



Governance and Audit Committee – 9 November 2021

Response to the Community Equipment Stores & Community Alarms Service Audit Report 2021/22

Purpose:	To provide an update and response to the 2021/22 internal audit of Community Equipment Stores and the Community Alarms Service.
Report Author:	Helen St John (Head of Integrated Community Services)
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

Service response to the internal audits of Community Equipment Stores and the Community Alarms Service.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As a result of internal audits on the Community Equipment Stores and Community Alarms service both were issued an assurance level of 'Moderate'
- 1.2 This report offers additional information and summary response on recommendations across both audits focusing specifically on the 2 x High Risk (HR); 4 x Medium Risk (MR).
- 1.3 An action plan covering all recommendations has been developed in response to the findings and responsibilities assigned for implementation and is appended to this report.

2. High Risk and Medium Risk Recommendations of Internal Audit – Additional Information and summary Service Response

- 2.1 High Risk Recommendation – Stock of Equipment:** Across both audits of Community Alarms and Community Equipment the recommendation was made to review and establish the reason for items of equipment classed as ‘missing in action’. The audits highlighted a need to scrutinise our in house stock control systems and apply more comprehensive controls and thresholds to our tracking of equipment not returned/collected as expected. This is to be taken forward as described in the appended action plan.

During 2020/21 35,000 individual pieces of equipment were delivered to people’s homes, residential care homes and satellite stores across hospital sites in the region. Community Alarms are in the homes/Sheltered accommodation of 4,500 clients across Swansea. This combined total offers some context for the figures provided within the audit report which identifies ‘MIA’ covering a period of 12 years.

If based on current levels of demand the total classed as ‘MIA’ would equate to approximately 1.6% of total community equipment provided for the same period. This level will be reviewed against more recent collection and recycling rates and a threshold established with partners for formal categorisation of non-returned items.

- 2.2 High Risk Recommendation – Service Resilience:** Within the Community Alarms audit report the current level of senior staffing within the service was highlighted. As explained in the action plan a current whole service restructure is underway with partners to address staffing levels across both Community Alarms and Community Equipment Services. In the interim a temporary senior officer has recently been employed within the community alarms service to support the digital switch over programme and wider service delivery.
- 2.3 Medium Risk Recommendation – GDPR Training & Compliance:** Across both Community Alarms and Community Equipment Service the employee training and managers GDPR checklist compliance was highlighted as an immediate action. As detailed in the action plan this is acknowledged by the service and will be completed as a matter of priority. Appropriate access to online training will be sought for non-office based staff and specific training support for the number of supported employees with learning disabilities, visual and/or hearing impairment within the service will be explored with colleagues in Training and employability Services.
- 2.4 Medium Risk Recommendation – Contract Procedure Rules:** Within the Community Equipment Service audit recommendations were made to align all purchases in accordance with contract procedure rules of the Council. As explained within the action plan the service is already reviewing all ‘specialist’ equipment not currently held within one of the 3 frameworks applicable to the pooled fund arrangements of the Community Equipment

Store. This work is ongoing and will provide the necessary assurance and monitoring of any specialist equipment purchases going forward.

The remaining medium risk recommendations around P-card approvals and equipment servicing within Community Equipment Service have been closed as detailed within the updated action plan.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications other than those set out in the body of the report.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications other than those set out in the body of the report.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices:

Appendix A - Updated Community Alarms Action Plan.

Appendix B - Updated Community Equipment Service Action Plan.

Appendix C - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form – Community Alarm Service.

Appendix D - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form – Community Equipment Service.