	1
Management Checks					1	
Restricted Access Accounts					1	
Overpayments					2	
Customer Information System (CIS)			1		2	
<b>Total</b>			<b>3</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>

# Housing Strategy

## Assurance Level

### **Assurance: SATISFACTORY**

It is our opinion that controls currently in place within the system provide satisfactory assurance that risks material to the achievement of the systems objectives outlined in the Scope and Objectives section of this report are adequately managed.

## Key Findings

<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Strengths and Improvements</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 'Right to Buy' grant scheme should be reviewed to ensure that suitable projects are promptly identified in advance of 'Right to Buy' receipts becoming repayable, and that the terms and conditions of the scheme are robust but also attractive to potential developers.</li> <li>Procedures should be implemented to ensure that all relevant Houses in Multiple Occupation licence holders provide a valid gas safety certificate on an annual basis, in accordance with the licence conditions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A strategy has been developed with the aim of reducing empty properties with officers from relevant services meeting on a periodic basis to discuss the achievement of the strategy objectives.</li> </ul>

## Summary of Recommendations

An analysis of the recommendations categorised by risk and classification (regulatory or added value) is shown below:

<b>Description</b>	<b>High</b>		<b>Medium</b>		<b>Low</b>	
	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>
'Right to Buy' Receipts			1			
Empty Property Strategy					1	
Landlord Accreditation					4	1
Caravan/Camping Sites					1	
Houses in Multiple Occupation			1		2	
<b>Total</b>			<b>2</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>

# General Ledger

## Assurance Level

**Assurance: SUBSTANTIAL**

It is our opinion that controls currently in place within the system provide substantial assurance that risks material to the achievement of the systems objectives outlined in the Scope and Objectives section of this report are adequately managed.

## Key Findings

Key Issues	Strengths and Improvements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The end of year monthly bank reconciliation was carried out promptly and found to be in balance.</li><li>• Additional staff have been trained in the monthly/year end bank reconciliation process.</li><li>• Daily reconciliations are carried out between the Cash Book and Nominal Ledger.</li><li>• Integra suspense items are cleared out promptly.</li></ul>

## Summary of Recommendations

An analysis of the recommendations categorised by risk and classification (regulatory or added value) is shown below:

Description	High		Medium		Low	
	R	A	R	A	R	A
None						
<b>Total</b>						

# Payroll

## Assurance Level

**Assurance: SATISFACTORY**

It is our opinion that controls currently in place within the system provide satisfactory assurance that risks material to the achievement of the systems objectives outlined in the Scope and Objectives section of this report are adequately managed.

## Key Findings

<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Strengths and Improvements</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The majority of payroll amendments are now carried out in-house by the Payroll Officer.</li><li>• A good working relationship is in place with the Payroll service provider, Stoke-on-Trent City Council.</li><li>• Payroll data is reconciled monthly by a member of staff independent of the Payroll Section.</li></ul>

## Summary of Recommendations

An analysis of the recommendations categorised by risk and classification (regulatory or added value) is shown below:

<b>Description</b>	<b>High</b>		<b>Medium</b>		<b>Low</b>	
	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>
Payroll Processing					2	
Honorarium Payment					1	
MyView System Access					1	
MyView Amendments					1	
Establishment					1	1
Record Keeping					1	
<b>Total</b>					<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>

## Recovery

### Assurance Level

#### **Assurance: SATISFACTORY**

It is our opinion that controls currently in place within the system provide satisfactory assurance that risks material to the achievement of the systems objectives outlined in the Scope and Objectives section of this report are adequately managed.

### Key Findings

<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Strengths and Improvements</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2018/19 collection rate targets were achieved for Business Rates, Council Tax and Sundry Debtors.</li><li>• Records of the cases passed to collection agents are regularly reconciled between systems.</li></ul>

### Summary of Recommendations

An analysis of the recommendations categorised by risk and classification (regulatory or added value) is shown below:

<b>Description</b>	<b>High</b>		<b>Medium</b>		<b>Low</b>	
	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>
Policies & Procedures					1	
Write Offs					1	1
OHMS System					1	1
<b>Total</b>					<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>