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Adults, Housing and Communities – Control Environment Update

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Director of Adults, Housing and Communities

Governance and Audit Committee

21st of March 2023



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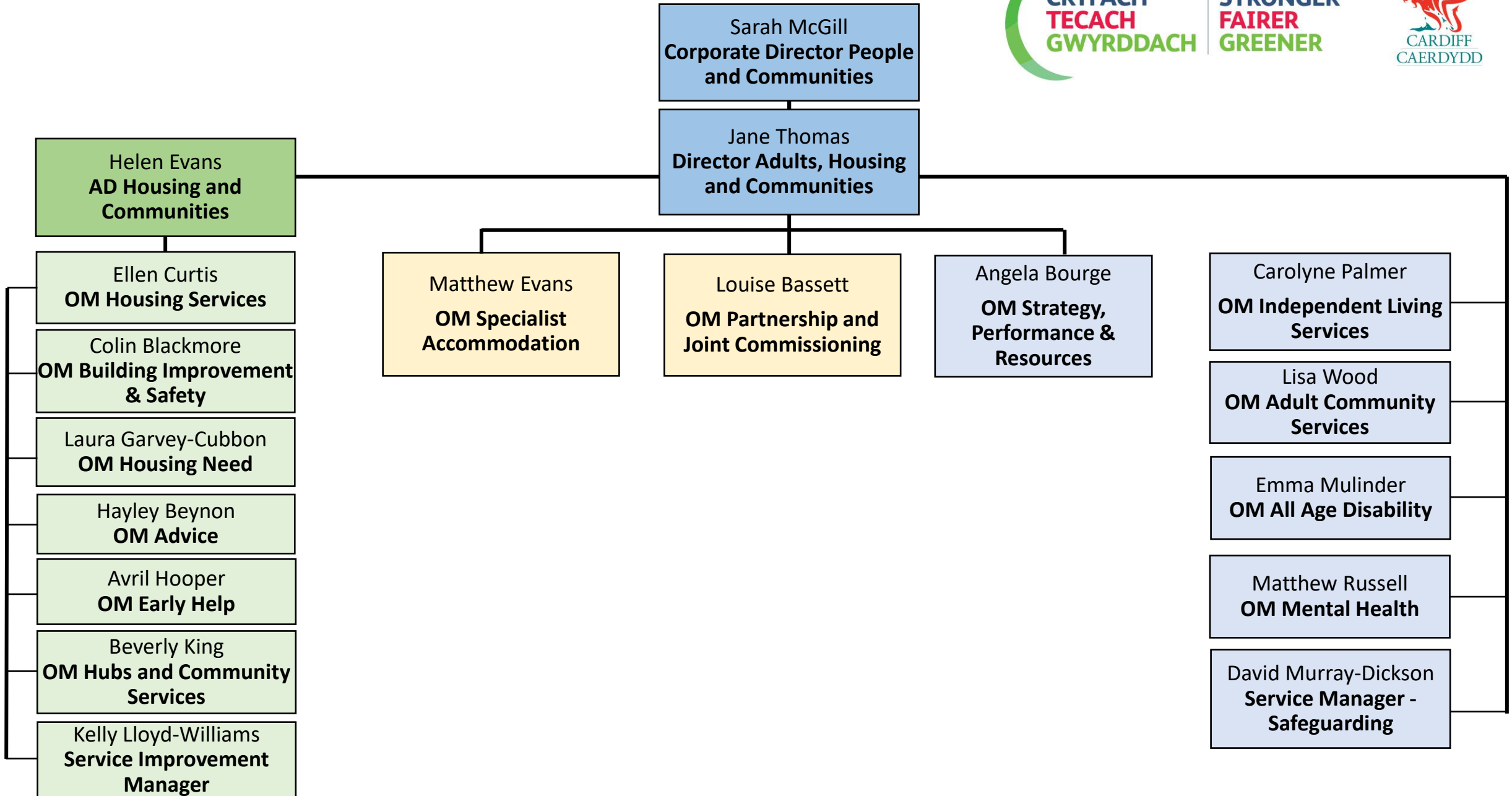
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Directorate Overview



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Key Priorities and Remit



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The **Adults, Housing & Communities** directorate provides a wide range of functions
Many services were impacted by the pandemic and the following surge in demand for services

Adult Services

- Independent Living Services
- Community & Hospital Social Work
- Mental Health Services
- Learning Disability Services
- Care Commissioning
- Direct delivered services - Internal Supported Living and CRT Homecare
- Adult Safeguarding

Housing & Communities

- Housing Services
- Building Improvement Service
- Homelessness Services
- Community Hubs and Older Persons Day Centres Advice
- Early Help for Families and Children
- Specialist Accommodation and Support Services
- Partnerships and Joint Commissioning

- Governance is provided through the Director, Assistant Director and a strong tier of Operational Managers
- Regular strategic and operational meetings are in place to oversee management of the service including performance, statutory & corporate compliance, and risk.
- Regular performance management in place – reviewed at both operational and strategic meetings

Risk Management



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Corporate (high level) Risks

- Corporate safeguarding / Adult Safeguarding
- Welfare Reform

Escalated Directorate Risks

- Recruitment & retention of care workers - (impact on provision of care)
- Recruitment & retention of social workers and occupational therapists - (impact on assessment of need)
- Lack of pitches for Gypsy /Travellers - (resultant overcrowding and fire safety issues)
- Fire safety in council homes - (in particular high-rise blocks)
- Increased homelessness demand (pressure on temporary accommodation)
- Cost of Living Crisis (impact on debt/evictions/homelessness)

Directorate (operational) Risks – significant directorate risks are included at Appendix C

Strong risk management arrangements are in place, all risks are reviewed regularly - with some key issues reported on a daily / weekly basis, and clear governance arrangements in place

Internal Audit Assurance



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Regular meetings take place between Director and Internal Audit representatives

Resources are now in place to monitor compliance with audit requirements

Audit recommendations from pre- pandemic are now being reviewed and taken forward

Audits April 2020 to date

- From April 2020 15 audits have been undertaken
- 12 have been effective / effective with opportunity for improvement
- 4 of these audits remain open – 6 actions
- Dates have been set for completion

Pre April 2020

- There are 5 long standing open audits (11 outstanding actions) relating to Adult Services
- Dates have been set to complete recommendations on 3 audits
- 2 audits relate to areas where significant work has been undertaken since the audit / further work is needed to confirm the way forward
- Details of these are set out in appendix D

Internal Audit Assurance

Currently **9** audits with open recommendations, **18** outstanding actions



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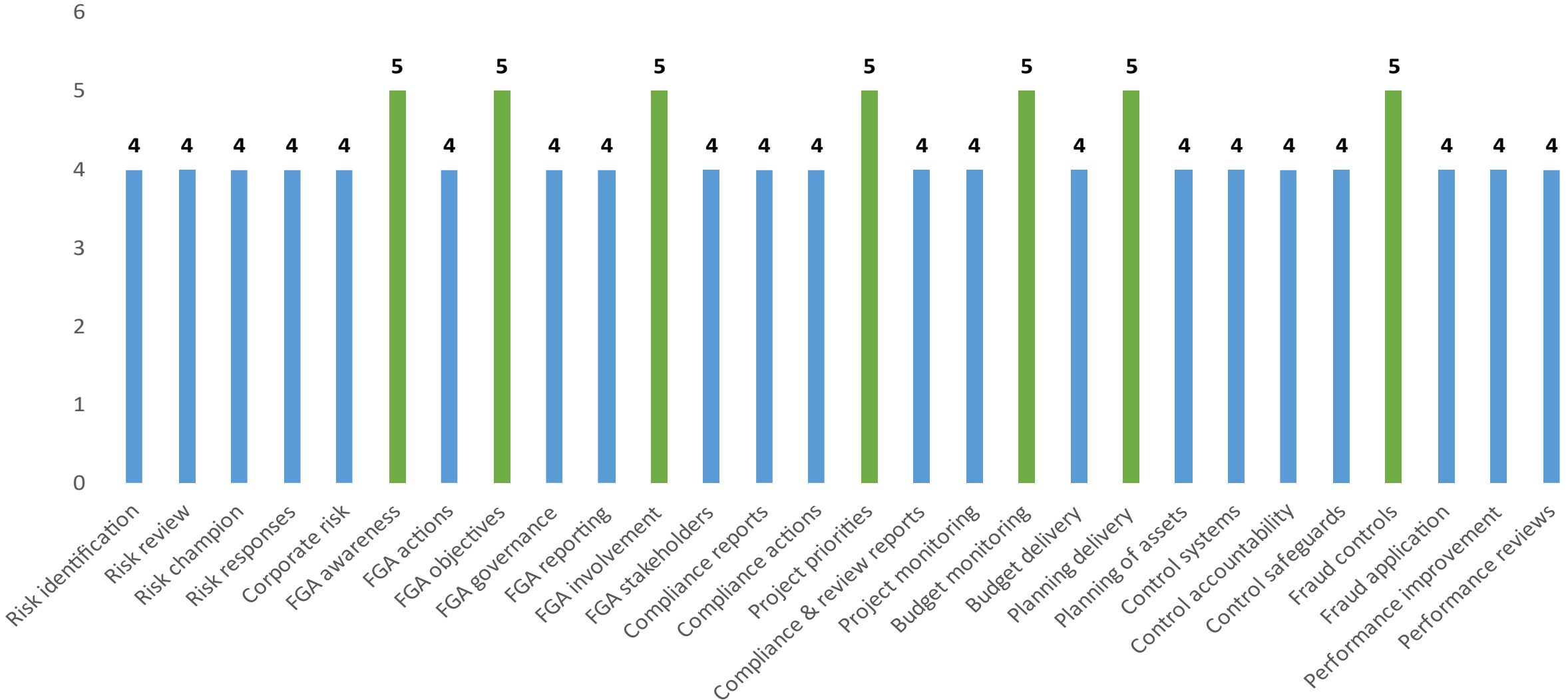
Audit	Report Status	Assurance Rating	Total Actions	Completed Actions	Outstanding Actions	Implementation Status
2022/23 (to date)						
Housing Benefit -Local Housing Allowance -Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Final	Effective	3	1	2	1 actions due for completion 31.05.2023 1 action due for completion 31.10.23
Agency Payments	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	1	1	0	All actions completed
Get Me Home Service	Final	Effective	0	0	0	All actions completed
Income and Debtors	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	4	4	0	All actions completed
ICF Schemes	Final	Effective	2	2	0	All actions completed
2021/22						
Libraries and Hubs	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	11	11	0	All actions completed
Pre-Contract Assurance - Adults, Housing & Communities	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	2	2	0	All actions completed
Contract Monitoring and Management - Adults, Housing & Communities	Final	N/A - sampled as part of corporate audit	3	3	0	All actions completed
Homelessness (Temporary Accommodation)	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	1	1	0	All actions completed
Joint Equipment Service	Final	Insufficient with major improvement needed	8	6	2	1 action due for completion 01.06.2023 1 action due for completion 01.07.2023

Internal Audit Assurance

Audit	Report Status	Assurance Rating	Total Actions	Completed Actions	Outstanding Actions	Implementation Status
2020/21						
Housing Benefit -Local Housing Allowance - Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	4	4	0	All actions completed
Risk Based Verification	Final	Effective	2	2	0	All actions completed
Income and Debtors - People and Communities	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	6	5	1	1 action due for completion 31.03.23
Income & Debtors - Social Services	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	3	2	1	1 action due for completion 30.05.2023
Commissioning and Procurement - Social Services	Final	Insufficient with major improvement needed	5	5	0	All actions completed
Communities - Asset Management	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	3	3	0	All actions completed
Older – Longstanding Recommendations						
Social Services - Health and Safety	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	5	4	1	1 action due for completion 31.03.23
Domiciliary Care	Final	Insufficient with major improvement needed	8	3	5	Full review required
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards	Final	Insufficient with major improvement needed	3	1	2	Subject to legislative change full review required
Direct Payments Support Service	Final	Insufficient with major improvement needed	6	4	2	2 actions due for completion 31.3.23
Learning Disabilities	Final	Effective with opportunity for improvement	2	0	2	2 actions due for completion 31.7.23

Senior Management Assurance

Senior Management Assurance - Adults, Housing & Communities



Senior Management Assurance



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A recent review showed good levels of assurance, however opportunities were identified for improvement:

- **Response to internal audits** is currently good, however as noted above the pandemic and the need to prioritise “life and limb services” has delayed some responses - improved monitoring arrangements have been put in place to bring this back on track
- **The delivery of major projects** is well planned with full project governance in place, however there is a need to ensure that smaller projects are better prioritised/limited in number so that they can be delivered effectively.
- **Budgetary control** is good, both services were able to contribute to in year savings. There is a need to ensure that timing for achieving savings is realistic given the complex nature of the client group.
- **Administrative functions** are generally sound - however it is recognised opportunities exist to improve back office and debt management functions and systems within Adult Services, with opportunities for join up services and learning from elsewhere in the directorate.

External Assurance



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Adult Services

- **Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)** - last inspection in **November / December 2020** – opportunities for improvement have been incorporated into service plans.
- Regular meetings between CIW and the Director where issues / risks are considered and actions to remedy these are discussed.

Direct Care Provision

- **RISCA regulations** - Internal Supported Living for people with learning disabilities and CMT Homecare Service - both services overseen by registered managers.
- Responsible Individual (RI) - undertakes regular reviews.
- CIW have inspected both direct services recently - some issues were identified it was acknowledged that plans were in place to address these



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External Assurance



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Housing & Communities

Housing Revenue Account Business Plan – reviewed by Welsh Government each year to ensure it is “acceptable”

Housing Benefit – Audit Wales / DWP audits / National Fraud Initiative

Early Help Service (Flying Start) - Care Inspectorate Wales

Into Work Advice Services – ESF projects audited by Welsh Government / Newport Council -New arrangements as part of the Shared Prosperity Fund.

Adult Learning – Estyn inspection to commence 20th March



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Value for Money



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Adult Services Commissioned Services

- **£106m budget for externally commissioned care services** - good value for money and financial control is key.
- Approved provider lists are in place - 120 providers registered and all have met set quality requirements.
- Each package of care is offered separately to the market, ensuring competitive approach.
- Review underway of commissioning going forward - Market Engagement Manager to take this forward.
- New team put in place to regularly visit residential care settings to oversee the quality of care provided- will inform new Quality Assurance Framework and commissioning arrangements.
- Review of contract management arrangements underway to ensure that available resources are focused effectively.



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Value for Money



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Maintenance and Improvement of Council Homes

- Budget of £15.8m for improvement of council homes (2023/4) - vital that programmes of work are cost effective and delivered on time.
- Range of Frameworks commissioned to deliver planned and responsive works - commissioned using clear Schedules of Rates (SOR)
- Invitation to Tender (ITT) clearly set out detailed requirements - both cost and quality are considered in the evaluation of bids.
- Appointed contractors subject to robust contract management regime - performance monitored.
- Financial deductions can and have been made for poor performance.
- Annual report on performance of the frameworks sent to the Service Area's Director and Assistant Director.



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Complaints



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Adult Services

- Complaints Team located in the **Strategy Performance & Resources** section ensuring that the service is able to work independently.
- Trends identified & reported to **Adult Services Management Team**.
- Between January 2022 and January 2023, the team received 115 complaints, of which 26 cases were either upheld or partially upheld. Reviewed for lessons learned.
- 7 requests for Stage 2 Investigation so far this year. **2** of which have been upheld, and **4** have not been upheld. All Stage 2 complaints overseen by Director
- To date this year, **3** complaints have been decided upon by the Ombudsman, **none** have been upheld.
- Complaints are reported regularly to the Adult Services Management Team.

Complaints



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Housing and Communities

- Dealt with by The **Quality and Appeals** team - investigate complaints on an impartial basis and provide resolutions to the issues raised.
- Between January 2022 and January 2023 - **840** complaints, of which **340** cases were either upheld or partially upheld.
- **59** complaints to ombudsman so far this year – 4 still being considered, **no reports upheld**
- Opportunity for service improvement identified - recommendations for improvement made.
- Reports circulated to Director and Assistant Director regularly
- Compliments and complaints presented regularly at **Housing and Communities SMT** meetings.
- Annual complaints report covering considered by Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee (CASSC).