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**REPORT TO: AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 14 FEBRUARY 2024**

**SUBJECT: INTERNAL AUDIT SECTION – COMPLETED PROJECTS REPORT**

**BY: AUDIT AND RISK MANAGER**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 The report advises Committee on the work of the Internal Audit Section for the period from 22 November 2023 to 14 February 2024.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (I) (2) and (8) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to consideration of reports from the Council's Internal Auditor and monitoring delivery of the audit service through receipt of quarterly reports on work carried out by Internal Audit.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **That Committee consider the contents of this report, seeks clarification on any points noted and otherwise notes the report.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This report provides details of the following internal audit work concluded during the period 22 November 2023 to 14 February 2024:

**Moray Integrated Community Equipment Store**

- 3.2 A review of the Occupational Therapy Store, now known as the Moray Integrated Community Equipment Store, has been undertaken. Occupational Therapy stock comprises aids and equipment issued to service users to help with various daily tasks, including cooking, dressing and bathing. The individual items of equipment held can vary in value from a few pounds to upwards of £1,000 for certain types of hoists and specialised seating. The total stock turnover for 2022/23 amounted to approximately £500,000. A particular feature of this store is that it also deals with returns of equipment that is no longer required, and where possible, this equipment is decontaminated and made available for reuse. The audit reviewed the systems and controls in managing the store, covering purchases, issues and storage of stock items. Significant findings were found where improvements are required to current operating arrangements. However, it is pleasing to report that the Service has agreed to all the recommendations. The executive summary and recommendations for this project are given in **Appendix 1**.

### **Children's Services Commissioning**

- 3.3 An audit of the arrangements for commissioning children's social care services has been undertaken. The audit reviewed the key controls in operation within Children's Services with regard to the external commissioning of social care services. Services delivered included contracts for preventative, support and restorative services and residential care, and the commissioning of out of area residential placements required due to the limited capacity of specialised care within the Moray locality. The annual budget for commissioning children's social care services covered by the audit utilising national framework and local contract arrangements totals £7.4 million, of which £4.3 million relates to out of area placements. The audit found within the parameters of the audit scope that the delivery and management of children's social care commissioning services to be well managed. The executive summary and recommendations for this project are given in **Appendix 2**.

### **Food Standards Scotland Guidelines**

- 3.4 A review has been undertaken of systems and procedures used by the Council's Environmental Health Service to evidence compliance with the Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) developed by Food Standards Scotland. Local Authorities are required to monitor compliance with food hygiene and standards on behalf of Food Standards Scotland. In 2019, the Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) introduced a new Food Law Rating System whereby local authorities classify all food business operators within their locality into defined category ratings that determine the requirements and frequency of inspections to assess compliance with the food safety standards. At the time of this audit, it was noted that over 1,300 food business operators were registered with the Council. The audit tested the key controls and operational practices within the Environmental Health Service to evidence the Council's compliance with the requirements of the Code. The audit reviewed service delivery planning arrangements and checked the processes and procedures developed for registering and monitoring food business operators' compliance with food safety standards and regulations. Audit testing found no significant issues of concern. However, as with other Local Authorities, full implementation of the Code has taken longer than anticipated, but the Service is working on an agreed programme to ensure full compliance with the Food Law Rating System. The executive summary and recommendations for this project are given in **Appendix 3**.

## **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

- (a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP))**  
Internal audit work supports good governance and the delivery of efficient services.
- (b) **Policy and Legal**  
No implications.
- (c) **Financial Implications**  
No implications directly arising from this report.
- (d) **Risk Implications**  
The independent review of selected systems and procedures mitigates the risks associated with inadequate or ineffective control procedures.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

No implications.

**(f) Property**

No implications.

**(g) Equalities/ Socio Economic Impacts**

No implications.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

No implications.

**(i) Consultations**

There have been no direct consultations during the preparation of this report.

**5. CONCLUSION**

**5.1 This report provides Committee with a summary of findings arising from an audit project completed during the review period.**

Author of Report: Dafydd Lewis, Audit and Risk Manager  
Background Papers: Internal audit files  
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