

Audit	Background to review	Key findings	Audit opinion (1)	Recommendations for improvement (Priority) (2)
<p>Residential Care Homes – Managing Residents’ Monies</p>	<p>The council has 13 in-house residential care homes: six for older people; and seven for people with learning disabilities. In July, the council was supporting over 260 permanent residents in these homes to manage their personal money, i.e. money for day-to-day expenses. The service requested an audit of the management of residents’ monies.</p>	<p>There were a number of areas of concern arising from this audit that pose financial and reputational risks to the council. Key concerns include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of date and unavailable central guidance leading to inconsistent, local procedures at individual homes; • 45 personal accounts with overdrawn balances; • Banking duties being carried out by lone officers; • Failure to store cash securely despite safes being available; • Officers withdrawing cash from residents’ cash tins with no record of authorisation from the resident; and • Officers using their own money to make purchases on behalf of residents. <p>Despite these concerns, the desire of officers to help and support residents was evident at all homes. It was apparent that officers were acting with good intentions and the best interests of residents in mind.</p>	<p>Major Improvement Needed</p>	<p>The Service Delivery and ASC Finance teams must work together to produce updated guidance for managing personal accounts. This exercise must consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of personal accounts templates and spreadsheets and reconciliation requirements; • Escalation procedures for accounts with low or overdrawn balances; • Defining authorisation levels for access to safes; • Arrangements for obtaining resident authorisation for cash withdrawals; • Creation and retention of records including officers receiving cash; • Evidence of spend requirements where residents withdraw cash and where officers purchase on behalf of residents; and • Checks to ensure residents receive goods purchased. (H) <p>The updated Imprest procedure notes should be finalised and circulated to all relevant teams and care homes. (H)</p> <p>All debit [overdrawn] balances must be investigated and corrective action taken. (H)</p>

Audit	Background to review	Key findings	Audit opinion (1)	Recommendations for improvement (Priority) (2)
Residential Care Homes – Managing Residents’ Monies cont’d			Major Improvement Needed	<p>Implement a strict policy whereby officers undertaking banking duties do so in pairs, driving to the bank where possible. (H)</p> <p>The auditor has given the AD for Service Delivery a copy of Internal Audits’ safe guidance and detailed recommendations on the use of safes. These procedures should be implemented immediately. (H)</p> <p>The recommendations as above include guidance on storing bank cards and PINs but the service should work with the Financial Assessment & Benefits Team to determine the capacity of residents to keep their own bank cards or PINs. (H)</p> <p>Clear communication must be sent to all homes prohibiting officers from using their own funds to make purchases on behalf of residents. (H)</p>

¹ Audit Opinions

Effective	Controls evaluated are adequate, appropriate, and effective to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and objectives should be met.
Some Improvement Needed	A few specific control weaknesses were noted; generally however, controls evaluated are adequate, appropriate, and effective to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and objectives should be met.
Major Improvement Needed	Numerous specific control weaknesses were noted. Controls evaluated are unlikely to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and objectives should be met.
Unsatisfactory	Controls evaluated are not adequate, appropriate, or effective to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and objectives should be met.

² Audit Recommendations

Priority High (H) - major control weakness requiring immediate implementation of recommendation

Priority Medium (M) - existing procedures have a negative impact on internal control or the efficient use of resources

Priority Low (L) - recommendation represents good practice but its implementation is not fundamental to internal control

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