

AUDIT COMMITTEE- 8th APRIL 2008 RESPONSE BY LEISURE SERVICES

Background

Audit Sub Committee, noted the following at their meeting on the 18th December 2007:

"With reference to the Leisure Services report the sub-committee expressed disappointment that the recommendations in the previous audit report had not been applied across all Leisure Centres and that this be drawn to the attention of the Head of Services and the Portfolio Holder and that they be asked to attend the next meeting of the sub-committee".

Following an Audit inspection (September 2007) it has been identified that some 'high risk' recommendations previously highlighted, relating to the sharing of passwords when logging onto the authorities IT system, did not appear to have been implemented at all sites. Whilst it confirmed that this practice has ceased at the centres reviewed in 2006-07 (Richard Herrod and Arnold), this practice was identified in the 2007-08 review conducted at Redhill and Calverton LC's.

Response

The Audit Inspection Report dated December 2006, where this was identified as an issue, states that all staff should be reminded that sharing of passwords is prohibited by the Authorities IT security policy. Each officer should only use the own user-id and passwords when logging on to any of the Authorities IT systems.

The response by Head of Leisure stated that IT security was raised at Managers meeting on 27th November 2006 and included in minutes. Also a back up e-mail (19th December 2006) was sent out to managers reminding them to ensure all staff at all sites have been made aware of the Councils IT policy.

This was then cascaded down to staff at all sites.

The Audit Inspection Report dated November 2007 conducted at Redhill and Calverton, identified that staff shared till log-ins when covering for breaks and lunches.

The management comment to this states that at busy times when staff are drafted in to cover on reception it is not always possible to log on and off the till due to the length of time it takes. This is particularly an issue for where there is only one point of sale (Calverton, Redhill, Richard Herrod)

The planned corrective action states that Centre management be informed that sharing log-ons is not advocated under any circumstances.

Centre management to be informed that wherever possible all staff need to log on with their own windows and Flex log-ons before using reception.

These recommendations were discussed at a Facilities Management Team meeting on 12th November 2007.

The November 2007 Report also identified that some staff had access to IT systems other than at the centre where they worked and that access privileges had not been reviewed when staff take up new positions at different centres. Also one known leaver had not had their access terminated.

The management comment is that removal of users on the Flex system is communicated from the IT dept through to centre management. This triggers the removal of access for ex members of staff.

The recommendation is that copies of the leaver forms are to be passed to the personnel department and then on to IT to allow the earliest removal of access.

Again this issue and recommendation was discussed at Facilities Management Team Meeting on 12th November. This was then cascaded down to staff at all sites.

Evidence of the communication of this issue has been supplied to Audit Officers.

General Comments

It seems that that biggest area of concern is the shared use of Flex log-ins. It should be noted that this system includes the till and booking/ administration system as well as cash recording. Log-on and use of the flex system does not allow access to the other Council I.T. Systems such as Agresso or the I: Drive and therefore the only risk to security is for that of cash in the till.

Although this is stated as high risk, staff would not physically have access to reception areas if they were not trained in the use of the Flex system and therefore the log on procedures.

Whilst sharing of log on is not advocated by management there is a need to be sympathetic to the frustration that this can cause both customers and staff when there is a queue of people to be served.

Alterations have been made to the documented procedures for cashing up and refunds procedure to ensure the security of cash.

Staff are asked to sign receipt of these procedures.

Spot checks are also carried out by Internal Audit at the centres and no problems have been identified over this period in relation to cash.

Conclusion

Issues highlighted within the Audit Reports at Leisure Centres have been communicated to staff in both cases and the issue is taken seriously by the management team.

Due to operational needs it is not always possible to ensure that log ons are not used by staff covering busy periods etc, however, this is not condoned.

Any further instances highlighted will be investigated with a view to disciplinary action. However, further detail will be needed with regard to who is using and sharing passwords and in which system.