

Draft Internal Audit Report

Tor Bay Harbour Authority -
Asset Management

Torbay Council

March 2014

Devon Audit Partnership

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1 Introduction

Torbay Council as a Harbour Authority operates and manages three enclosed harbours within the statutory harbour of Tor Bay. The statutory responsibilities of a Harbour Authority are considerable and include the provision of moorings and storage for various types of vessels.

A five year rolling audit plan was taken to the Harbour Committee and approved in June 2011 separating the various operation and strategic elements of the harbour operation into distinct audit areas; this audit is the third audit from the rolling plan and focuses on asset management.

2 Audit Opinion

Improvements Required - In our opinion there are a number of instances where controls and procedures do not adequately mitigate the risks identified. Existing procedures need to be improved in order to ensure they are fully reliable. Recommendations have been made to ensure the organisational objectives are not put at risk.

3 Executive Summary

Governance in relation to Tor Bay Harbour Authority asset management was found to be exceptional, with the Tor Bay Harbour Authority benefiting from the established arrangements of Torbay Council and enhancing these with specific additional requirements addressed through the Harbour Committee.

Although processes and arrangements are in place to operationally manage the assets, a number of weaknesses were identified that could lead to loss of income and unidentified deterioration in assets. The number of issues identified has resulted in our overall assurance opinion being 'Improvements Required'.

Torbay Development Agency (TDA) provide certain services to the Tor Bay Harbour Authority in relation to asset management and hence improved monitoring of service delivery and establishing closer and more effective working practices with the TDA would assist in addressing some of the issues found during this audit.

The detailed findings and recommendations regarding these issues and less important matters are described in the Appendices. Recommendations have been categorised to aid prioritisation. Definitions of the priority categories and the assurance opinion ratings are also given in the Appendices to this report.

4 Assurance Opinion on Specific Sections

The following table summarises our assurance opinions on each of the risks covered during the audit. These combine to provide the overall assurance opinion at Section 2. Definitions of the assurance opinion ratings can be found in the Appendices.

Risks Covered		Level of Assurance
1	Regulatory and procedural requirements not met	High Standard
2	Assets not managed, and related asset financial data is not reliable	Improvements Required

The findings and recommendations in relation to each of these areas are discussed in the "Detailed Audit Observations and Action Plan" appendix. This appendix records the action plan agreed by management to enhance the internal control framework and mitigate identified risks where agreed. Management are required to agree an action plan, ideally within three weeks of receiving the draft internal audit report.

5 Issues for the Annual Governance Statement

The evidence obtained in internal audit reviews can identify issues in respect of risk management, systems and controls that may be relevant to the Annual Governance Statement.

In terms of this review, we are able to report that there are no issues that are arising from the examination of systems and controls that warrant inclusion in the Annual Governance Statement.

6 Scope and Objectives

The audit scope has previously been agreed for 2013/14, as taken to Harbour Committee in June 2013; hence this audit is focussing on asset management and its associated controls.

This audit has been undertaken based on the following key risk areas bulleted below using previous audit work, input from Harbour staff and Internal Audit's view on risk within the function:

- Regulatory and procedural requirements not met;
- Assets not managed and related asset financial data is not reliable.

7 Inherent Limitations

The opinions and recommendations contained within this report are based on our

examination of restricted samples of transactions / records and our discussions with officers responsible for the processes reviewed.

8 Acknowledgements

We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to all those who provided support and assistance during the course of this audit.

Robert Hutchins
Head of Partnership

Definitions of Audit Assurance Opinion Levels

Assurance	Definition
High Standard.	The system and controls in place adequately mitigate exposure to the risks identified. The system is being adhered to and substantial reliance can be placed upon the procedures in place. We have made only minor recommendations aimed at further enhancing already sound procedures.
Good Standard.	The systems and controls generally mitigate the risk identified but a few weaknesses have been identified and / or mitigating controls may not be fully applied. There are no significant matters arising from the audit and the recommendations made serve to strengthen what are mainly reliable procedures.
Improvements required.	In our opinion there are a number of instances where controls and procedures do not adequately mitigate the risks identified. Existing procedures need to be improved in order to ensure that they are fully reliable. Recommendations have been made to ensure that organisational objectives are not put at risk.
Fundamental Weaknesses Identified.	The risks identified are not being controlled and there is an increased likelihood that risks could occur. The matters arising from the audit are sufficiently significant to place doubt on the reliability of the procedures reviewed, to an extent that the objectives and / or resources of the Council may be at risk, and the ability to deliver the service may be adversely affected. Implementation of the recommendations made is a priority.

Definition of Recommendation Priority

Priority	Definitions
High	A significant finding. A key control is absent or is being compromised; if not acted upon this could result in high exposure to risk. Failure to address could result in internal or external responsibilities and obligations not being met.
Medium	Control arrangements not operating as required resulting in a moderate exposure to risk. This could result in minor disruption of service, undetected errors or inefficiencies in service provision. Important recommendations made to improve internal control arrangements and manage identified risks.
Low	Low risk issues, minor system compliance concerns or process inefficiencies where benefit would be gained from improving arrangements. Management should review, make changes if considered necessary or formally agree to accept the risks. These issues may be dealt with outside of the formal report during the course of the audit.

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Marking	Definitions
Not Protectively Marked or Unclassified	Documents, information, data or artefacts that have been prepared for the general public or are for the public web pages or can be given to any member of the public without any exemptions or exceptions to release applying, have the classification NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED. Some organisations will also use the word UNCLASSIFIED for publicly available information.
Official	The majority of information that is created or processed by the public sector. This includes routine business operations and services, some of which could have damaging consequences if lost, stolen or published in the media, but are not subject to a heightened threat profile.
Secret	Very sensitive information that justifies heightened protective measures to defend against determined and highly capable threat actors. For example, where compromise could seriously damage military capabilities, international relations or the investigation of serious organised crime.
Top Secret	The most sensitive information requiring the highest levels of protection from the most serious threats. For example, where compromise could cause widespread loss of life or else threaten the security or economic wellbeing of the country or friendly nations.