



Licensing Functions Audit Report 2016/17

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Central Midlands Audit Partnership has undertaken an audit to identify the appropriateness and adequacy of the controls in place in relation to certain functions undertaken by the Licensing Team.
- 1.2 Controls were identified as reasonable, with most areas reviewed being adequately controlled, with risks generally managed, but some systems required the introduction or improvement of internal controls.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To provide assurances to the Licensing Committee that licensing functions within Communities and Place do not raise any significant or critical risks to the authority.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 An audit of the Licensing Team was undertaken the Central Midlands Audit Partnership. The purpose of the audit was to identify the appropriateness and adequacy of the controls in place in relation to certain functions undertaken by the team relating to animal welfare, exhumations, charitable collections and mobile home sites.
- 4.2 Controls were identified as reasonable and the procedures to issue licences were identified as robust. Most areas reviewed were being adequately controlled, with risks generally managed, but some systems required the introduction or improvement of internal controls.

4.3 Of the seven areas identified for improvement, all were considered as low risk. All control issues identified were accepted and positive actions have already been taken in relation to six of the weaknesses. Positive action has been agreed for the remaining identified weakness. A summary of the issues identified and actions taken are attached at Appendix 2 for information.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 No other options applicable.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	n/a
Financial officer	n/a
Human Resources officer	n/a
Estates/Property officer	n/a
Service Director(s)	n/a
Other(s)	

For more information contact:	Sandra Mansell 01332 641931 sandra.mansell@derby.gov.uk
Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Summary of issues and actions following audit

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

1.1 None directly arising.

Legal

2.1

Personnel

3.1 None directly arising.

IT

4.1 None directly arising.

Equalities Impact

5.1 None directly arising.

Health and Safety

6.1 None directly arising.

Environmental Sustainability

7.1 None directly arising.

Property and Asset Management

8.1 None directly arising.

Risk Management and Safeguarding

9.1 There would be significant reputational risk to Council if no action was taken to address the issues identified in the report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 The proposals set out in this report address the corporate objectives of:
- protecting vulnerable children, young people, adults and older people
 - promoting health and well-being
 - being more commercial
 - delivering our services differently

Summary of issues and actions following audit	
Issue	Action
1) A review had not recently been undertaken to update procedural guidance in place to support the process to administer licenses relating to animal welfare and the process to oversee exhumations.	This was completed as part of the Departments QA programme, which is no longer in place. It is updated as and when required.
2) A record to evidence the presence of the Environmental Health Officer, at an exhumation was not being maintained.	This was recorded on the departmental information management system but is now also recorded by Bereavement Services.
3) The cost of the Licensing Officers (Environmental Health Officers) time for attendance at exhumations was not being included in the calculation of fees charged to the licensee.	This was acknowledged at the review of the fees and charges in 2016 – 2017 and a cost was introduced.
4) Invoices for the annual billing for licence fees and fee renewals, numbering around 600, were being raised manually and input to the system individually, which was resource intensive.	These are now processed in batches on a monthly basis.
5) The Licensing Team was not receiving reports on the income from the suspense account from Accountancy for them to monitor and identify income belonging to them.	These are now received by email for action.
6) Debts submitted for approval for 'write offs' had not been fully investigated as they included existing customers in receipt of other council services for which either normal payments were being made or arrangements to repay debts were in place.	The Licensing Team carryout the checks they can be reasonably undertake but then passed the information to the corporate team for action.
7) Mobile Home Sites had not been inspected to ensure the number of homes on site and other licence conditions were being adhered with.	Costs agreed and will be reviewed annually along with other fees and charges. Inspection will be carried out when resources available.