



**Comhairle nan Eilean Siar  
Internal Audit Follow Up Review  
Residential Care Services  
Final Report – FU04-23/24**

**15 March 2024**

**COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR  
INTERNAL AUDIT FOLLOW UP REPORT  
RESIDENTIAL CARE SERVICES**

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**SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Introduction**

- 1.1 The Report has been prepared for the Comhairle's Audit and Scrutiny Committee. The original report advised of 8 recommendations made in the Residential Care Services report which was issued on 10 July 2023. The follow up review was undertaken in accordance with the operational annual internal audit plan for 2023/24.

**Internal Audit Objective**

- 1.2 Following up internal audit reports and assessing the level of compliance with recommendations made is an important part of the internal audit function.
- 1.3 In accordance with the remit detailed in the operational annual internal audit plan for 2023/24, our internal audit work was designed to obtain assurance that the original recommendations have been implemented. We obtained this assurance through internal audit testing and undertaking discussions with key personnel.
- 1.4 The main recommendations in the original report were:
- The Comhairle holding balances for deceased service users, some dated pre-2020 must be prioritised and addressed with procedures put in place;
  - The Comhairle to identify all the balances that require to be finalised after paying any outstanding debt to the Comhairle and any residual monies to be returned to families or dealt with through solicitors; and
  - The issue with the amenity funds held with the bank since 2021 be addressed and signatories be updated to allow release of funds to the care homes.

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**Detailed Findings**

- 1.5 The current status of progress against the original recommendations can be summarised as follows:

**Key to Status**



Fully implemented;



Partly implemented, although further work is required to meet the objective of the recommendation; or



Insufficient progress to date

Recommendations	Action to Date	Status
The Services Manager to put procedures in place that when a service user dies that any outstanding bank accounts are dealt with as soon as possible after all due payments have been accounted for and settled.	Fully implemented	
The Service Manager in collaboration with Legal Services to follow up the balances and make arrangements to clear down the balances through the appropriate procedures.	Partly implemented	
The Service Manager – Residential Services to investigate further and liaise with the bank to release the funds to the care homes in question.	Fully implemented	
The Service Manager - Residential Services and the Policy Officer to introduce a bespoke form for use in all the care homes for consistency and clarity.	Fully implemented	
The Service Manager - Residential Services to refresh the care homes information and include information regarding the new care home complex on the Intranet/Internet.	Fully implemented	
The Service Manager to reiterate to staff that the required processes must be followed in accordance with the policy.	Fully implemented	
Consideration be given to standardising the Amenity Cash forms across the Comhairle care homes.	Fully implemented	
All care workers who have not done so must undertake training in order that all staff are in compliance with the safekeeping of service users' information at all times.	Partly implemented	

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**Concluding Remarks**

- 1.6 From our follow up testing, we note that out of the 8 follow up recommendations made in the original 6 appear to have been fully implemented, and management have confirmed that the remaining recommendations will be implemented by late 2024.
- 1.7 For Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar Internal Audit Section

Internal Audit  
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar  
Sandwick Road  
Stornoway  
Isle of Lewis  
HS1 2BW

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**SECTION 2 - DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>Action Recommended</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Progress to Date</b>	<b>Action Outstanding</b>
<b>2.1</b>			
The Services Manager to put procedures in place that when a service user dies that any outstanding bank accounts are dealt with as soon as possible after all due payments have been accounted for and settled.	Service Manager - Residential Services	We have updated the care plan to include executor details. Care Home Managers will inform the Service Manager of any accruing bank balances from the information provided by the SW Support team on a quarterly basis in order that issues can be dealt with, and any balances cleared as soon as possible after the death of a service user.	None

<b>Action Recommended</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Progress to Date</b>	<b>Action Outstanding</b>
<b>2.2</b>			
The Service Manager in collaboration with Legal Services to follow up the balances and make arrangements to clear down the balances through the appropriate procedures.	Service Manager - Residential Services	The process is underway with identification of solicitors/executors in the first instance, communication made to relevant solicitors, & requests made for Confirmation Certificates. 11/18 cases are actively progressing, 2 complete. Where certificates have been received (3 cases) process to initiate release of funds has begun.	Continued work with legal to complete for all cases.

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Action Recommended	Action By	Progress to Date	Action Outstanding
<b>2.3</b>			
The Service Manager – Residential Services to investigate further and liaise with the bank to release the funds to the care homes in question.	Service Manager - Residential Services	Complete	None

Action Recommended	Action By	Progress to Date	Action Outstanding
<b>2.4</b>			
The Service Manager - Residential Services and the Policy Officer to introduce a bespoke form for use in all the care homes for consistency and clarity.	Service Manager - Residential Services	Complete – process includes taking a photo of the valuable property.	None

Action Recommended	Action By	Progress to Date	Action Outstanding
<b>2.5</b>			
The Service Manager - Residential Services to refresh the care homes information and include information regarding the new care home complex on the Intranet/Internet.	Service Manager - Residential Services	Complete – summary of care provision description for each care home including the new care home is on the intranet/internet including the video promotional footage of the care campus.	None

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Action Recommended	Action By	Progress to Date	Action Outstanding
<b>2.6</b>			
The Service Manager to reiterate to staff that the required processes must be followed in accordance with the policy.	Service Manager - Residential Services	Complete – policy issued to managers	None

Action Recommended	Action By	Progress to Date	Action Outstanding
<b>2.7</b>			
Consideration be given to standardising the Amenity Cash forms across the Comhairle care homes.	Service Manager - Residential Services	Agreed and implemented	None

Action Recommended	Action By	Progress to Date	Action Outstanding
<b>2.8</b>			
All care workers who have not done so must undertake training in order that all staff are in compliance with the safekeeping of service users' information at all times.	Service Manager - Residential Services	Training is ongoing	Ongoing



**RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL AUDIT**

**Responsibility in Relation to Internal Controls**

It is the responsibility of the Comhairle's management to maintain adequate and effective financial systems and to arrange for a system of internal controls. Our responsibility as internal auditors is to evaluate the financial systems and associated internal controls. In practice, we cannot examine every financial implication and accounting procedure within an activity, and we cannot substitute for management's responsibility to maintain adequate systems of internal controls over financial systems. We therefore may not identify all weaknesses that exist in this regard.

**Responsibilities in Relation to Fraud and Corruption**

The prime responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud and irregularities rests with management. They also have a duty to take reasonable steps to limit the opportunity for corrupt practices. It is our responsibility to review the adequacy of these arrangements, but our work does not remove the possibility that fraud, corruption or irregularity may have occurred and remained undetected.

We nevertheless endeavour to plan our internal audit work so that we have reasonable expectation of detecting material fraud, but our examination should not be relied upon to disclose all such material frauds that may exist.