

Appendix – March 2023 update on Grant Thornton 2020/21 IT Control recommendations

No.	Issue	Initial Management Response (March 2021)	Updated Management Response (March 2023)
1	User access for terminated employees/ leavers not disabled in a timely manner	The process to identify employee leavers will be enhanced to provide timely notification to Finance system staff to delete Altair and E5 system access	<p>Following the e5 upgrade in June 2022, we now have single sign-on for Finance System users. This means the E5 user accounts are now directly linked to Council AD (Active Directory) accounts.</p> <p>In November 2022, automatic disabling was enabled so that E5 access is now automatically disabled when a AD account is closed or suspended.</p>
2	Lack of documentation over Altair change of access rights	User access are assigned to a particular job role in line with the requirements of the role. There is a dedicated module to manage the security appropriately, of which only the team managers have access	As previous
3	Lack of documentation over testing performed for Altair upgrades	<p>This dedicated application has been used by the vast majority of LGPS funds for many years. Over that time a strong control framework has been developed which includes a testing working party who perform user acceptance testing. With every new release, Aquila Heywood issues a release guide detailing the content and changes incorporated into that release, and the system help is updated accordingly.</p> <p>Where appropriate, webinars are provided, which give training on the amendments.</p> <p>Furthermore, specialist user groups can provide additional support. To provide the WCC fund with</p>	As previous

		additional assurance, a dummy payroll is run after each upgrade in TEST	
4	Lack of review of information security event/audit logs	Altair and E5 record any attempt to access the system, storing the date and time a user attempted to access it, and whether that attempt was successful. We can interrogate this data, and this will now be done on a regular basis	Improved Audit logs have been included in the development list, with intent to integrate this into the system and processes as soon as possible.
5	Insufficient periodic review of user access	A regular review of users will be undertaken and system access rights updated with any changes	A review of user roles is on the development list, with a view to embedding into BAU processes as soon as possible.
6	Lack of documented IT operations policies	We are currently reviewing our Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation. This exercise will include a review of key policy documents and will include a review of IT policies	As part of the Finance Improvement Plan, there is a workstream on financial regulations. Furthermore, IT have now included relevant policy documents on their webpage accessible to staff members.
7	Lack of documentation/evidence on E5 batch job completion process	The E5 Financial Systems Team receive a one-word email notification upon the completion of a batch job process and this either confirms that the process has successfully completed or has abended. The Team promptly investigates all abended processes and carries out remedial action as required in order to ensure the integrity and completeness of the Financial System. We will consider evidencing this process to enable independent review and verification.	The procedure has been altered to now include notification, confirmation and logging of a batch number following a batch process.
8	Non-compliance with the password policy	We will review the password settings within E5 and Altair, with a view to aligning these to the WCC password policy	There is now single sign-in, so the password settings are fully aligned.

9	Lack of process to proactively review IT service provider assurance reports	The County Council will consider this and discuss with the software providers for Altair and E5 with the aim of receiving suitable assurance	ISO27001 certificate has been received and reviewed
10	No employee acknowledgement of the WCC IT policies	We will give consideration to introducing a process whereby employees are required to acknowledge their understanding and adherence to WCC IT Policies	We are currently developing a business case to take to COG to approve the creation of a mandatory eLearning course to be completed by all employees to confirm understanding and acceptance of our IT policies.