

Internal Audit Report



Internal Audit Report
Adult Social Work & Care
Carers' Act Implementation
Assignment No. 18-22
March 2019

Final Report

(Report No. 19/159)

Legal and Governance
Corporate and Democratic Services
Perth & Kinross Council
Council Offices
2 High Street
Perth
PH1 5PH

Internal Audit Report

Internal Audit

“Internal Audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation’s operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes” Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards (PSIAS).

The Council’s Audit Committee approved the PSIAS as the relevant standard for its Internal Audit activity.

Background and Introduction

This audit was carried out as part of the audit plan for 2018/19, which was approved by the Audit Committee on 27 June 2018.

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 came into force on 1 April 2018 and sets out responsibilities for local authorities and health boards to deliver carer support, work closely with carers, and where relevant the Integrated Joint Boards (IJB). The Act defines an unpaid carer as an “individual who provides or intends to provide care for another individual (the “cared for person”)”. Identification of carers (including “hidden carers”), carer involvement, a preventative approach and offering information and advice to carers are key to implementing the Act.

As part of the joint working arrangements and delegation to the Perth Kinross Joint Integration Board (P&K IJB) a Transformation Project ‘Shifting the Balance of Care’ invested in additional Carers Support with the aim to reduce carer breakdown and long term placements in residential care. In September 2018, a Carers Programme Board was created specifically to manage delivery of this service. Shared working with external bodies also includes the third sector for Carers.

Perth & Kinross Council (PKC) and Health and Social Care Partnership (P&K HSCP), work in partnership with Perth & Kinross Association of Voluntary Service (PKAVS) and are commissioned to offer support and inclusion for Carers.

P&K HSCP Annual Performance Report 2017-2018 included National Health & Wellbeing Outcome 6 –‘People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their health and wellbeing’.

41% of carers who responded to the Health and Clinical Excellence survey in 2017/18 in Perth & Kinross feel supported to continue in their caring role which sits above the Scotland average of 37%.

Scope and Limitations

The audit reviewed support processes for adult carers as defined in the Act. P&K HSCP provide support for Adult Carers which are defined by the Act as being at least 18 years old and not a Young Carer. Education & Children's Services support Young Carers who are defined as being either under 18 years or 18 years but still at school. Young Carers have been excluded from the scope of this audit and will be included for consideration in a future internal audit plan.

Internal Audit Report

The audit has reviewed the arrangements that have been put in place by the Partnership to support the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. The effectiveness of these arrangements will be assessed over time and therefore no assessment of this has been undertaken as part of this audit.

The audit included interviews with officers and a review of documentation to ensure that the Council has adequate arrangements in place for the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. Audit testing was carried out during March 2019.

Control Objectives and Opinions

This section describes the purpose of the audit and summarises the results. A 'control objective' is a management objective that requires the maintenance of adequate and effective internal controls to ensure that it is achieved. Each control objective has been given a rating describing, on the basis of the audit work done, the actual strength of the internal controls found to be in place. Areas of good or poor practice are described where appropriate.

Control Objective: To ensure that the Council has adequate arrangements in place for implementation of the Carers [Scotland] Act 2016.

Internal Audit Comments:

Audit testing and review of documentation confirmed that the Council has adequate arrangements in place to support the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. This is evidenced by the following:

Guidance to support implementation of the Carers Act defines responsibilities and duties of local authorities including –

- Adult Carer Support Plan
- Local Eligibility Criteria
- Provision of support, waiving of charges and replacement care
- Carer involvement in service planning
- Local Carer Strategy
- Information and advice for carers
- Short Breaks Services Statement

These responsibilities were reviewed and findings are reported below:

- The Council website describes PKC's duty to provide the carer with an opportunity to speak to someone about what help would be useful in their caring role. It states that an Adult Carer Support Plan will be written outlining the support which may help the carer remain in a caring role and provides contact details. This is a change from previous legislative duties to carry out a 'carer's assessment'. Evidence of a standard support plan confirmed that it identifies the carer's personal outcomes, needs and the support to be provided by the Partnership to meet these needs. PKAVS publicises support and offers a similar service for both Adult and Young Adult Carers by offering online forms on its website Hub.
- The Council's obligation to set local eligibility criteria has been met with the publication on the Council's website in January 2018 of a local eligibility criteria framework for adult carers. This framework was developed and designed in

consultation with local carers between October to December 2017 and determines the level of support a carer can expect to receive as well as whether the support will be provided to the carer under a mandatory duty or a discretionary power.

- Provision of support, waiving of charges and replacement care duties include consideration of whether support should take the form of, or include a break from caring. Charging depends on the impact of caring on the carer in accordance with Waiving of Charges Regulations and Eligibility Criteria. A decision matrix is being developed to assist Team Leaders to decide on support, waiving of charges and replacement care for short term breaks. Both PKAVS and the Perth and Kinross Council websites detail various short breaks for carers and the support available including Respitality which aims to connect local organisations that support unpaid carers with hospitality and leisure providers who provide free access to their facilities.
- Sections 29 and 30 of the Act require local authorities to involve individual carers in decision making. A survey called 'Getting it Right for Carers across Perth and Kinross' on behalf of P&K HSCP ran in October 2018 and informed the Carers strategic direction. A list of outputs from this consultation was published on the PKAVS hub website. Carer involvement in Perth and Kinross service planning was evident in events such as the annual Carers' Conference. The latest conference held in November 2018 was a joint effort between PKAVS Carers Hub Team and P&K HSCP with unpaid carers and professional delegates contributing views and sharing experiences. Smaller conference type events are planned for localities during Carers Week in June 2019.
- A draft Local Carers' Strategy for 2019 – 2022 was evidenced and reported to be in line with the draft overarching Perth & Kinross Health & Social Care Strategic Commissioning plan. An updated Strategic Commissioning Plan is due to be presented for approval to the Integrated Joint Board in September 2019. The revised Carers' Strategy incorporates input from the Carers' Conference and a Carers Workshop held in December 2018. There has also been an online Carer Services evaluation survey. The Carers' Strategy is due to be presented at the Carers Programme Board in March 2019.
- P&K HSCP commissioned PKAVS to provide an Information and Advice Service as required by Section 34 of the Act. The PKAVS online resource Carers Hub has specific site areas offering information, support and advice to different Carers by age group as well as parents and professionals. PKAVS set up a Carers Telephone and Support Service in February 2018 providing not only a simple route to contacting someone to talk to about caring issues, but also providing a valuable and valued support to Carers on a regular basis. There is also information on the Council website with resources by areas including Carers and money matters; news and events; health and wellbeing; support and short breaks, plus an email address, phone number and address of the Early Intervention and Prevention Team. PKAVS also provide training for Carers such as first aid and moving and handling.
- A Short Breaks Services Statement for local carers and cared-for persons was approved and published in December 2018 to comply with section 35 of the Act. This is available online on the Council website with different options of short breaks, information and contact details to assist carers' choices and

Internal Audit Report

applications for support. PKAVS website also provides links to the full statement. This provides definitions of terms and can be obtained in other formats and languages if required. A one page summary of the statement is also available online.	
Strength of Internal Controls:	Strong

Management Action and Follow-Up

There are no actions arising from this audit. As such, no management action plan is required.

Acknowledgements

Internal Audit acknowledges with thanks the co-operation of K Sharp, Service Manager and A Gallacher, Business Improvement Officer during this audit.

Feedback

Internal Audit welcomes feedback, in connection with this audit or with the Internal Audit service in general.

Distribution

This report has been distributed to:

K Reid, Chief Executive

J Valentine, Depute Chief Executive

G Patterson, Chief Officer, Health & Social Care Partnership

D Fraser, Head of Adult Social Work and Social Care

K Sharp, Service Manager and Carers Strategic Lead

P Henderson, Service Manager (Strategic Lead Older People)

A Gallacher, Business Improvement Officer

L Simpson, Head of Legal and Governance Services

S Mackenzie, Head of Finance

Committee Services

External Audit

Authorisation

The auditor for this assignment was N Duncan. The supervising auditor was M Morrison.

This report is authorised for issue:

J Clark
Chief Internal Auditor
Date: