



REPORT TO: MORAY INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD AUDIT, PERFORMANCE AND RISK COMMITTEE ON 26 AUGUST 2021

SUBJECT: INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

BY: CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITOR

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To provide an update on audit work progressed since the last meeting of the Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Audit, Performance and Risk Committee is asked to consider and note this audit update.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) require the Chief Internal Auditor to prepare and present reports to committee on internal audit's activity relative to the audit plan and on any other relevant matters.

3.2 Challenges associated with the pandemic still remain, resulting in significant changes within current working practices that make the audit process more difficult and uncertainty still remains regarding these arrangements in the period ahead. All audit staff are still working from home, which brings some limitations to the audit process.

4. KEY MATTERS RELEVANT TO RECOMMENDATION

Self Directed Support (SDS)

4.1 An audit is currently ongoing regarding the financial monitoring arrangements within the SDS Team for direct payments made to service users. The audit will check for effective arrangements in the monitoring of funds issued to service users. A check will also be made to ensure that monies awarded and expenditure incurred by service users correspond to their support plan.

Petty Cash

- 4.2 A review was undertaken of the systems and procedures for the administration of petty cash funds. Petty cash is an amount of money held by establishments or services in cash to meet minor items of expenditure. The audit report has been prepared and a response requested to the recommendations.

Social Media

- 4.3 An audit has been undertaken of the Council's arrangements on the use of social media. Social media refers to websites and applications e.g. Facebook and Twitter that are designed to allow people to share content quickly, efficiently, and in real-time. The audit reviewed the Council's guidelines and procedures on the use of social media. Testing has also been undertaken to establish how officers are authorised to communicate information through social media and monitoring arrangements of postings. The audit report has been prepared and a response requested to the recommendations.

Business Continuity

- 4.4 An audit has been undertaken of the Council's Business Continuity arrangements. Business Continuity is an important part of corporate governance and is a specific risk management process designed to establish and manage the risks that may interrupt or stop effective service delivery. The scope of the audit was to review the Council's Business Continuity arrangements to confirm up to date policies, procedures and plans are regularly tested and reviewed, and that an appropriate level of awareness of Business Continuity is held throughout the organisation. An audit report has been prepared and a response requested to the recommendations.

Self-directed Support Framework of Standards- Joint working arrangements with Social Work Scotland

- 4.5 It was noted that recently the Health and Social Care Moray has been successful in a joint working arrangement with Social Work Scotland to assist in the implementation of the new self directed support standards. The standards are intended to promote a greater flexibility and autonomy in meeting service users support needs. Implementation of these new standards may therefore require a review of current arrangements regarding authorisation, monitoring and reporting of expenditure in the near future.

Staffing

- 4.6 Currently the Internal Audit Section has a number of staff vacancies including the post of the Internal Audit Manager, who undertakes the Chief Internal Auditor role for the IJB. A recruitment process has started to ensure the staffing establishment for internal audit remains fit for purpose going forward. However, until this is completed and all posts filled, there is a risk the service may have insufficient capacity to meet the requirements placed upon it by the internal auditing standards.

5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)) and Moray Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan “Moray Partners in Care 2019 – 2029”

Not directly applicable.

(b) Policy and Legal

The internal audit service is provided in terms of paragraph 7:1 of the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, and there is a requirement to provide a service in accordance with published Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

(c) Financial Implications

No implications directly arising from this report.

(d) Risk Implications

The pandemic continues to generate challenges for all services, and with the new normal as yet uncertain internal audit's focus will be to do what it can to support good governance and the integrity of systems; to learn from the experience and give consideration to how best it can continue to provide the audit assurance required in terms of Internal Auditing Standards.

(e) Staffing Implications

A number of staffing issues within Internal Audit require to be addressed as outlined in this report.

(f) Property

No implications.

(g) Equalities/ Socio Economic Impacts

No implications.

(h) Consultations

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

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 This report provides and update on progress re projects included in the audit plan and on other issues relevant to the MIJB.

Author of Report: Dafydd Lewis, Senior Auditor
Background Papers: Internal Audit Files
Ref: mijb/ap&rc/26082021