



Report of the Director of Social Services

Governance & Audit Committee – 14 December 2022

Western Bay Adoption Service Report 2022/23

Purpose:	To provide an update on the Western Bay Adoption Service audit report for the above period
Report Author:	Julie Davies, Head of Service and Nichola Rogers, Regional Adoption Manager, Western Bay Adoption Service.
Finance Officer:	Chris Davies
Legal Officer:	Tracy Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

Internal Audit on Western Bay Adoption Service – Update October 2022

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As a result of an internal audit on the Western Bay Adoption Service carried out in September 2022, an assurance level of **moderate** was given.
- 1.2 An action plan was developed to address the issues identified and appropriate implementation steps put in place. (Appendix A)
- 1.3 This report highlights the two Medium Risk items and the one high risk item only. All items can be found within Appendix B, which sets out the report in full and associated actions, Low Risk (LR) items and points of good practice (GP).
- 1.4 This action plan identified the following MR/HR actions:

Expenditure

A sample of fifteen payments for the supply of goods or services was selected and checked for compliance with the Council's Spending Restrictions, Contract Procedure Rules and Accounting Instructions. The following was found that all purchase orders had been raised through the Oracle system and had been approved and receipted by authorised employees at the time. However, thirteen of the orders had been placed after the date of the invoice.
(Medium Risk)

Seven suppliers with cumulative expenditure of over £10,000 during the 2021/22 financial year were noted. Our enquiries revealed that quotations had not been obtained for any of the purchases and that Waiver requests or Contract Award Reports had not been completed.
(Medium Risk)

Travel & Subsistence Expenses

A sample of claims for travel and subsistence during the period April 2021 to June 2022 were reviewed and checked for compliance with the Council's Policy on Travel & Subsistence. The following was found:

- a) A number of instances were found where the mileage claimed was higher than expected for the description of the journey recorded on Oracle. Further investigation is being undertaken into the claims.
(High Risk based on value)
- b) Home to work mileage had not been deducted by a staff member.
(Medium Risk)

2. Integrated Assessment Implications

2.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

2.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development.

Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

- 2.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.
- 2.2 An IIA screening has been undertaken (Appendix ?). No impacts were identified:
- Findings of the audit have been raised with identified staff members and HR processes have been instigated.
 - The report has taken into account the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) by ensuring that we have taken into account the five ways of working and also the seven national well-being goals.
 - We have deemed this as a low financial risk; findings of the audit have been shared with the identified staff members and the Council's Travel and Subsidence Policy has been re-circulated and re-enforced with all Swansea staff members.
 - No changes are required to the internal or external website.

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 - Western Bay Adoption Service Management Action Plan

Appendix B - Western Bay Adoption Services, Adoption Allowances - Final Internal Audit Report 22-23

Appendix C – IIA Screening Form