

Audit, Risk and Governance Committee
Meeting to be held on Monday, 27 January 2020

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Update Report: Outstanding Actions from 2017/18 Audit Work, Adult and Children's Services.

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

After reviewing the Internal Audit Progress Report at its meeting on 28 October 2019, the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee requested an update report from the relevant Executive Directors regarding progress made toward outstanding actions from the 2017/18 internal audits. This report summarises actions taken in each of the following areas:

1. Transition from children's to adult services.
2. Personal budgets for children's service users and direct payments to their carers.
3. Case management of adult occupational therapy services

Recommendation

The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee is asked to note the progress made in the three audit areas identified.

Background and Advice

As stated above this report summarises actions taken in the following three areas:

1. Transition from children's to adult services

The internal audit actions for the Transitions Team have now been incorporated into the wider strategic piece of work which sits under the Preparation for Adulthood Steering Group.

A joint Preparation for Adulthood Steering Group is now in place co-chaired by the Director of Education and Skills in Children's Services and Director of Adults Disability and Care Services with clear terms of reference.

A shared Preparation for Adulthood vision has been developed across the wider health and social care system and been approved by the Preparation for Adulthood Steering Group and being taken forward for action into the Special Educational Needs and Disability Partnership Board in January 2020 and a subsequent system wide strategy will follow.

A revised transition proposal has been agreed via the Preparation for Adulthood Steering Group to confirm the key roles and responsibilities for the transition service from December 2019.

Once the wider Preparation for Adulthood Strategy has been agreed a more specific transition strategy will be finalised outlining the transitions service along with policy and guidance.

The transitions team are currently in a re-organisation of the team structure that best meets the outcomes required of the team. The Transitions Team currently is comprised of three small locality teams. This is not an efficient way of managing a small team and so is moving to a countywide structure.

Key workshops with transitions staff have been scheduled in January/February 2020 to map out our current processes and to ensure we fully understand the challenges facing the Transitions Team. Better understanding of these challenges will help clearly define the transformed service.

Key engagement with internal teams

- i. Communications - to ensure we have a clear communication plan so those impacted by these changes are kept up to speed and also to review both the intranet and internet webpages for transition information and guidance so there is clear understanding of the process, timescales and expectations.
- ii. Core Systems - the council essentially uses a different electronic recording system for children than for adults. This causes a number of challenges for the Transitions Team who work across both systems. Work is ongoing with core systems to find solutions that will ensure a more streamlined service and one that is able to provide better data to enable more accurate demand forecasting.
- iii. Business Intelligence - to determine what data we currently collect and what data we would like to collect going forwards. This will give senior strategic managers a better sense of future demand and what resources will be required to meet that demand.

Work is underway to develop a new referral form capturing the required information from schools, parents and carers and individuals as well as ensuring we have clear consent from parents and carers to store information and complete the relevant assessments.

2. Personal budgets for children's service users and direct payments to their carers

Initial action has been undertaken to train staff and amend guidance on Direct Payments, to ensure recording of information and secure compliance with financial and safeguarding requirements. Further work needs to take place to review current practice to ensure actions are completed and practice embedded and in particular that education and social care staff respond to families in a coherent way.

The remaining outstanding action will be progressed and monitored through the Special Educational Needs and Disability Improvement programme going forward to ensure progress to completion, including improving information as part of the Local Offer, recording of information and full compliance with financial and safeguarding requirements. This will necessitate a lead identified for each action and clear timescales for the completion of actions in accordance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Partnership processes which recently received a 'substantial assurance' following an internal audit.

3. Case management of adult occupational therapy services

The internal review of case management of occupational therapy services' was generally positive and recommendations have all been implemented with one action outstanding.

That remaining action was 'to implement a case-load tracker within Liquidlogic adults' social care system rather than using a set of spreadsheets'. It was reported at the committee that it was unlikely that this improvement would be achieved in the foreseeable future.

This action has now been superseded in two ways.

Firstly, the original proposal to build a tracker was based on the approach developed in other areas of adult social care, most notably older people's social work teams, in order to get a firm grip on performance including social work waiting times, reablement performance, acute hospitals are some of the examples.

Whilst necessary at the time, the trackers were only ever intended to be an interim rather than a long term solution as they present technical limitations and are significantly resource intensive not representing the most efficient or effective way of working and thus not ideal to replicate. It was therefore agreed not to take this option forward in relation to occupational therapy.

Secondly, the council has recently procured a new analytical tool from Microsoft called 'Power BI'. This is now being deployed initially in adult social care so that the existing 'trackers' used to monitor performance can be decommissioned. In due course the intention is to ensure the performance reporting available through Power BI will offer a better way for management and staff to understand and monitor all the key metrics and that includes relevant areas of the occupational therapy service. The performance continues to be monitored under existing arrangements engaging managers at all levels.

Consultation

N/A

Implications:

N/A

Risk Management

Transition from children's to adult services is also monitored by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Partnership Board as part of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Improvement Plan.

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A