



THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This is a report prepared to update the Governance and Audit and Standards Committee on the work undertaken within Adult Social Care to address the risks identified following an Internal Audit review within Adult Social Care regarding its provision of Direct Payments.
- 1.2 An initial audit was completed in 20/21 with subsequent follow up internal audits taking place in December 2022 and August 2023. Whilst both follow up reviews noted progress, actions to mitigate risk exposure has taken longer than originally envisaged. All recommendations from audits to date relating to finance systems and processes have been implemented.
- 1.3 The main areas of risk were linked to recording and consistency of practice. This included the following:
 1. Support planning did not always state outcomes and allowable expenditure was not always clear.
 2. Reviews were not undertaken within the required timeframe.
 3. Support plans were not always updated to reflect changes in need.
 4. Practice was inconsistent.
 5. Financial information was not always consistent across System1 and ContrOCC.
 6. Lack of governance processes in place to assess quality of practice.

2. Position update

- 2.1 A number of pieces of work have been undertaken to address the risks that internal audit raised, with respect of Direct Payments. A flowchart has been produced which details what actions are needed to set up a direct payment. In consultation with a group of adults who use Direct Payments a draft policy has been produced. Once this policy has been signed off workshops will be planned in with social care and finance colleagues to ensure the requirements for setting up a Direct Payment are clear.
- 2.2 Resources have been deployed to target recent case file reviews of all Direct Payment cases to ensure the direct payment calculator, support plan and order on ControCC (electronic system) are consistent. There is now a requirement that supervisors undertake two audits per practitioner per year using a Direct Payment audit tool. Quarterly governance meetings have been set up and Direct Payments will be a standing agenda item.



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2.3 It is noted that the last internal audit report found that there were still some inconsistencies in recording. The requirement for supervisors to audit, and report findings into a quarterly governance meeting will provide ongoing internal scrutiny of this area of practice.

3. Work outstanding.

3.1 Progress has been made in improving practice, however there is more work to be done.

The following work is planned for 2024:

1. Direct Payments project, which will review options for improving the way Direct Payments are currently delivered.
2. Embedding of strength-based practice across all teams. This will include work on outcome-based support planning. This will ensure allowable expenditure is clearly articulated and linked to outcomes recorded in the support plan.
3. Review of the existing documentation, to include the development of a separate support plan document.
4. Focus on increasing the number of residents who take up Direct Payments, supporting more choice and control.

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Signed by (Director)

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Self-Directed Support - Direct Payments PCC23/24 - 003	Internal Audit and Adult Social Care